

THE IMRALI POST

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Issue № 25 / 1 November 2022 ★ Contact: imralipost@freeocalan.org

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Activists from Strasbourg take over Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil this week

ANF | STRASBOURG | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative launched the Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil on 25 June 2012 in Strasbourg, to ensure the physical freedom of the Kurdish people's leader. The action has entered its 541st week.

A group of activists from Strasbourg took over the vigil this week.

The group includes Veli Tekiner, Mehmet Ali Çoban, Sidar Amed and Ismail Fırat.

Group Spokesperson Sidar Amed said that they are on vigil demanding freedom for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, and called on the people of Kurdistan living across Europe to support and attend the vigil.

Amed said: "The vigil has been carried out for 10 years and continues uninterrupted. Today, we are taking over the vigil on behalf of the patriots in Strasbourg. Our call to patriots living in all European countries is to support this vigil. Long live the freedom struggle of Kurdistan! Long live Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan! Biji Serok Apo!"



New six-month ban on visits for Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 OCTOBER 2022

After the ban on visits imposed on Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan on 13 April ended on 18 October, it was automatically extended for another six months.

Asrın Law Office's lawyers, who applied to visit their client to the Bursa Execution Judge after 18 October were informed that there was no "any ban on visits".

The lawyers then applied again on 26 October asking why they couldn't visit their client.

This time, the judge said that Abdullah Öcalan was given a new 6-month ban on lawyer's visits, which became final on October 21.

The lawyers said that they were not notified of the sentence and announced that they would appeal.

Lawyers are requesting to meet with the Kurdish people's leader twice a week. However, their applications are systematically left unanswered. In some cases, months later, lawyers are told that disciplinary actions have been taken against Öcalan.



Prisons in Turkey

Prisoners in Diyarbakır High Security jail go on hunger strike to protest use of chemical weapons

ANF | AMED | 25 OCTOBER 2022

Political prisoners in Diyarbakır High Security Prison No. 1 said that they have gone on a hunger strike to protest the Turkish state's use of chemical weapons against the guerrillas in Medya Defense Areas.

Prisoners Muhammed Kartal, Kasım Aslan and Masum Karaman said that they have gone on a five-day hunger strike to protest the use of chemical weapons.

The prisoners, who announced their actions through their families, said that they would step up their actions if the use of chemical weapons continued.



Artworks of prisoners in Turkey exhibited in Switzerland

ÖNER POLAT | ZURICH | 25 OCTOBER 2022

Political prisoners in Turkey continue to produce artworks despite hardships. Prisoners' relatives help these artworks reach audiences or readers.

Ferhan Mordeniz's family is also trying to deliver the poems and paintings he produced in prison to readers and art lovers. This year, not only the artworks of Mordeniz, but also those of five other prisoners have taken their place in an exhibition in Zurich, Switzerland.

Drawings, oil paintings, cartoons, poems and prose literary works produced by political prisoners Aynur Epli, Ferhan Mordeniz, Dr. Ayhan Kavak, Mehmet Boğatekin, Ömer Özdurak and Salih Erol are displayed in the exhibition.

Organized by the Tigris Euphrat Association operating in Switzerland, the exhibition, which aims to show solidarity with prisoners, is held at the Punto d'Incontro Cultural Association run by Catalans in Zurich. Lots will be drawn in an event to become pen pals with the prisoners.

The exhibition can be visited until November 3 at Josefstrasse 102, 8005 / Zurich. A musical concert will be performed on October 29.



Women prisoners go on a 3-day hunger strike against use of chemical weapons

ANF | ISTANBUL | 26 OCTOBER 2022

The women held in Bakırköy Women's Closed Prison went on a three-day hunger strike against the isolation of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, Turkey's use of chemical weapons against HPG guerrillas, and the violations of rights in prisons.

The women, held in 3 separate wards, sent a message to the people through their lawyers in which they said that the use of chemical weapons is a crime against humanity and that they decided to go on hunger strike to protest this. Pointing out that an independent committee on the use of chemicals should be formed and go to the region to conduct a proper investigation, the women called on people to speak out about this issue.



Aysel Tuğluk finally released from prison

ANF | ANKARA | 27 OCTOBER 2022

Kurdish politician Aysel Tuğluk, who is suffering from dementia, was released from Kandıra No. 1 F Type Closed Prison this evening after the Forensic Medicine Institute (ATK) said in a report that she could not "stay in prison".

Following the publication of the report by the ATK, Tuğluk's lawyers submitted another petition to the Kocaeli Execution Prosecutor's Office, reiterating their request for their client's release.

Tuğluk was eventually released this evening.

Many people, including Tuğluk's family and lawyers, have been waiting in front of the prison since last night. Tuğluk finally appeared at the prison gate, and found her family, lawyers, Lawyers Association for Freedom (ÖHD) members, Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Istanbul MP Züleyha Gülüm, İzmir MP Serpil Kemalbay, former MP Bucu Çelik, Kocaeli province and Gebze district administration, Marmara Prisoner and Convict Families Assistance Association (MA-TUHAYDER), HDP Party Assembly (PM) members and many people waiting for her.

Those who came to greet Tuğluk often chanted "Jin, Jiyan, Azadi".

Tuğluk was taken to Istanbul.



Police violently disperse Justice Vigil in Istanbul, detaining three including ANF reporter

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 OCTOBER 2022

The vigil of relatives of seriously ill and political prisoners, which has been taking place in Istanbul for months, was broken up again on Friday. The police used force against participants as well as media representatives accompanying the action and made arrests. In addition to activists Cemile Çiftçi and Fince Akman, ANF reporter Zeynep Kuray was also taken into custody. The journalist was harassed by male officers and dragged from the square with her hands cuffed behind her back. Police also used physical force against journalist Gülistan Dursun from the women's news agency JinNews and freelance journalist Hayri Tunç. In Dursun's case, an attempt was made to confiscate the correspondent's camera.

The "Justice Vigil", as the vigil in Istanbul is called, has been going on for 32 weeks. It is carried out by relatives of sick prisoners and supporters and aims to end the release of sick prisoners behind bars and the end of the Turkish Ministry of Justice's notorious measure of making the release of political prisoners after serving their prison sentence dependent on a confession of remorse. There are many people in Turkish prisons whose regular prison term has long since expired and who are still not released because of their political views.

Since the Justice Watch was launched, there has been violence against participants by security forces almost every week. Cemile Çiftçi and Fince Akman have been affected for the second time. The women met at Çağlayan Square in Istanbul's Şişli district at noon today and marched hand in hand to the front of the Palace of Justice to protest against the Turkish state's "hostile criminal treatment" of sick prisoners. In front of the courthouse, Çiftçi and Akman were initially surrounded by police before being taken into custody. Cemile Çiftçi is the sister of Selim Çiftçi, who is imprisoned in Ümraniye and is on the list of "seriously ill prisoners" of the Human Rights Association (IHD). Fince Akman is the mother of Yakup Akman, who is imprisoned in the high security prison Silivri No. 3. The Kurd, who lived in Istanbul until his arrest, had

reported a fire in Aydos Forest to the fire brigade in 2019, and was later sentenced to an aggravated life sentence plus an additional 25 years as an alleged “PKK arsonist”.

Both Cemile Çiftçi and Fince Akman have been detained dozens of times for their participation in the justice vigil. Several times they were reported to the police for taking part in an “unauthorised demonstration”. Both women are now facing charges. During their detention, they announced that they would continue to stand up for their relatives and all other sick prisoners.



Babur says that all ill prisoners should be released

ANF | VAN | 30 OCTOBER 2022

Kurdish politician Aysel Tuğluk has been released from prison. She was kept in jail for 6 years despite having been diagnosed with dementia and despite the reports saying she could not stay in prison. After her release, the situation of all ill prisoners came onto the agenda. There are 618 seriously ill prisoners in Turkey and Bakur Kurdistan jails.

Speaking to ANF, TUHAY-DER co-chair Edibe Babur said that although Aysel Tuğluk’s release is welcome news, it is not sufficient. “There are hundreds of ill prisoners like Tuğluk and her release should be a precedent. All ill prisoners must be freed. They have the right to be treated in a proper environment and to continue their lives. These people are really left to die. Some of our friends died shortly after being released from prison. Our call to the Ministry of Justice is to comply with the law and release the ill prisoners immediately.”

Many prisoners are suffering from dementia

Babur said: “We do not have a precise number, but we know that there are many prisoners suffering from dementia. We currently have 618 ill detainees. Their families and lawyers also confirmed this. The voices of ill prisoners are not heard and our approach to ill prisoners should be more sensitive. It is a very sensitive issue and we will continue to stand by our ill prisoners.”

Problems with meals provided

Babur continued: “There is torture in all prisons. There are prisoners held in the cell because they oppose the standing count. They beat the prisoners to death. They tortured prisoners in Van High Security jail. Again, the prisoners who remained in T-Type sent us news about torture through their families. Even meals provided in Van prisons violate the standards.”



Ehettin Kayna dies two months after his release from prison

ANF | İZMİR | 31 OCTOBER 2022

Ehettin Kaynar, who was sentenced to life imprisonment for taking part in the “Justice Commission”, was released from Karabük T-Type Prison on 2 September. He had his sentence postponed for 6 months after he contracted cancer in prison.

Kaynar, 73, died on Sunday night in Iğdır State Hospital.



Military aggression and occupation

Military operation begins in Hakkari

ANF | HAKKARI | 25 OCTOBER 2022

On Monday evening, the Hakkari Governorate declared a “special security” zone for 15 days “to provide security and ensure public order” in the villages of Sorê, Zêvkan and highlands of the Yüksekova District.

A military operation was launched this morning in the villages and hamlets of Tilorana Jor, Tilorana Jêr, Yêkmal'a Jêr, Pagê, Kuçe, Hirmin, Mitirban, Meşkan, Mûşan, Kendalok, Wargenima.

With the support of combat type war helicopters, a landing was made on the dominant hills of the villages.

While soldiers were dispatched to the villages declared as “special security” zones, intense helicopter activity was observed in the region.



Autonomous Administration announces the death of two citizens in Turkish drone attack in Qamishlo

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2022

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) released a written statement concerning the deadly Turkish drone attack on October 24. “The Turkish state is targeting civilians and their houses with all its means to implement its genocidal policies against our people and to destroy stability and stir chaos in the Autonomous Administration regions. This is an alarming situation which paves the way for the Turkish state to cause a crisis,” the AANES statement on Tuesday said.

“Yesterday’s drone attack in Qamishlo is a continuation of the previous attacks. It shows that the Turkish state has openly declared war. Mercenary and terrorist groups, especially ISIS, take advantage of these attacks,” said the statement, which further included the following:

“The targeted attacks on SDF commanders involved in the fight against terror, citizens, Autonomous Administration employees and civilian institutions only prove the invading Turkish state’s violation of all international agreements and moral values. Turkey’s targeted aggression and its excuses to wage a war should be distinguished from each other.

As the AANES, we condemn the drone attack that claimed the lives of two citizens in Qamishlo yesterday (October 24). We underline that the silence of active parties in Syria, the international community and institutions serves the political interests of the Turkish state. Clear and bold reactions should be developed against these attacks.

We state that we will continue to protect our people’s rights to stability, organization and self-defence, as well as their achievements, and we will not hesitate to protect the revolution of our people.”



Turkey and mercenaries cutting off water from Alouk station causes epidemic diseases

ANF | HESEKE | 26 OCTOBER 2022

The invading Turkish state continues to use water as a tool of war against the people of the region, after all the invasion plans in the Northern and Eastern Syria regions were foiled. The invaders, who use water to put economic pressure on the Autonomous Administration, mostly target the Alouk Water Station and the Euphrates River.

The Turkish state and its mercenaries have been cutting off the water reaching Heseke Canton from Alouk (Elok) Station for more than two years. Although agreements have been made for the delivery of water to Heseke, the invading Turkish state and its mercenaries constantly violate them.

Millions of people in the Heseke Canton have been suffering from lack of water after the occupation forces cut off water supply from the Alouk Station which they hold under their control.

“This crisis is not new; our water has been cut off since the occupation of Serêkaniyê. The Turkish state has used it as a tool of pressure to displace the local people,” a citizen named Welîd Şakir Ebdullah from Til Temir told ANHA.

‘Why do Russia and the US remain silent?’

“To solve this problem, we had to find alternative solutions, such as digging wells. Also, costs are high because water tankers are filled by their owners. This aggravates the water problem and causes the spread of diseases in the region,” Ebdullah continued.

Ebdullah condemned the silence of the international community towards the crimes committed by Turkey in the region. “What is the reason for the military presence of Russia and the US in our regions? They are turning a blind eye to our suffering,” he said.

Diseases increased

“The water cut at the Alouk Station has seriously affected the residents of the district. Many diseases have, therefore, spread in recent months. Many diseases such as diarrhea and enteritis have appeared because of dirty water,” Omer Mardo, a doctor at Şehit Lêgerîn Hospital in Til Temir, said.

Impact on production

Eziz Xiro has been running a brick factory for 20 years. “The water shortage has affected every aspect of life. Factories cannot produce quality products due to the lack of water. Brick production is a good example. Without water, you cannot produce quality bricks,” Xiro said.

“We are faced with continuous water and electricity outages by the invading Turkish state and its mercenaries. This affects production and supply negatively,” Xiro added.

The Til Temir Water Works Directorate has taken some measures to deal with the water crisis.

“We draw water from underground wells in Til Erboş and Til Ruman villages near the Til Temir-Heseke highway. However, after some tests, we stopped drawing water from wells. We found out that the water from wells was not good and caused diseases. Therefore, we requested the Autonomous Administration to drill new wells in Til Temir in order to redress the grievances of the people,” Xalid Mihemed Elo, Til Temir Water Department Head, said.

Elo condemned the international community’s silence against the water cuts. “If these states cannot provide us water, I do not believe they can maintain security and peace in the region,” he said.



Turkish attack on civilian settlement injures two children in Sherawa, Afrin

ANF | SHERAWA | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The invading Turkish state forces once again shelled civilian settlements in northern Syria on Thursday.

According to reports from the ground, the village of Aqiba in the Sherawa district of Afrin was shelled by the occupation forces.

The attack left two children injured. Semer İdrîs (4) and Ciwan İdrîs (3) were taken to hospital in Til Rifet district.

Largely unnoticed by Western public opinion, Turkey is waging an open war of attrition against northern and eastern Syria, bombing civilian settlement areas or autonomous administration facilities on a daily basis. For months, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has also been threatening a new war of aggression against the region. Ankara justifies the warlike aggression with a “terrorist threat” to Turkey from the majority Kurdish north-east of Syria. With this, the Turkish regime wants to justify a further invasion. The aim is to expand the illegal occupation zone.



Turkish drone strikes a house in Shengal

ANF | SHENGAL | 29 OCTOBER 2022

As part of its never-ending attacks on the Yazidi settlement Shengal (Sinjar) in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), the Turkish state carried out yet another aerial attack on Saturday.

According to RojNews, the attack was carried out by a drone and targeted a house in the town of Khana-sor (Xanesor). Information on the aftermath of the attack was not immediately available.

Turkey conducts ongoing drone attacks in northern Iraq and northern Syria. The last drone attack in Shengal took place on September 11 when a Turkish drone attack targeted a vehicle of the Shengal Resistance Units (YBŞ). In a statement on the same day, YBŞ stated that no people were killed in the attack which took place near an Iraqi army base in the village of Behreva near Xanesor (Khanasor) town.

Since Shengal was liberated from the murderous ISIS gangs, there have been constant drone attacks on the population, YBŞ said, adding: “Clearly, the Turkish state wants to complete what ISIS has failed to do.

Since the ISIS genocide of 2014, which the Yazidi community refers to as Ferman, the people of Shengal have been attacked by Turkey using cowardly and unethical methods. The aim is to prevent the Yazidis who have been displaced by ISIS from returning to their homes and to render the population helpless and unable to defend themselves.”

Shortly before, on August 29, two YBŞ fighters were injured in a Turkish drone attack. On the same day, Evizet Abdullah Abid, a civilian father of six children, was killed in a drone attack in the Maxmur refugee camp. The Turkish state makes no distinction between armed forces and civilians in its attacks.

In Shengal, air strikes have increasingly been carried out since 2017 under the pretext of “fighting the PKK”. The specific targets are mostly representatives and institutions of the Democratic Autonomous Assembly of Shengal (MXDŞ) and the defence units YBŞ/YJŞ. The casualties are mainly civilians - often survivors of the 2014 ISIS genocide. In June, three civilians were killed in a Turkish drone attack in Shengal, including a twelve-year-old child. In February, three civilian Arab workers died in multi-hour bombings on 22 targets. In December 2021, Merwan Bedel, co-chair of the MXDŞ Executive Commission, a long-time core personality of the autonomous administration, was assassinated in a Turkish drone strike. A doctor and nurses were among the eight people killed in an air strike on a hospital in Sikênîyê in August 2021.

In the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria, 27 people were killed in Turkish drone attacks in August, including eight minors.



HPG reports ongoing Turkish attacks with chemical weapons and banned bombs

ANF | BEHDINAN | 30 OCTOBER 2022

According to the press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), the Turkish army used banned bombs nine times and chemical weapons eleven times against guerrilla positions in Medya Defense Zones in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) on Saturday. The guerrilla areas were also bombed nine times by fighter jets and dozens of times by howitzers and heavy weapons.

Nevertheless, the guerrillas continue to resist. In Çemço in the Zap region, a soldier of the Turkish invasion forces was seriously wounded by a sniper last night. In Sida, between 7.30 and 8.30 a.m. today, the guerrillas carried out four actions with heavy weapons against a Turkish squad trying to advance towards the Şehîd Doğan position. Another action with heavy weapons targeted the invading at Girê Cûdî on Saturday. On Saturday evening, soldiers who wanted to carry out demolitions at the Şehîd Çekdar position at Girê Cûdî were struck by guerrillas with light weapons.

The Turkish attacks with prohibited bombs were directed against the Şehîd Yunus position at Girê Cûdî and the Şehîd Felat position in Sîda. The Şehîd Bahoz position in the resistance area of Çemço was affected by the chemical weapons operations.

Girê Bihar, Girê Cûdî and Girê FM were bombed by fighter jets, artillery attacks took place in the Çemço, Girê Cûdî, Girê FM and Girê Amêdî areas.

In Karker, the Turkish army continues to try to demolish guerrilla positions with construction machinery. In the resistance area of Şehîd Fedakar, the Turkish army continues military road construction.



4 Turkish soldiers and 9 mercenaries killed in YPG retaliatory actions

ANF | 30 OCTOBER 2022

The Press Office of the People's Defense Units (YPG) released a statement announcing the details of their actions directed at the Turkish army and allied mercenaries in occupied territories on the 23rd and 27th of October.

The statement said, "The Turkish occupation army continues its violent attacks on our areas. In most of these attacks, our people are targeted, resulting in the death and injury of civilians. These attacks also cause material losses to our people. In the face of these brutal attacks, we defend our people and their achievements in all circumstances and conditions in the context of legitimate defense.

In this scope, retaliatory actions were carried out against the invasion forces in the occupied areas on the 23rd and 27th of October. These actions resulted in the killing of 4 soldiers of the Turkish occupation army and 9 mercenaries, in addition to destroying a vehicle, an A-4 weapon and a grenade launcher.

Our forces will continue their retaliatory operations in response to the attacks of the Turkish occupation army



HTS mercenaries kidnap four people in occupied Afrin

ANF | 30 OCTOBER 2022

The Turkish-backed Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), formerly known as al-Nusra Front, have kidnapped four residents of the Kefermize village in Afrin's Shera district.

The kidnapped civilians who were taken to an unknown place were identified as Hîlal Osman, Casim Ocalan, Cuma Mistefa Osman and Qusey Henan Osman.

The Turkish state has established a regime of terror in the territories it has invaded together with jihadist groups under its control. Crimes such as kidnapping, execution, torture, plundering and forced migration have become a daily routine and war crimes are systematically committed, especially in the canton of Afrin, which has been occupied since March 2018.

Kidnappings of civilians are part of the daily routine. In most cases, a ransom is demanded for their release. In recent years, thousands of people have been kidnapped and tortured. Some have been executed, the fate of others is unknown.

In the first six months of this year, the invaders kidnapped 346 citizens, 30 of whom were women, and killed 18 citizens.

On the other hand, 8,500 trees were cut down, and more than 100 trees were burned, while tens of hectares of forests and fields were burned.

Following the NATO meeting in Madrid, Spain on June 30, the Turkish state has increased its crimes against the people in North and East Syria, specifically in the regions it has occupied together with jihadist allies.

According to the Afrin-Syrian Human Rights Organization, Turkey has increased its crimes of killing, kidnapping and harassing citizens in the occupied regions in order to displace the local population and to undermine the security of the region. Moreover, the Turkish state, which threatens to invade Til Rifat and Manbij, is currently targeting the civilian people with tanks, bombings and fighter jets.



Maxmur Camp refugees: Iraq and UN must stop Turkish airstrikes

ANF | MAXMUR | 31 OCTOBER 2022

Turkish reconnaissance planes continue to fly over Martyr Rustem Cudi Camp (Maxmur) 24 hours a day. After the reconnaissance planes, air strikes were carried out by targeting camp residents many times. The Turkish state killed a citizen named Abuzêd Abdullah Abid in front of his home on 29 August 2022.

Many attempts were made to stop the Turkish state's attacks and flights over Maxmur. Maxmur Diplomacy Committee Member Bêwar Unver, told Rojnews: "Air strikes were carried out dozens of times and many civilians were killed. With these attacks, Turkey wants to break the will of the Maxmur people. There is a great threat to Maxmur and it is not known when and where the bombardment will take place. 5,000 children live in Maxmur Camp and the airstrikes have a psychological effect, especially on them."

Unver said that Turkish state planes can enter into Iraqi airspace because of the permission of Iraq, the UN and the International Coalition. He said: “Not even a bird can fly in the airspace of Iraq without the permission of the UN and the International Coalition. Maxmur Camp is officially recognized by the UN. Geographically and legally, it is located within the territory of Iraq. However, the attacks on Maxmur are ignored by these institutions and organizations. The Iraqi government and the UN are as responsible as Turkey for the attacks on Maxmur. Refugees have the right to safety, but we are deprived of this right. As a committee, we will work for the rights of Maxmur Camp. We will defend our rights in Iraqi and international courts.”



Autonomous Administration of N-E Syria vows to fight in the spirit of the Kobanê resistance

ANF | 31 OCTOBER 2022

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) issued a message to mark November 1, World Kobanê Day.

The message of the Autonomous Administration is as follows:

“The Kobanê battle manifested historic resistance against terrorism under the leadership of the YPG and the YPJ. It shattered the dream of the terrorist organization ISIS to build a religious state in the region and Syria. Promoting a free and honourable life, the Kobanê resistance gave a message to the forces that support terrorism. This resistance proved that the people would achieve victory.

This historic resistance became the basis for the resistance of North and East Syria that has been going on for years and was crowned with the defeat of the ISIS terrorist organization on March 23, 2019. The Kobanê resistance represents an important stage in the resistance of the peoples and in building democratic autonomy. It is Afrin's Resistance of the Age, which lasted for 58 days. The resistance in Baghouz also aimed to build a self-government and to clear the occupied areas from terror, mercenary groups and conspiratorial forces against the peoples who demand democracy and freedom.

When we talk about the Kobanê resistance, we should also mention the historic victory in 2014. The international community showed their support for Kobanê on November 1. This support from global institutions, organizations and individuals demonstrates the fact that people's power lies in unity.

Global support is the basis of the Kobanê resistance. The spirit of Kobanê resistance generated the will of the people against dark forces and their plans. It prompted the world to support this resistance, unprecedented since the Second World War. Therefore, the Kobanê resistance represents the essence of the resistance against terrorism and its supporters.

'We will resist until we build a free society'

We remember the resistance of our people in Kobanê, all the world powers that supported it, and all the young people who flocked to Kobanê from Bakur (North), Bashur (South) and Rojhilat (East) Kurdistan. We mark the 8th anniversary of the resistance with respect and gratitude. We would like to emphasize that the support given for Kobanê, North and East Syria is still very significant. Our people derive their strength of resistance and self-defence from this support. We are still determined to defend the Kobanê resistance line. The support for Kobanê is now part of the history of our people's resistance.

We, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, emphasize that we will resist in Afrin, Serêkaniyê and all occupied areas in the spirit of the Kobanê resistance, and we will defeat terrorism and frustrate the plans directed at the will of our people.

We declare that we remain persistent on resistance. The support for Kobanê forms a strong basis to liberate humanity from terrorist structures. On this occasion, we commemorate the resistance fighters and martyrs from all our component peoples who fought in Kobanê, North and East Syria. We will resist in this spirit until we build our democratic will and a free society.”



HPG reports massive attacks with chemical weapons and banned bombs on guerrilla areas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 31 OCTOBER 2022

According to the daily statement by the People's Defence Forces (HPG), the Turkish army continues its attacks on various areas in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) unabated. In the past 24 hours, HPG recorded at least 32 attacks with chemical warfare agents and prohibited bombs, in parallel with 52 attacks by attack helicopters and further air attacks by aircraft and ground artillery.

According to the statement, the chemical weapons attacks on Sunday were directed against the guerrillas' defensive positions and underground tunnels in the resistance areas of Girê Amêdî, Girê Cûdî, Saca, Sîda and Çemço. This is also where most of the helicopter attacks took place, as well as dozens of ground attacks from Turkish outposts. The primary targets of the fighter jets were Golka and Serê Metîna in Metîna, the Kendekola area in Xakurke, and the Bihar and FM hills. The HPG registered a total of 13 waves of attacks. In Karker, occupation forces repeatedly attempted to demolish guerrilla positions with excavator vehicles.

Despite chemical weapons and air strikes by the Turkish NATO army, the guerrillas continue to resist the invasion of Southern Kurdistan. In the Zap region, guerrillas struck the invading forces in Saca, Sîda and Çemço on Sunday and hit enemy military with heavy equipment, while it couldn't be clarified if and how

many soldiers were killed or injured. In Çemço, guerrillas targeted a reconnaissance drone, which had to withdraw after being hit.

In Metîna, a successful guerrilla intervention prevented the bombing of war positions at Girê Amêdî, where one occupier was shot dead. An attempt by the occupation forces to advance on the area, which was launched hours later, was met with two guerrilla sabotage actions.



Road between Til Temir and Zirgan closed due to Turkish attacks

ANF | TIL TEMİR | 31 OCTOBER 2022

In response to continued attacks by the Turkish army and allied jihadist militias, the road connecting Til Temir and Zirgan (Abu Rasen) has been closed. According to the Asayish, the security authority of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), the closure is necessary to protect the population from escalating attacks by Turkey and its mercenaries. “The occupying forces are trying to expel the indigenous population from their settlement areas by means of warlike aggression. In order not to risk casualties, we appeal to our residents to avoid the road,” said Selman Nûhî, an Asayish officer in charge of Til Temir. Along the contact line, new protective walls made of concrete blocks weighing several tonnes are springing up like mushrooms. Recently, there have been more targeted attacks on vehicles from these positions.

Most recently, on Sunday, several vehicles on the approximately 25-kilometre-long traffic route were fired upon by machine guns. The starting point of the attacks was the occupation zone. Before that, the region was intensively shelled with artillery, large calibres and “small arms” by Turkish-backed jihadists for several days. It is currently unclear when the temporary closure of the road between Til Temir and Zirgan will be lifted.

North of Til Temir is the line of contact with Turkey’s illegal occupation zone. There, preparations for a large-scale attack on the north-eastern Syrian autonomous areas have apparently been underway for days. The connecting road closed by the Asayish runs between the strategic trunk roads 712 and M4 and leads to the self-administered town of Zirgan, which lies east of the already fully occupied town of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain). Since 2019, Turkey has been trying to incorporate both towns into its zone of occupation.



Chemical weapons

KCK: Everybody needs to take action against chemical weapons attacks

ANF | BEHDINAN | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement calling for action by all circles against the use of chemical weapons in the Turkish state's invasion campaign in guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), ongoing since mid-April.

The KCK statement on Thursday includes the following:

“After the HPG recently announced that 17 guerrillas were massacred with chemical weapons in Zap, Metina and Avaşin and published certain documents proving this, the use of chemical weapons by the occupying Turkish army against the guerrilla has been put on the public agenda and has thus become discussed publicly. As a result, a number of sensitive personalities and democratic institutions have started to take an interest in the issue and have expressed their stance on the matter. Among them was the President of the Turkish Medical Association, Şebnem Korur Fincancı. Listening to the voice of conscience and truth, TMA President Fincancı stated that the published documents were serious and that the Turkish army had used chemical weapons against the guerrilla. However, the fascist AKP-MHP government, which commits these crimes against humanity, panicked in the face of the revelations and decided to go after those who put the issue on the agenda. Şebnem Korur Fincancı was targeted and detained as a result.

The detention of members of the free press is also connected to the attempt to prevent the exposure of the crimes and corruption committed by the AKP-MHP, especially the use of chemical weapons. However, the fascist AKP-MHP government, which has been caught red-handed, cannot cover up the crimes against humanity it has committed through its oppression and attempts to silence everybody. Ever since the beginning, the fascist AKP-MHP government and the occupying Turkish army have used chemical weapons in their war against the guerrilla forces. This has been amply documented.

As the Kurdistan Freedom Movement, we have repeatedly stated that the occupying Turkish army has used chemical weapons against the guerrilla. We have also said that everybody needs to be sensitive with regards to this situation. However, the issue at hand has not yet been put on the agenda as much as it should have been. Although some sensitive circles have shown interest in our statements and calls, expressed their stance and tried to send delegations to the battlefield, this issue has so far not been on the agenda enough, which is why the war crimes of the AKP-MHP's have not been exposed. The delegations that came to South Kurdistan [North Iraq] in order to go to the battlefield were prevented by the KDP. Subsequently, the People's Defense Central Headquarters Command recently published some of the documents it had on the use of chemical weapons.

The panicking and angry denial of the fascist AKP-MHP government and its collaborators regarding the use of chemical weapons is an attempt to hide the truth and the result of a psychology of guilt. The fact that the fascist army officials say that there are no chemical weapons in their inventory also serves the purpose of concealing the truth. Neither the Kurdish people nor the democratic institutions and circles believe this. The Iraqi state claimed not to have any chemical weapons in its inventory either, and when the US invaded Iraq, they did not find any chemical weapons. But Saddam Hussein's regime used chemical weapons in Halabja. Therefore, the statements of the fascist and occupying army officials have no value. The Kurdish people know very well the crimes against humanity that the genocidal colonialist Turkish state has committed because they have experienced this reality themselves.

This is not the first time the genocidal colonialist Turkish state and its occupying army have used chemical weapons against the Kurds. The Turkish state has resorted to all kinds of dirty and immoral methods, including the use of chemical weapons, and has committed crimes against humanity in its war against the Kurds for a long time. As a result of the confessions made by those who carried out massacres with chemical weapons, this fact has become known not only to the Kurdish people but to everyone else as well. All of the related documents are known to the public. In this respect, it is necessary to approach the Turkish state and its army on the basis of this historical consciousness.

Throughout its history, the Turkish state has used chemical weapons in many massacres against the Kurds and has not tried to hide this fact. One of the most well-known places where massacres were carried out with chemical weapons is Dersim. In the 1938 campaign against Dersim, chemical weapons were used to carry out a genocide against the Kurds. Thus, a great crime against humanity was committed. In Dersim, those who escaped the massacre and took refuge in the mountains and caves were gassed with chemical gas and thus massacred in the caves. The bones of those massacred with chemical weapons were later found there. The people who committed massacres with chemical weapons in Dersim clearly stated this later. The Turkish state also used chemical weapons in the massacres in Ararat and the Zilan Creek. Since the use of chemical weapons was not banned at that time, the genocidal colonialist Turkish state did not hide this and did not hesitate to take responsibility for it. The Turkish state's only effort was to find a justification for its massacres, which is why it pointed at the Kurdish rebellion.

Today, since the use of chemical weapons is considered as a crime against humanity all over the world and a harsh attitude is taken against those who make use of these weapons, the fascist AKP-MHP government resorts to hiding the use of chemical weapons. Those who reveal this and express their opinion on this issue are targeted and silenced by the AKP-MHP. They attempt to silence those who speak the truth by emphasizing the importance of state, nation and homeland and by fueling a nationalist hysteria. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the voices of truth and to protect those who speak the truth. Just being human is reason enough to stand against this crime against humanity. It is absurd to talk about the humanity of those who do not take this kind of stance.

To date, not only 17 friends but more than 80 freedom fighters have been killed by chemical weapons during the one-year-long war. The occupying Turkish army has also used chemical weapons in [the South Kurdish areas] Werxelê and Tepê Sor. The HPG has made all this public and has provided information on the nature, colors and effects of the weapons used. When this information is taken into consideration, the extent of the crimes against humanity will be better understood. Therefore, the statements of denial made by the fascist army officials are not true. For years, the Turkish army and state have concealed and denied the crimes against humanity and murder networks that they used in the 90s. Only after a lot of time had

passed was it accepted that the facts expressed with regards to this issue, especially the existence of JITEM, were true.

On the other hand, by confiscating the masks and tools provided by the guerrilla to protect themselves against chemical warfare and by preventing the delegations who wanted to go to the battlefield to examine the use of chemical weapons, the KDP has revealed that it is a partner of the anti-Kurdish fascist AKP-MHP government and the occupying Turkish army in their Kurdish genocide and crimes against humanity.

The attitude of the international powers also shows their complicity in the war crimes of the fascist AKP-MHP government. Until today, they have not taken a stance although it is well-known that the Turkish state has used chemical weapons. Although the OPCW is responsible for the investigation of the use of chemical weapons, it has not accepted any applications with regards to this matter, let alone taken a stance. The weapons and technology used for the Kurdish genocide, especially the banned weapons, are provided to the Turkish forces by the US, European and NATO powers. This attitude of the international powers can neither be accepted by the Kurdish people nor by humanity. They must abandon this attitude and stop being complicit in the crimes against humanity committed by the fascist AKP-MHP as a result of its anti-Kurdish hostility. The US, European states and all relevant powers, especially the OPCW and the UN, must take a stance against the war crimes of the Turkish state. Otherwise, they will be considered guilty by our people and by history.

The fascist AKP-MHP government and the occupying army officials aggressively deny the use of chemical weapons due to their own guilt and target those who speak out. This stance of the AKP-MHP is enough to sufficiently explain the truth. If chemical weapons have not been used, then why are those who speak out about it targeted and arrested? By doing so, they want to prevent the truth from being revealed. However, this issue is of great importance, which is why everyone should make an effort to uncover the truth. In order to understand the truth, independent delegations need to go to the battlefield and conduct investigations there. We would like to call on all official and democratic civilian institutions to carry out such an investigation. We are ready to provide all necessary support for the delegations to go to the battlefield and conduct investigations there. The HPG has already announced that they will help the independent delegations to visit the battlefield and conduct investigations.

The anti-Kurdish hostility and the crimes committed as a result of it do not only mean that the AKP-MHP is guilty. The whole country and society are put under suspicion and are thus made partners in the crimes against humanity. From this point of view, not only Kurds but also the democratic forces of Turkey, intellectuals, writers, artists, academics and all sensitive groups must take a stance against the crimes against humanity committed by the AKP-MHP and inform and mobilize society with regard to this issue. The AKP-MHP must be prevented from committing more crimes and must be tried for the many crimes against humanity and genocide it has already carried out. The conscience and future of society can be saved by putting the fascist AKP-MHP government on trial and holding it to account.”

WMA calls for an independent investigation into use of chemical gases against the PKK

ANF | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The World Medical Association (WMA) issued a strong condemnation of the arrest in Turkey of Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı, President of the Turkish Medical Association.

Fincancı was taken into custody in Istanbul on Friday after claims that she made comments about the use of poisonous gas against Kurds in Iraq.

Dr. Frank Ulrich Montgomery, Chair of the WMA Council, said: 'It is totally unacceptable that Dr. Korur Fincancı has been detained and that members of the Turkish Medical Association are being threatened with suspension.'

"The WMA joins those who are calling for an independent investigation into reports that chemical gases were used by the Turkish authorities against the PKK group. These perpetual attacks on members of the Turkish Medical Association are completely unjustified," WMA stated.



Head of Turkish Medical Association jailed after comments on possible use of chemical weapons

ANF | ANKARA | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on October 20 opened an investigation against Turkish Medical Association (TTB) President Şebnem Korur Fincancı because of her comments on a video published by ANF on October 18, showing two PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) members suffering from a chemical attack in Iraq's Kurdistan Region.

The substance of the investigation, accusing Fincancı of "propagandizing for a terrorist organization" and "publicly degrading the Turkish Nation, the state of the Republic of Turkey and its institutions", is constituted by Fincancı's comments to Medya Haber. The head of TTB stated that the involuntary movements of the people seen in the video could occur with the effect of a chemical getting hold of the nervous system and that an effective investigation should be carried out in relation to this if there are allegations that a chemical was used.

Fincancı was taken into custody in Istanbul and taken to Ankara on Wednesday over her comments. After spending the night in police custody, she was referred to Ankara Courthouse in the early morning hours today with a demand for her arrest.

After four hours of procedures at the courthouse, Fincancı was remanded in custody for allegedly “spreading propaganda for a terrorist organization”. She was taken to the Women’s Closed Prison in the Sincan district.



MEP Villumsen submits parliamentary question on Turkey’s possible use of chemical weapons

ANF | 27 OCTOBER 2022

Nikolaj Villumsen, a member of the European Parliament representing the Red-Green Alliance from Denmark, submitted a parliamentary question to the Council asking about the reports and allegations on Turkish use of chemical agents in its war against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The parliamentary question presented by the Danish MP includes the following:

A report from International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, based on a September 2022 mission, raises questions about Turkey’s possible use of chemical agents in warfare.

The report entitled ‘Is Turkey violating the Chemical Weapons Convention? An independent investigation into possible violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Northern Iraq is urgently needed’[1] highlights Turkey’s possible illegal use of chemical agents against Kurdish fighters. This includes the possible use of chlorine gas, and a high-level Turkish military official admitted the actual use of chemical agents in combat operations.

Such use is explicitly prohibited under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction[2].

In light of this, will the Council please clarify:

- 1. When will it discuss calling for an official mission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to explore the allegations?
- 2. What are the possible consequences for an EU-applicant country using chemical weapons?
- 3. Are there any circumstances under which the EU finds the illegal use of chemical warfare agents acceptable, and if so, which circumstances?

- [1]

https://www.ippnw.de/commonFiles/bilder/Frieden/2022_IPPNW_Report_on_possible_Turkish_CWC_violations_in_Northern_Iraq.pdf

- [2] https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVI-3&chapter=26&clang=en



Former commando says he witnessed Turkey using chemical weapons

MEDYANews | 28 OCTOBER 2022

Yannis Vasilis Yaylalı, a former-commando-turned-peace-activist after his mandatory service at the Turkish military in the 1990s, said he had witnessed what he called war crimes during his time in the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK).

Yaylalı was a staunch Turkish nationalist when he was conscripted, and did not know about his Greek roots. As he was serving his mandatory time at the TSK, he was detained by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The former commando [told](#) Mezopotamya that he had witnessed several massacres, torture and war crimes at the time, leading to a transformation in his worldview.

Yaylalı said Turkey had been using chemical weapons against Kurdish fighters since the 1990s. "Turkey used to drop chemical bombs on the area where female guerrillas showered," he said. "There, many woman fighters died from a yellowish gas with a strong odour."

Yaylalı spoke of historic instances of Turkish forces using prohibited chemicals, during the Dersim Massacre of 1938 and "in the 60s and mid-80s, against the Kurdish movement".

"If Iraq forms a commission as promised and calls on the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to fulfil its duty, this time Turkey will get a strong headache," Yaylalı said.

The accusations Yaylalı posed have been voiced before, most recently by a Kurdish historian who [said](#) there was evidence of Turkey purchasing poisonous gas from Germany to use in the Dersim and Zilan massacres.

"The government wants to go to elections with a narrative that it entered no-go zones," Yaylalı said. "Turkey will only withdraw if there is a loud reaction from inside. Or, if international organisations exert pressure."

The former soldier said Turkey carried out more than 200 attacks in six months, which would be "impossible to do without informing NATO".

The government seeks to isolate those voicing concerns over chemical use allegations, Yaylalı continued, pointing to the arrest of Turkish Medical Association chairwoman Şebnem Korur Fincancı and 11 Kurdish journalists earlier in the week.

The People's Defence Forces (HPG) had released video footage showing guerrillas who it said had been caught in a Turkish chemical weapon attack in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) on 18 October.



Families of guerrillas killed by chemical weapons call on international community to speak out

NUJIYAN ADAR | QAMISHLO | 30 OCTOBER 2022

The family of Serdem Agirî (Osman Abdi), who fell a martyr in the chemical weapon attacks carried out by the Turkish army against Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna, condemned the silence surrounding these attacks and called for the relevant institutions to conduct an investigation in the Medya Defense Areas.

The Turkish army, in cooperation with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), is using chemical weapons in the invasion attacks against the Zap, Metîna and Avaşîn regions of the Medya Defense Areas. The HPG announced that banned and chemical weapons have been used at least 2,476 times in the attacks, which have been going on for 6 months.

The HPG announced that 17 guerrillas were killed by chemical weapons in August, September and October alone. Serdem Agirî was one of the guerrillas who died in one of such attacks in Zap on 20 October 2022.

'The KDP is acting against Kurds'

Speaking to ANF, Martyr Serdem Agirî's mother, Hamdiye Ehmed, strongly condemned the KDP and said: "All the Kurdish people are brothers. The KDP should have stood by the Kurdish people. There must be unity for the establishment of a free Kurdistan. The KDP should have sided with the guerrillas. If they are not siding by the Kurdish people and the guerrillas, why do they call themselves Kurds? If they were Kurds, if they defended the interests of Kurdistan and the Kurdish people, they would support the guerrillas. What the KDP did was betrayal."

Hamdiye Ehmed said that the international silence should end.

'The KDP betrayed the guerrillas'

Mihemed Abdi, father of Martyr Serdem Agirî, pointed out that chemical weapons are prohibited by international law, and said: "Turkey knows it has been defeated and resorted to chemical weapons in order to get results."

Noting that the KDP paved the way for the Turkish state to easily pass into the Medya Defense Areas, Abdi said that the KDP seized the masks sent to the guerrillas and said: "If the KDP had not been the enemy, it would not have seized the gas masks for the guerrillas."

Abdi condemned the silence of international institutions and organizations about the use of chemical weapons and underlined that they have not carried out any fact investigation.



Mardin Peace Mothers call on people to attend march against use of chemical weapons in Silopi

ANF | 30 OCTOBER 2022

The Mardin Peace Mothers Assembly called on people to attend the march that will take place in Silopi (province of Şırnak) on 6 November to protest the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish army against the HPG in Zap, Avaşîn and Metina in South Kurdistan.

The Peace Mothers organised a press statement at the HDP Mardin Provincial Building and said that the slogan of the march will be “Humanity against chemical weapons-Li dijî çekên kîmyewî meşa mirovahiye”.

Speaking on behalf of the Mardin Peace Mothers Assembly, Halime Kaya said: “We reject the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish army and we invite everyone to join our march.”

'Let's stop the attacks'

Perihan Altuğ, spokesperson of the Peace Mothers Assembly in Nusaybin, said that mothers are suffering the most and added: “Our children are killed in prisons and everywhere. Both Kurdish children and Turkish children were killed. Our call is to all mothers: let's hold the hand extended by the Peace Mothers, let's stop this persecution. Enough is enough. This march is a peace march, a march for justice, a march for brotherhood. We want to see everyone in Silopi. We do not want war. Let's stop this war, let's end these chemical attacks.”



Iran

Mahsa Amini commemorated at her grave on the 40th day of mourning

ANF | 26 OCTOBER 2022

Kurdish woman Mahsa (Jina) Amini is commemorated at her grave in Seqiz 40 days after she was murdered by the morality police in Tehran.

Despite tight security measures, numerous people gathered at the cemetery and shouted the iconic slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi” (Woman, Life, Freedom) and “Death to the dictator”.

22-year-old Amini was detained by the morality police on September 13 in Tehran on the grounds that she did not cover her head properly. She died in a hospital on September 16, as a result of the torture she was subjected to. There have been mass protests across East Kurdistan and Iran since.

Human rights defenders revealed that security forces threatened Amini’s family with death during the commemoration at her grave.

Despite the crackdown, numerous people gathered in the cemetery where Amini is buried. Images circulated on the social media show that the slogan “Kurdistan will be a graveyard for fascism” was frequently chanted during the commemoration.

In the meantime, there has been broad participation in the strike launched in the cities of Seqiz, Sine, Diwandere, Meriwan and Kamyaran in East Kurdistan.

In the meantime, protests continued in the city of Zahidan in the Sistan Balochistan province. According to non-governmental organizations, at least 93 people were murdered during the protests in the city which started on September 30 after reports that a police officer had raped a young woman.



Iranian forces open fire on people commemorating Mahsa Amini

ANF | SEQIZ | 26 OCTOBER 2022

22-year-old Mahsa (Jina) Amini was detained by the morality police in Tehran on September 13 on the grounds that she did not cover her head properly. She died in a hospital on September 16 as a result of the torture she was subjected to. Mass protests have been taking place across East Kurdistan and Iran since.

Iranian security forces threatened Amini’s family with death at her grave during a commemoration today, the 40th day of mourning, according to human rights defenders.

Despite tight security measures, thousands of people gathered by Amini’s grave. Videos circulated on the social media show people chanting the slogan “Kurdistan will be a graveyard for fascism”. Videos also show Iranian state forces using real bullets and tear gas against demonstrators during the ongoing protests in the city.

People took to the streets in the cities of Mahabad, Sine and Bikaner in East Kurdistan as well. Reports are coming through of clashes sparked by state forces at several locations.



Protests continue in East Kurdistan and Iran

ANF | 28 OCTOBER 2022

There has been a widespread popular uprising since the murder of 22-year-old Mahsa (Jina) Amini in police custody in Tehran on September 16.

The protests escalated in East Kurdistan on October 26, the 40th day after the killing of Amini by torture.

Despite threats and the deadly crackdown by Iranian state forces, thousands of protestors took to the streets.

On Thursday (Oct. 27), protests took place in several cities of East Kurdistan, particularly in the cities of Mahabad, Bokoan, Pirañsar, Serdeşt, Bane, Seqiz, Diwander, Dêwlan, Kamyaran, Sine, Kirmaşan and Ilam.

In Mahabad, state forces are reported to have opened fire on protestors with live bullets. Several state-owned institutions and banks were set on fire by protestors. The Governor's Office came under protestors' control for a while. According to reports, Iranian state forces killed or injured many demonstrators during the protests.

In the city of Bane, the regime forces opened fire on protestors, killing at least two people and injuring many others.

In the city of Diwander, protests took place as mourners marked the deaths of two protestors.

In the city of Xuremawa, Loristan, mourners commemorated a person named Niker Shakeremi 40 days after his murder. While anti-regime slogans were chanted during the protest in the city, regime forces opened fire on protestors, leading to clashes.

Protests resumed in the cities of Birucêrd and Miyandwaw in Loristan.

The regime forces had to retreat in the face of popular resistance in many cities.

Protests were also staged in Keraj, Mashhad, Erak, Shush, Zahidan and many other cities in Iran.

Hundreds of people killed

According to Amnesty International, at least 8 people have been killed since Wednesday evening, most of them in East Kurdistan.

Two Basij members were killed in Amol city, Mazandaran province, where paramilitary Basij forces were deployed.

According to human rights organizations and opposition groups, between 234 and 260 protestors, including 29 minors, have been killed since September 16.

Tens of thousands of people have been detained during the protests that have spread to almost 200 cities.



Mahsa Amini's family under house arrest

ANF | 28 OCTOBER 2022

It is reported that the family of Kurdish woman Mahsa (Jina) Amini, who was murdered by the morality police in Tehran, has been placed under house arrest.

According to Al Arabiya, Iranian authorities have placed Amini's family members under house arrest in Se-qiz. Speaking to The National media outlet, which reports on the Middle East, family member Irfan Murtazayi confirmed the house arrest.

Murtazayi, who resides in South Kurdistan, stated that Amini's parents and brother have been under house arrest since Wednesday.

On Wednesday, despite threats from government forces, thousands of people commemorated Amini at her grave 40 days after her murder. Iranian state forces also threatened to arrest Amini's brother.

"Jina and thousands like her have sacrificed their lives so that the Iranian people can live freely. I hope that the Iranian people will stay on the streets until they reach their goals," Murtazayi said.



At least 253 people, including 34 children and 19 women, killed in ongoing protests in Iran

ANF | 29 OCTOBER 2022

According to information obtained by Iran Human Rights, at least 253 people have been killed by security forces in the nationwide protests so far. Of those, 34 were under 18 years of age but have not all been verified through document evidence. Iran Human Rights is working to obtain confirmation of their ages.

Province breakdown

Deaths have been recorded in 21 provinces: Sistan and Baluchistan: 93 people; Mazandaran: 30 people; Tehran: 25 people; Kurdistan: 23 people; Gilan: 19 people; Western Azerbaijan: 18 people; Kermanshah: 13 people; Alborz: 7 people; Khorasan-Razavi: 4 people; Isfahan: 3 people; Markazi: 2 people; Qazvin: 2 people; Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad: 2 people; Zanjan: 2 people; Eastern Azerbaijan: 2 people; Ardabil: 2 people; Ilam: 2 people; Bushehr: 1 person; Semnan: 1 person; Khuzestan: 1 person; Hamedan: 1 person.

Protesters have been killed in 21 provinces, with the most reported in Sistan and Baluchistan, Mazandaran, Tehran, Kurdistan and Gilan. The highest number of deaths were recorded on 21, 22 and 30 September.

Intensified repression in Kurdistan and Sistan and Baluchistan provinces

In the past two days alone, at least 16 people, including 4 women, were killed by security forces in different cities, particularly Kurdish regions. At the time of writing on Friday, security forces opened fire on protesters in Zahedan. Protests are also taking place in other cities in the province, including Saravan and Iranshahr.

Iran Human Rights warns of the risk of another “Bloody Friday” being repeated in Sistan and Baluchistan provinces. It is investigating reports of security forces firing at protesters in Zahedan today. Those killed today have not been included in the current death count.

Furthermore, bloody crackdowns in Kurdish cities commemorating the 40th day since Mahsa (Jina) Amini’s killing, are ongoing.

Numbers are a “minimum”

The numbers of deaths published are an absolute minimum. Reports of protester killings in the last few days are still being investigated. Iran Human Rights has received a high volume of reports of deaths which it continues to investigate with internet disruptions. The actual number of people killed, therefore, is certainly higher.

The urgent situation of detainees

According to the reports received by Iran Human Rights, there has been a high number of injured people in the last few days with some reported to be in critical condition. Many avoid going to medical centres due to the fear of arrest.

Reports also confirm that detainees have been subjected to physical and mental torture and ill-treatment. Many were under duress to force false televised confessions, with some already aired. Protesters are also being held in unofficial buildings without any monitoring and supervision. Prisons and detention centres are filled over capacity, without access to sanitary facilities. Children under 18 are amongst those detained.

Students continue protests for freedom in Iran and East Kurdistan

ANF | 31 OCTOBER 2022

On 30 October, which marked the 45th day of the protests in East Kurdistan, people took to the streets in numerous cities once again to demand their freedom and rights. The protests were sparked by the torture to death of 22-year-old Kurdish woman Jina Mahsa Amini in the custody of the so-called morality police.

Anti-regime slogans were frequently chanted during demonstrations in cities such as Sine, Serdeşt, Merivan, Piranşar, Kuhdeşt and Bane.

On Saturday, the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC), Hussein Salami, called for an end to the popular uprising. "The demonstrators should not try the patience of the system," the general warned, saying, "Today is the last day of unrest. Do not come to the streets anymore." He said no one would allow the protesters to continue creating insecurity and to turn the country's universities into a "battlefield". Despite Selami's warning, people continued to pour out in the streets at the weekend.

Students from Shiraz University held a rally and announced that this year would be the year to overthrow Iranian religious leader Ali Khamenei. While students of Sadra Islamic Azad often shouted the slogan "Freedom, freedom, freedom", students at Shiraz Azad University said that Ali Khamenei was responsible for the "terrorist" attacks that took place in the city recently.

Students from Islamic Azad University and Pardis University in Tehran chanted the slogan "Death to the dictator".

"We are not leaving Iran; we are taking back Iran" and "This is the last message! The whole establishment is our target", Amir Kabir University students said.

Students at the University of Zanjan, high school students in Sine, Noshirvani University in Babul, Arak University, Azad University in Eslamshahr, Chamran University in Ahvaz, high school students in Marivan, residents of the Kuhdasht city in Loristan province, Imam Reza University in Mashhad, Sardesht University students and students in many other cities took to the streets and took part in the ongoing protests.



Iranian regime plans public trials in Tehran

ANF | 31 OCTOBER 2022

Iran's dictatorial mullah regime wants to put some 1,000 people on public trial in Tehran over the popular uprising against the ruling clergy. The state news agency Irna reported that the suspects had taken part in "subversive actions" and would therefore have to stand trial. These included attacks on security forces, arson and other charges. Accordingly, the trials will take place in a revolutionary court and begin this week.

"Those who intend to confront and undermine the regime depend on foreigners and will be punished according to legal standards," said Iranian judiciary chief Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejei. He was implying that demonstrators would be charged with collaborating with foreign governments.

Representatives of the regime repeatedly claimed that "foreign enemies" had fomented the unrest in the country and spoke of a "conspiracy" by the US, Britain, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Ejei said the prosecution wanted to distinguish between "angry Iranians" who had merely vented their displeasure and those who wanted to overthrow the government.

Hundreds dead and thousands arrested

The revolt in Iran began more than six weeks ago and was ignited by the violent death of 22-year-old Kurdish woman Jina Mahsa Amini in the custody of the Iranian morality police. Since then, tens of thousands of people, led by women and youth, have been demonstrating across the country for the dismantling of the regime and a change of system. The central slogan of the new freedom movement, which unites all ethnic groups, genders, classes and social strata in Iran, is: "Jin, Jiyan, Azadî" [Woman, Life, Freedom]. Security forces repeatedly use live ammunition and tear gas against those involved in the uprising. According to human rights groups, hundreds of people have died so far and about 14,000 have been arrested.

Hengaw: Protests and arrests in Kurdistan

On Saturday, the notorious Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) threatened to crack down even harder on demonstrators. "Today is the last day of unrest. Don't come to the streets anymore," IRGC commander Hussein Salami said, demanding an end to the revolt. But the opponents of the regime were not intimidated. Especially at universities and schools, there were large protests again. Mass protests in public places and parks were reported in the Kurdish cities of Mahabad, Seqiz (Saqqez), Bikan, Serdeşt, Piranshahr, Diwandere, Kirmaşan (Kermanshah), and in Sine (Sanandaj) students were attacked by IRGC troops with live ammunition. The Kurdish human rights organisation Hengaw reported that there were numerous arrests. Several of those concerned were literally abducted, and in many cases their whereabouts are unclear. In addition, Iranian media reported that the police were using drones to control the system-critical protests. According to the Tasnim news agency, which is considered the mouthpiece of the IRGC, the drones are supposed to help the special forces, in particular, to observe events more effectively.

Baerbock: Put Revolutionary Guard on EU terror list

Meanwhile, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock has raised the possibility of classifying the IRGC as a terrorist organisation because of the violent crackdown by Iranian regime forces on the protest movement. Last week, she made it clear that “we will initiate another package of sanctions, that we will examine how we can also list the Revolutionary Guard as a terrorist organisation”, said the Green politician in an interview broadcast on Sunday by the ARD programme “Report from Berlin”.

In 2019, under then-President Donald Trump, the USA classified the IRGC as a terrorist organisation. However, the organisation is not on a corresponding list of the European Union. Such a classification would allow EU states to freeze the Revolutionary Guard’s assets in the EU. According to Baerbock, the EU is currently preparing further punitive measures against Iran.

The Revolutionary Guard is the elite unit of Iran’s armed forces and far more important than the classical army. It reports directly to the “Supreme Leader”, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say in all strategic matters. The unit also has great political and economic influence in Iran.



Femicide

Woman killed in Kızıltepe

ANF | MARDIN | 30 OCTOBER 2022

Nurhan İlhan, 45, was found murdered in her own home in the village of Meskeynter (Eşme) in the Kızıltepe district of Mardin.

Nurhan İlhan, who lived with her two brothers, was taken to the Mardin State Hospital morgue for autopsy.

It was stated that Nurhan İlhan had beating marks on various parts of her body and her jewellery was not on her.



Ecocide

Iraq's mighty river Tigris is drying up

ANF | 31 OCTOBER 2022

The Tigris river is said to have watered the biblical Garden of Eden and helped give birth to civilisation itself. But today it is dying. Human activity and climate change have choked its once mighty flow through Iraq. The country may be oil-rich but it is plagued by poverty after decades of war and by droughts and desertification.

The Tigris, the lifeline connecting the storied cities of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra, has been choked by dams, most of them upstream in Turkey, and falling rainfall. An [AFP](#) video journalist travelled along the river's 1,500-kilometre (900-mile) course through Iraq, from the rugged Kurdish north to the Gulf in the south, to document the ecological disaster that is forcing people to change their ancient way of life.

The Tigris' journey through Iraq begins in the mountains of autonomous Kurdistan, near the borders of Turkey and Syria, where local people raise sheep and grow potatoes.

"Our life depends on the Tigris," said farmer Pibo Hassan Dolmassa, 41, wearing a dusty coat, in the town of Faysh Khabur. "All our work, our agriculture, depends on it.

"Before, the water was pouring in torrents," he said, but over the last two or three years "there is less water every day".

Iraq's government and Kurdish farmers accuse Turkey, where the Tigris has its source, of withholding water in its dams, dramatically reducing the flow into Iraq.

According to Iraqi official statistics, the level of the Tigris entering Iraq has dropped to just 35 percent of its average over the past century.

Baghdad regularly asks Ankara to release more water.

The World Bank warned last year that much of Iraq is likely to face a similar fate.

"By 2050 a temperature increase of one degree Celsius and a precipitation decrease of 10 percent would cause a 20 percent reduction of available freshwater," it said.

"Under these circumstances, nearly one third of the irrigated land in Iraq will have no water."

The International Organization for Migration said last month that "climate factors" had displaced more than 3,300 families in Iraq's central and southern areas in the first three months of this year.

“Climate migration is already a reality in Iraq,” the IOM said.



Human Rights Violations

Eleven journalists detained in seven cities

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2022

Eleven journalists were detained in simultaneous raids in Ankara, Istanbul, Van, Amed (tr. Diyarbakır), Urfa, Mersin and Mardin. Those detained are the editor-in-chief of the Mezopotamya News Agency (MA), Diren Yurtsever, MA correspondents Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Zemo Ağgöz, Berivan Altan, Hakan Yalçın, Emrullah Acar and Ceylan Şahinli, and JinNews correspondents Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer.

Secrecy order

A secrecy order has been imposed on the investigation file. It remains unclear what the journalists are accused of. The investigation is being conducted by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. All those detained in today's operation are to be taken to Ankara. In addition, JinNews reporter Derya Ren was arrested at her home in Amed as part of another case.

Assaults and threats

The detentions were accompanied by assaults and threats. Pictures of journalists murdered in the 1990s were confiscated from the editorial office of the Mezopotamya news agency in Ankara. The picture of the Kurdish journalist and Jineolojî researcher Nagihan Akarsel, who was murdered by the Turkish secret service MIT in Sulaymaniyah on 4 October, was even torn up by the police.

Special police units smashed the doors of the journalists' homes with battering rams and pointed assault rifles at them. Journalist Berivan Altan and her colleagues who were detained with her had their hands tied behind their backs and had to wait for a long time lying on their stomachs. It was reported that the police officers sat on the journalists, pushed them to the ground, insulted them and called them names. One police officer threatened Berivan Altan, saying, “I know what I will do to you, you will see when we leave here.” Others were insulted and asked if they were Turks under threat of weapons.

“The free press will not be deterred by these attacks”

Journalists' associations protest against the attack on press freedom. The Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association (DFG) said: “The detained journalists from MA and JinNews are members of our association. They were detained in a raid on their homes in the morning. The MA's office in Ankara was also searched as part

of the operation. We condemn this operation aimed at silencing journalists. The free press will not be deterred by these attacks.”

The Basın-İş press union, which is organised in the DISK trade union federation, said: “Journalism is not a crime, release our colleagues immediately!”

The Mezopotamya Women Journalists' Platform (MKGP) said: “The intimidation policy against the press is an attempt to suppress women journalists. We said it yesterday and we say it today: you cannot silence journalism. This policy of repression and intimidation will not achieve its goal. We will not stop writing the truth. Take your hands off the journalists. The judiciary and arrests will not make the women journalists take even one step back.”

The Union of Journalists in Turkey also expressed solidarity with those taken into custody.



13 people detained in Mersin

ANF | MERSIN | 25 OCTOBER 2022

On the orders of the Mersin Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, the Turkish police stormed a whole series of flats in Mersin. At least 13 people were detained on charges of “propaganda for a terrorist organisation” and “membership in a terrorist organisation”, meaning the PKK. Those detained were taken to the Mersin police station.

For trials like this, sharing reports on chemical weapons use or other issues critical of Turkey on social media is enough. If convicted, those persecuted could face long prison sentences.



16-year-old ill-treated and detained in village raid in Yüksekova

ANF | HAKKARI | 26 OCTOBER 2022

Since 25 October, a large-scale military operation has been taking place around the villages of Sorê and Zêvkan near Yüksekova district of Hakkari. On Tuesday, 16-year-old shepherd M.A. was detained by soldiers when he was grazing his animals near the village of Sorê. His phone was forcibly taken away, he was searched and dragged into an armoured vehicle based on pictures on the phone, where he was ill-treated. In the evening, he was released in Yüksekova. Fearing the army, the doctors at the hospital refused to document the boy's injuries.

The governor of Hakkari declared the region, including its villages, a “special security zone” on Monday, limited to 15 days so far. The villages and hamlets affected by the military operation are Tilorana Jor, Tilorana Jêr, Yêkmal'a Jêr, Pagê, Kuçe, Hirmin, Mitirban, Meşkan, Mûşan, Kendalok and Wargenima.



Female journalists mistreated during detention

ANF | 26 OCTOBER 2022

On Tuesday, eleven journalists were taken into custody in simultaneous raids against Kurdish media in Turkey on the orders of the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. A ban on lawyers was imposed for the first 24 hours after the arrests. Those detained have been able to speak to their legal advisors at the Ankara police headquarters today.

Berivan Altan, a correspondent for the MA (Mezopotamya Ajansi) news agency, sent a message of thanks through her legal advisor to all those who are showing solidarity with her and her colleagues. She reported that she was handcuffed behind her back and abused during her arrest. Before the police officers involved entered her flat, they stood outside the door for a long time. When she was taken away, she was told that her head would be pushed down and that she should not make any trouble. As she refused to bow her head, force was used.

During the transport to the police station, the accompanying police officers were asked by telephone to forward the video recordings of the arrest. The footage was published shortly afterwards on Twitter by the Ankara police directorate as an “operation against the terrorist organisation PKK/KCK”. Apparently, there is a state interest in showing Kurdish women with their heads bowed. A similar procedure took place when the HDP MP Semra Güzel was arrested in Istanbul at the beginning of September. The pictures of the Kurdish politician were staged in the media and spread thousands of times.

On the other hand, MA Editorial Director Diren Yurtsever told her legal counsel that when her flat in Istanbul was searched, books, magazines and newspapers were confiscated as alleged evidence. As she was being taken away, a police officer reportedly said to a neighbouring shopkeeper, “Terrorists live here.” During transport to the Istanbul police station, she was subjected to sexist insults and threats. During a health check in hospital, which is common in Turkey after arrests, a policeman called her a “studied terrorist”. When she insisted that the psychological violence she had suffered be included in the medical certificate, a policeman said: “You talk about psychological violence, but now the physical torture will begin, you'll see.”

At the police station, officers tried to photograph Yurtsever with her hands tied in front of a Turkish flag. She resisted and the police said it was a normal procedure. In the end, she was photographed without a flag.

The detained journalists are Diren Yurtsever, editor-in-chief of the Mezopotamya News Agency (MA), MA correspondents Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Zemo Ağgöz, Berivan Altan, Hakan Yalçın, Emrullah

Acar and Ceylan Şahinli, and JinNews correspondents Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer. Mehmet Günhan, a former MA intern, was arrested at his home in Manisa. All the accused are or have been working for the MA's Ankara office in the past.

Journalist Zemo Ağgöz is on maternity leave and could not breastfeed her 45-day-old baby until five hours after the arrest, when the infant could be brought to the police station after lawyer intervention.

The journalists are accused of incitement of the people because of their reporting. In recent days, MA has frequently reported on the war crimes committed by the Turkish army through the use of chemical weapons in Kurdistan. A secrecy order was imposed in the case, and the specific charges are unclear. Those detained had no access to legal counsel for 24 hours, and the order was justified by the serious “nature of the offence”. According to the Ankara Police Directorate, three other journalists are being sought. The arrests were ordered by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. All those detained were taken to the Ankara police headquarters.

The simultaneous arrests were accompanied by assaults and threats. The editorial office of the Mezopotamya news agency in Ankara was searched for six hours. Five computers, two hard drives, a microphone, a telephone, calendars, books, newspapers, magazines, a newspaper archive from the past thirty years and pictures of journalists murdered in the 1990s were confiscated. A picture of the Kurdish journalist and Jineoloji researcher Nagihan Akarsel, who was murdered by the Turkish secret service MIT in Sulaymaniyah on 4 October, was torn up by the police.



TTB Central Council Chair Fincancı taken into custody

ANF | ANKARA | 26 OCTOBER 2022

Şebnem Korur Fincancı, President of the Central Council of the Turkish Medical Association (TTB), was taken into custody in Ankara, a few days after saying that the Turkish state's chemical weapons attacks should be investigated.

In a statement on Twitter, the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TİHV) said: “TTB President and Board Member of our Foundation Prof. Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı was taken into custody on an unacceptable basis. She should be released immediately.”

From the statement, Prof. Fincancı is under investigation for “propaganda for a terrorist organisation” and “publicly degrading the Turkish Nation, the state of the Republic of Turkey and its institutions.”

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office also requested from the court to end Fincancı's duty as the Chairman of the TTB Central Council and to elect a new president.

Background

After learning of the investigation against her, Prof. Fincancı said: “I stated that these involuntary movements could occur with the effect of a chemical getting hold of the nervous system and that an effective investigation should be carried out in relation to this if there were allegations that a chemical had been used. I stated that if there were deaths, it was necessary to carry out a medical investigation according to the Minnesota Protocol and that it is compulsory that the investigation should be carried out by independent institutions, since this is considered as a war crime in the scope of the Geneva Convention... Opening an investigation to the one who is saying ‘an investigation should be made’ gives the impression of concealing a crime... This investigation is meant to be an intimidation for the whole society.”



New 24-hour extension of custody period for Kurdish journalists

ANF | ANKARA | 27 OCTOBER 2022

Within the scope of the investigation carried out by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office, following house raids carried out on Tuesday morning, Mesopotamia Agency (MA) editor-in-chief Diren Yurtsever, MA correspondents Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Berivan Altan, Hakan Yalçın, Emrullah Acar and Ceylan Şahinli, JINNEWS journalists Habibe Eren and Öznur Mehmet Günhan, who worked as a trainee reporter in the Ankara office of MA, were taken into custody.

After the journalists were detained, a decision was made to restrict the file. In addition, a 24-hour lawyer ban was imposed on the allegation of “the nature of the crime”. The prosecutor’s office once again extended the detention period by an extra 24 hours.

Mother of 45-day-old baby sent to house arrest

Journalist Zemo Ağgöz, whose statement was taken at the prosecutor’s office on Wednesday, was released under house arrest.

The Mezopotamya Agency journalist has a 45-day-old baby and was eventually released under house arrest and judicial control.



Professor Fincancı: Together will overcome this smear campaign

ANF | 27 OCTOBER 2022

Turkish Medical Association (TTB) Central Council Chair, Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı, was targeted for her statements regarding the need for an investigation into allegations of Turkey's use of chemical weapons against HPG guerrillas in the Kurdistan Region. She was taken into custody on Wednesday morning on charges of "terrorist propaganda", and appeared at the Ankara Anti-Terror Branch Directorate.

Professor Fincancı, who was given a 24-hour custody order and is expected to be brought to the Ankara Courthouse for a statement to the prosecutor's office this morning, sent a message through her lawyers.

She said that she would explain her views with scientific evidence, and thanked the public for showing solidarity.

Fincancı said in her message: "Dear fellow travellers, I am sorry that you are faced with this surrealistic situation. However, I know that we will overcome this surrealistic process with solidarity. I was going to convey the scientific opinion process to you with its resources, but I did not have the opportunity. When this process is over, let's hold a meeting on evidence.

You are definitely very tired and, unfortunately, I also contributed to this. Together we will overcome this smear campaign. With solidarity, I look forward to the days when we will establish a humane health system together."



Cebrail Gündoğdu tortured by police in Menemen sent to prison

ANF | İZMİR | 27 OCTOBER 2022

Cebrail Gündoğdu, who was detained by the Turkish police on 22 October in Izmir's Menemen district, was sent to prison. Gündoğdu, who was tortured by the police after he was detained, used his right to remain silent in the police station due to the torture and ill-treatment he suffered.

Gündoğdu was brought to the courthouse in reverse handcuffs on Wednesday at the prosecutor's request for his arrest.

Gündoğdu talked about the torture and ill-treatment he suffered in the police station at the Criminal Judgeship of Peace on Duty. He said that he did not know why he was detained because there was a confidentiality order in his file, and demanded his acquittal.

Gündoğdu's lawyers demanded that the marks of assault found on Gündoğdu's body and face be recorded in the report and a criminal complaint be filed against those responsible.

The judge, rejecting the lawyers' demands, sent Gündoğdu to prison.



Police attack people protesting in solidarity with Fincancı outside courthouse in Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 27 OCTOBER 2022

The Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on October 20 opened an investigation against Turkish Medical Association (TTB) President Şebnem Korur Fincancı because of her comments on a video published by ANF on October 18, showing two PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) members suffering from a chemical attack in Iraq's Kurdistan Region.

The substance of the investigation, accusing Fincancı of "propagandizing for a terrorist organization" and "publicly degrading the Turkish Nation, the state of the Republic of Turkey and its institutions", is constituted by Fincancı's comments to Medya Haber. The head of TTB stated that the involuntary movements of the people seen in the video could occur with the effect of a chemical getting hold of the nervous system and that an effective investigation should be carried out in relation to this if there are allegations that a chemical was used.

Fincancı was taken into custody in Istanbul and taken to Ankara on Wednesday over her comments. After spending the night in police custody, she was referred to Ankara Courthouse in the early morning hours today with a demand for her arrest.

Representatives of several labour and professional organizations were prevented by the police as they gathered outside the courthouse to show solidarity with Fincancı. Driving journalists away, the police attacked the crowd using violence.

Members of the Confederation of Public Labourer's Union (KESK), the Trade Union of Public Employees in Health and Social Services (SES) and students were violently detained by the police.

It is reported that Döne Gevher from the KESK, Selma Güngör from the TTB, SES Women's Secretary General Gönül Adıbelli and Helin Çakır, a member of the Medical Students Commission (TÖK), were detained.

Activists who later gathered in Strasbourg Street made a short statement.

Emin Koromaz, chair of the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), emphasized the importance of fighting together against oppression and unlawfulness.

“As labour and professional organizations, we are here to monitor the court process. The judiciary and law-enforcement should stop acting like a tool of the government. Repression cannot intimidate us, we will fight against unlawfulness to the very end,” Koromaz said.



Bern Cantonal Parliament votes to have official notifications in Kurdish

ANF | BERN | 28 OCTOBER 2022

Bern Kurdish Cultural Association, Bern Alevi Cultural Association and KUTUSCH (Kurdish and Turkish-Swiss Solidarity Association) acted jointly and presented the bill, which was prepared as a result of the signatures they gathered in the Bern Canton, to the parliament.

Before the bill was presented, Kurdish activist Yeşim Ekici gave an informative speech about it.

After Yeşim Ekici and other parties and groups' speeches, the vote took place.

The bill was passed with 64 yes, 6 no and 3 abstentions. After the positive result of the vote, a group of Kurds who followed the debate thanked the parliament with a strong applause.



Lawsuit to remove Şebnem Korur Fincancı from office

ANF | 28 OCTOBER 2022

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has prepared a lawsuit for the dismissal of Central Council of the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) Chair, Şebnem Korur Fincancı, who was arrested on 27 October for demanding an independent investigation into chemical attacks by the Turkish army.

The Office of the Chief Prosecutor requested the dismissal of Fincancı and the members of the Presidency of the Central Council.



No Kurdish elective courses but religious classes in Van

ANF | VAN | 28 OCTOBER 2022

The AKP-MHP government, which has built its Kurdish policy on violence and repression in every area where Kurds live, with its war policies since it came to power, continues to abuse the Kurdish language and identity.

The AKP government, which made various promises before each election but embraced war policies again and again after winning it, announced last year that elective courses in Kurdish would begin in secondary schools. The government said that they will start these courses in Kurdish, so to end demands for education in the mother tongue, President Erdoğan said “We have solved the Kurdish problem, there is no such thing as the Kurdish problem anymore.”

However, in the two years that have passed, it has been revealed once again that the AKP is not sincere about this issue and uses it only as election propaganda. In Van, elective courses cannot be given in Kurdish. A list of religious lessons is left in front of Kurdish children who request elective courses in Kurdish. The parents who applied for the course were told: “For now, our conditions are not suitable for this, apply again next year”. Except for one school in Van, elective courses in Kurdish are not allowed in any other school.

Kurdish elective course only in one school

Speaking on the subject, Eğitim Sen Van Branch President Murat Atabay, said that the education trade union defends the right of the Kurds to education in their mother tongue. The union has pointed out the mistake of teaching Kurdish as an elective course from the very beginning. Atabay added that they also oppose the government’s exploitation of this situation by making it an election propaganda issue. “Every time the AKP come out and make promises to society in this direction, they mislead people and do not implement what they promise. There are currently no elective courses in Kurdish in Van, except for one school.”

Noting that children are forced to take religious lessons despite their option for Kurdish classes at schools, Atabay said: “They impose compulsory religious preference classes. We have been following this issue for a long time. They offer prepared lessons to the children and guide them by saying ‘Choose this, choose that’. Schools do not appoint Kurdish teachers and create obstacles to students’ choice. Children and parents who choose Kurdish are told that there are no conditions for running the course.”

Atabay continued: “Last year, we wrote to the Provincial Directorate of National Education and the Ministry of National Education. We warned them about the fact that there are pressures put on children to choose certain classes. Religious classes were imposed last year. The AKP government, the Governor’s Office, the Provincial and District Directorates of National Education have made optional religious courses compulsory. Teacher appointments are made immediately. It is a very serious issue. We defend education in our mother tongue. We advocate mother tongue education, not elective courses. We will have a serious follow-up in the coming months.”



9 detained in political genocide operation in Mersin

ANF | MERSIN | 28 OCTOBER 2022

The chief public prosecutor's office in Mersin ordered the arrest of eleven people for "spreading propaganda for a terrorist organisation", meaning the PKK. According to information so far, the police stormed the flats of the accused and detained nine people. They are being held at the Mersin police station. On Tuesday, 13 people had been detained in Mersin on the same charge.

For terror cases like these, sharing reports of chemical weapons use or other issues critical of Turkey on social media is enough. If convicted, those persecuted could face long prison sentences.



No justice for Roboski for 11 years

ANF | ANKARA | 28 OCTOBER 2022

Members of the Justice for Roboski Initiative made a press statement in front of the Human Rights Association (IHD) Ankara office to mark the 130th month after the massacre in which Turkish fighter jets killed 34 people, 19 of whom were minors, in the Roboski village in the Uludere district in Şırnak province on 28 December 2011 night.

"The trial of perpetrators would mark a threshold to make sure that similar incidents will never take place again, and geography is not destiny," IHD Ankara Branch Co-chair Fatin Kanat said.

Kanat spoke about the judicial process regarding the massacre, saying, "The Roboski Massacre is an 11-year-old open wound caused by a persistent policy of impunity. For the last 11 years, state authorities have remained silent, and there has been no justice. The last application submitted by the families has been pending in the Constitutional Court for two years."

"Like the unsolved murders in the 1990s, the responsibility of officials is known but a veil has been cast on all murders and massacres. Promoting human rights, peace, justice, ending impunity and ensuring the accountability of those responsible would be a threshold to preventing similar incidents. Justice for Roboski is the key to opposing borders and to promote peace, democracy and a solution," Kanat stated.

Kanat pointed out that those responsible for the massacre were protected by the state. He continued, "The judiciary took side with the rulers and the system against those oppressed, murdered and the victims. We can put an end to the injustice and impunity that developed after Roboski by coming together, struggling,

not making people forget and building a system for peoples. The existence of wars, massacres and politics that do not seek a solution leads to hunger, economic chaos, expensiveness, war, injustice and lawlessness.”



Nine journalists sent to prison

ANF | ANKARA | 29 OCTOBER 2022

Diren Yurtsever, Editor-in-Chief of the Mezopotamya Agency (MA), MA reporters Berivan Altan, Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Hakan Yalçın, Ceylan Şahinli, Emrullah Acar, JINNEWS reporters Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer and Mehmet Günhan, who worked as an intern for a while, who were taken into custody on 25 October. They were arrested after giving their statement to the prosecution at Ankara Courthouse.

The news as well as their social media posts were made the subject of accusations.

The prosecutor's office announced his decision 5 hours later and referred MA Editors Diren Yurtsever, MA reporters Berivan Altan, Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Hakan Yalçın, Ceylan Şahinli, Emrullah Acar, and JINNEWS reporters Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer to the court with a request for arrest.

Mehmet Günhan, who was a trainee at MA for a while, was referred to the court with a request of judicial control.

9 journalists remanded in custody

MA editor, Diren Yurtsever, MA reporters Berivan Altan, Deniz Nazlım, Selman Güzelyüz, Hakan Yalçın, Ceylan Şahinli, Emrullah Acar, and JINNEWS reporters Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer were arrested on charges of “membership in a terrorist organization”.

Mehmet Günhan, on the other hand, was released on judicial control and a ban on leaving the country.

The families and colleagues of the journalists waiting in front of the courthouse protested the decision with the slogans “Free press cannot be silenced”.



Nine detained during house raids in Cizre

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 29 OCTOBER 2022

Nine people were taken into custody in the northern Kurdish district of Cizre on Saturday. The people concerned, among them activists from the structures of the Kurdish youth movement, were taken into custody as part of an “operation” by the Special Operations Department. The raids were carried out by police special counter-terrorism units.

Those detained are Hozan Gökalp, Tatar Gökalp, Rıdvan Türel, Nurullah Kurami, Recep Turan, Goğan Geçgel, Burhan Macak, Ahmet Türüg and Ceger Cagini. The police did not give any information on the reason for the operation. The detainees were taken to the district police station in Cizre for questioning.

The district of Cizre in the province of Şırnak is considered a stronghold of the Kurdish resistance. In the local elections in March 2019, the city hall of the city was entrusted to the HDP with 76.99 per cent of the votes. Before that, a state-appointed trustee ruled Cizre for two and a half years. A few months before he took office, Ankara had the city extensively destroyed in the course of a military siege. Hundreds of people were killed; at least 177 people died in the “death basements of Cizre” alone. Since October 2019, Cizre has again been under trustee administration.

The appointment of so-called trustees instead of democratically elected mayors has been used by the Turkish state as a weapon against local Kurdish self-government since 2014. Tomorrow, Sunday, a music festival organised by the trustee and governor will take place in Cizre. Government officials from Ankara are also set to be there. For days, the police and military have been working flat out to turn the city into a fortress. The Kurdish youth movement assumes that today’s arrests are related to planned protests against the state event.



Police throw a bullet at HDP Şırnak MP Hasan Özgüneş

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 30 OCTOBER 2022

The Turkish police, who are not new to attacks against the People’s Democratic Party (HDP) deputies, went a step further on Saturday.

On the anniversary of the appointment of a trustee to the Cizre Municipality, an extremely dangerous development involving a direct “death threat” took place during a press conference attended by HDP Deputies Hasan Özgüneş and Nuran İmir. During the press conference, held despite the police blockade, a bullet was thrown by a police at HDP Şırnak Deputy Hasan Özgüneş.

In the videos recorded, it is clearly seen that it was a police officer who throw the bullet on the HDP deputy.

Previous attack

On the fringes of a planned demonstration to mark the anniversary of the beginning of the international conspiracy of 9 October 1998, the Turkish police violently attacked parliamentarians and media workers in the Yüksekova district of Hakkari on Sunday. HDP MP Habip Eksik was punched in the face and dragged along the ground, suffering a bleeding nose. His parliamentary group colleague Sait Dede was also attacked.

The Kurdish politician suffered a double leg fracture due to targeted blows with batons. He was also injured by blows to the face. He underwent urgent surgery.



Journalist Zeynep Kuray released under condition of judicial control

ANF | ISTANBUL | 30 OCTOBER 2022

ANF journalist Zeynep Kuray has been released after being held in Istanbul police custody for 24 hours. The release was ordered on Saturday by an on-duty court in the Çağlayan Palace of Justice, after being questioned by the public prosecutor's office. She was released on condition of judicial control.

Until a new decision is taken, Kuray will have to report to the police every month and is not allowed to leave the country.

Zeynep Kuray was arrested on Friday while covering the "Justice Vigil" organised by relatives of ill political prisoners in Istanbul. The journalist had been harassed by male officers and dragged with her hands tied behind her back from the square in front of the Palace of Justice where the vigil had taken place. The police also became violent towards two other media workers. In addition to Zeynep Kuray.



Journalists arrested kept in solitary confinement in Sincan No. 1 High Security Prison

ANF | ANKARA | 31 OCTOBER 2022

Nine journalists from Mesopotamia Agency (MA) and JINNEWS, who were violently taken into custody on 25 October as part of the Ankara-based investigation, were taken to Sincan Prison on 29 October, after being charged with "membership in a terrorist organization" due to their journalism activities.

MA Editor-in-Chief Diren Yurtsever and journalists Berivan Altan and Ceylan Şahinli, JINNEWS reporters Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer are being held in Sincan Women's Closed Prison.

MA reporters Deniz Nazlım, Emrullah Acar, Selman Güzelyüz and Hakan Yalçın were taken to Sincan No. 1 High Security Prison.

The journalists are kept in solitary confinement.



Police take fingerprints of the entire population in Gever

ANF | HAKKARI | 31 OCTOBER 2022

The province of Hakkari (Colemêrg in Kurdish) borders with the Medya Defense Areas and is a stronghold of the Kurdish resistance. In particular, the district town of Gever (Yüksekova) repeatedly made headlines for the revolutionary resistance of its population.

The Turkish state deployed tens of thousands of its soldiers, paramilitaries and secret service agents in the region which is now also known as an "open prison". As if this were not enough, the Turkish colonial state has gone one step further and has begun to take the fingerprints of the entire population of Gever and Hakkari.

Entire population is recorded

As part of the "My Police Compass" project, the police headquarters in Gever have started to take fingerprints from all family members in Gever. Police forces began this practice in August on family members with disabilities, under the absurd excuse that they would be better able to find them if something happened to them. That this was just a pretext became clear when fingerprints were taken also to all minors in September before finally being extended to the entire population in October.

Hakkari is a counterinsurgency laboratory and a focus of resistance

Talking to ANF, HDP Hakkari MP Sait Dede, criticized the recording as illegal. Dede pointed out that Hakkari is one of the centers of counterinsurgency, annihilation and denial of the Kurdish people. However, the people of the region have never given up resisting oppression and have always resisted with dignity.

People are punished with poverty

Sait Dede said that every regime in Turkey has targeted this region and added: “A large part of Hakkari Province and its county towns have been declared prohibited zones, making it impossible for people to engage in agriculture and animal husbandry. Trade at the border crossings cannot take place either. People are punished with poverty. The main reason for this is that these people do not give up their political stance and keep their own will. Our people have never and never will bow to any economic or political embargo.”

18 civilians murdered by security forces in five years

Recalling that 18 civilians, mostly minors, have been killed by state forces in Hakkari over the past five years, Dede said: “The only thing the state did was to protect the killers. We are dealing with a regime that does not see itself bound by any law or rule.”

Hakkari as a pilot region

Regarding the recording of the population of Gever, Dede said: “Recent events show that the province of Hakkari is being turned into a pilot region. All citizens are being fingerprinted in violation of the law, the constitution and international conventions. It’s not enough to surround a town with police stations, set up checkpoints at every turn, it’s not enough to evacuate villages, close alpine pastures, ban trade, drive armoured vehicles through the population at full speed, it’s not enough to blockade villages and lock people in their homes for days, it is not enough to imprison elected officials, drag them along the ground and mistreat them. Now, the fingerprints of the entire population are being taken.”

First the children, then everyone

Dede underlined that the law describes in detail how and by whom fingerprints can be taken, how this data is to be stored and how it is to be destroyed. “Article 5 of the Law on the Duties and Powers of the Police makes it unlawful to go from house to house and take fingerprints. The state even violates its own laws. The law provides for consent for the collection of fingerprints. The police claim to have received this consent. They move into neighbourhoods with tanks and heavy weapons, take fingerprints and then claim people freely gave consent. Let them set up a table in the market, see how many people will come and voluntarily give them their fingerprints.”

Interview

Bese Hozat: The only way to overthrow the fascist government is struggle

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2022

An interview with Besê Hozat, KCK co-Chair, on Medya Haber about the latest developments in Kurdistan, the Middle East and the world, including the international attempts to justify Abdullah Öcalan's prolonged imprisonment, the importance of the guerrilla's resistance in South Kurdistan against Turkey's genocide policy, the KDP's collaboration with Turkey, the significance of the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' for the upcoming Turkish elections, the legitimate goals of the uprising in East Kurdistan and Iran, the election of the new Iraqi President and Turkey's alliance with al-Nusra against the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria:

The isolation of the Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan continues. The CPT [European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment] has recently made a statement regarding its last visit to the Turkish prison island Imrali. At the same time, the Kurdish people and their friends around the world continue to take a clear stance against the isolation. How do you evaluate the isolation and the international protests against it?

First of all, I would like to salute the resistance of Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. He has been putting up great resistance for 24 years. A comprehensive war is being waged against Leader Apo. Imrali is a torture system. This isolation is not only limited to the last 5 or 6 years. There has been a terrible system of isolation, oppression and torture in Imrali for 24 years. The CPT, the EU, the Council of Europe and the ECHR [European Court of Human Rights] are also involved in this. They have been pursuing a hypocritical policy from the beginning and, accordingly, know everything that is going on in Imrali. Therefore, they themselves are responsible for Imrali. Imrali is an international system. The USA, England and Germany are the ones who established it. Western countries in general are responsible for this system. The US, Britain and Mossad captured our Leadership [Abdullah Öcalan] and handed him over to Turkey, which was given the role of a guardian. Turkey is implementing a torture system in Imrali. With the Imrali system, the whole Kurdish society and the society of Turkey are subjected to a system of torture and oppression.

What is happening in Imrali is complete fascism. Today, this has spread all over Kurdistan, Turkey and the Middle East. All international powers know what is going on in Imrali. Recently, the CPT visited Imrali and said that they would release a report in 6 months. Why will you only publish your report in 6 months? Then, after another 6 months, they will ask for explanations from Turkey. That makes one year in total. This shows that they are gradually extending this period. They have been talking about disciplinary penalties for more than 2 years and have not allowed lawyers and family members to go to Imrali. Disciplinary penalties are a very deliberate policy in order not to have to apply international laws. This policy is

being implemented with the knowledge and approval of international powers. Therefore, we are clearly faced with an international policy.

Our people have been carrying out very strong protests against this policy for many years now. The physical freedom of Leader Apo is on the agenda of all the peoples of the world today. His freedom has thus become a major demand. These efforts must continue even stronger. If we do not put serious pressure on the international powers, if we do not include all our international friends, the democratic public, and all non-governmental organizations and if we do not take a serious stance, their hypocritical policy will continue. Based on this policy, Turkey will then be able to continue to wage its genocidal war on the Kurds. İmralı is the center of this war. This hypocritical policy of the West also means giving approval to the genocide policy against the Kurds. The policy implemented against the Leadership is not independent from the genocide policy against the Kurds. It starts in İmralı and then spreads to all of Kurdistan and the whole society. Leader Apo is the leader of a people and millions accept him as the representative of their will. Not only Kurds, but also the democratic society of Turkey, the peoples of the Middle East and the women recognize Leader Apo as their leader.

We need to fight fiercely against the isolation policy. The Gemlik march was important. Lawyers in the Middle East and Europe recently made statements and requested to visit İmralı. These are important developments and we need to carry out these kinds of actions even more. The recent concert in Italy was also important. Everyone needs to stand up for Leader Apo because he is being held in prison due to his insistence on human values. His struggle increases the consciousness of the peoples, strengthens their willpower and opens the eyes of humanity. That is why they are afraid of the thoughts of Leader Apo. They are afraid of a single word of him reaching the outside and having an impact on society. Because they know that every word of Leader Apo causes great enlightenment, awakening, resurrection and resistance in society. And this threatens their power system and modernity. That is why they have all joined hands and are applying this system of oppression and torture in İmralı.

Therefore, we need to increase the struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo. The Council of Europe is also just pretending. For the 'Right to Hope' they gave Turkey the following options: They said that after 24 to 25 years, if Abdullah Öcalan shows good behavior, the 'Right to Hope' may be applied, but if not, Turkey may not apply it. That is why Turkey has been deliberately imposing disciplinary penalties for more than two years. Thus, they want to show that he does not show good behavior. With these disciplinary penalties they are trying to create a legitimate ground for not applying the 'Right to Hope' to Leader Apo. This is the kind of dirty policy they are mutually pursuing.

Just as our people have defeated this concept until now, they can defeat it again through our struggle. Thus, they can ensure the physical freedom of Leader Apo and completely crush the plan to carry out a genocide against the Kurds. This can only happen through our struggle. We cannot physically liberate Leader Apo or defeat the Kurdish genocide plan by creating empty expectations. We will defeat all this only through our struggle. That is why we must wage a strong struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo in North Kurdistan, Turkey, the other parts of Kurdistan and everywhere outside of the country.

For more than two years now, a strong struggle has been waged in the context of the campaign 'Dem dema azadiyê ye' ['Time for Freedom is Now']. The guerrilla constitutes the most fundamental pillar of this struggle. There is also a significant resistance of our people, but it is insufficient, often gets interrupted, turns into a routine and gets normalized after a certain period of time. It should not be like this.

In the current phase, the fascist Turkish state is struggling for its existence. And for the Kurdish people this phase also has a very historical meaning. Because the old balances in the region have collapsed. The political balances of the 21st century have collapsed and the systems have disintegrated. The whole system is currently being redesigned. In the wake of the 3rd World War, the balances of the 21st century are being reshaped in the region today. The Turkish state conducts a total war and pursues a genocide policy to prevent the Kurds from gaining a political status in the 21st century. We are faced with a policy of genocide in all its physical, cultural, ecological and economic aspects. If we do not wage a total resistance against this, we won't live up to the current phase. Therefore, the current attitude needs to be overcome.

For decades, Leader Apo has been waging a great struggle for the democratization of Turkey. And now, he is paying the price for it. One of the main reasons why he is in İmralı is his struggle to democratize Turkey. The Turkish rulers do not want Turkey to be democratized and free. They do not want a democratic republic, a democratic state. They do not want the Kurdish question to be solved on a democratic basis. Because they keep themselves in power by pitting the peoples against each other, by clashing, by creating enemies and by developing racist nationalism on the basis of the unsolved Kurdish question.

The years-long struggle of the Leadership and the Kurdish people has brought about very serious developments in Turkey. This has given courage, willpower and self-confidence to the forces of democracy. The Leadership has been waging this struggle in İmralı for 24 years. His struggle in İmralı is a struggle for the democratization of Turkey, a struggle for freedom. It is a resistance for democracy. Neither AKP-MHP fascism nor the bourgeois opposition want this. They have been keeping themselves in power in Turkey for years with the help of anti-democratic laws. That is why everyone must stand up for Leader Apo. Because he is fighting for the freedom of everyone. The society in Turkey, the democratic forces, intellectuals, artists and politicians must stand up for Leader Apo in the strongest way possible. Every aspect of Leader Apo's struggle is justified and legitimate. Everyone needs to strongly participate in this struggle.

The HPG Press Center [Hêzên Parastina Gel—People's Defense Forces] recently announced the 6-month balance sheet of the war in South Kurdistan [North Iraq]. One day later, the identities of 17 guerrilla fighters killed by chemical weapons and images showing the brutality of the war and the many crimes against humanity were made public. The guerrilla's resistance also has a strong impact on society. In this sense, how do you evaluate the resistance of the guerrilla and the protests of society?

A great struggle has been continuing for six months now. We are talking about a brutal war. Fascist Turkey does not recognize any international laws. The Turkish state is a member of the Council of Europe and of the UN. It has signed many international conventions which clearly prohibit the use of chemical weapons. But despite this, the Turkish state is carrying out all kinds of actions that are not in line with the laws of war. Neither the Council of Europe, nor the UN, the EU or the US, the so-called apostle of democracy, have said anything about this. The Turkish state is waging an illegal and inhumane war, committing crimes against humanity. But no one speaks out. This attitude is extremely hypocritical, based on economic and political interests. I would like to condemn the attitude of all these powers.

In front of the eyes of the whole world, the children of the Kurdish people are being martyred group by group with chemical gases. But all these powers simply remain silent. There is so much data, so much proof. There are so many images, so many documents regarding the characteristics of each gas. This issue has also been taken to the OPCW. Supposedly, the OPCW is an international organization that fights against chemical weapons. But it has not taken any stance regarding this issue. Everyone simply watches

the genocide of the Kurds, keeps silent and—in a way—thus participates in it. Therefore, these powers themselves are committing crimes against humanity. Our people need to cause an uproar because of this situation. I would therefore also like to criticize the attitude of our people. These young people who have been martyred with chemical gases, tactical nuclear weapons and other banned weapons are the children of our people. These are the most precious of their children. If they had preferred a simple life, they would not have come to fight under these difficult conditions.

These sons and daughters of our people are fighting for the freedom of the people, for their political status, for a free Kurdistan, for all peoples to live together on a free and democratic basis. They are putting their lives on the line. But still there is no serious social reaction. It is almost as if everyone is in the position of a spectator. People seem to be thinking that the guerrilla and the Turkish state are fighting and that the guerrilla will eventually just win this war which is why they can just wait for the outcome to become clear and live a comfortable life. This is not right. This is an extremely shameful situation. When I say this, I am not saying that our people do not struggle, do not resist and do not pay a high price. Of course, saying such things would be a great injustice. Our struggle has not come so far only based on the guerrilla resistance but through the glorious resistance, struggle and the heavy prices paid by the people. After all, the martyrdom of their children, the fact that tens of thousands of them are in this struggle is also a result of the struggle of the people. Our people have raised these daughters and sons. A strong patriotic tradition and stance exists among the Kurds and their popular resistance has continued for years. But the stage the struggle has reached today is different. Now the struggle is at its peak. The Kurdish question has now reached its final stage.

This problem can only be solved on a democratic basis. The Kurdish people will definitely achieve their political status in the 21st century. The opposite scenario would mean the continuation of the genocide policy that dates back hundreds of years. In this case, there will be no Kurds left. They will annihilate the Kurds, and the ones who survive will be condemned to an animal-like life. This is where the danger lies. The Turkish state says that they will finish this job in the 21st century, namely until October 29, 2023. Every day, that scoundrel Soylu gives a new date with regards to this. This is the policy of the Turkish state. Until the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey and the Treaty of Lausanne, they want to redesign the fascist Turkish nation system by eliminating the PKK and carrying out a genocide against the Kurdish people. They want to announce the success of their policy on October 29, 2023. That is why this issue is so important. But the resistance of society does not develop accordingly. It does not turn into total resistance.

The people in Rojava are constantly on their feet, just like our people in Europe. There is a certain level of resistance in North Kurdistan and in East Kurdistan [North-West Iran]. In South Kurdistan the people are extremely angry about the genocidal policy, but their anger does not turn into social resistance. Once it does, this will put great pressure on the international states that approve of this genocide. This will expose the Turkish state much more and oust the AKP-MHP from power. The AKP-MHP regime is already in the process of collapsing. This regime sustains itself with the help of a racist-nationalist mob. The guerrilla resistance against the regime is admirable and flawless. There is no other way to describe it. The enemy has bombarded the guerrilla thousands of times with tanks and war planes. Which other force is able to withstand such attacks? If a state had been under such a comprehensive attack, its lifespan would have only been one week. It would have simply ceased to exist. When IS attacked, Iraq fell apart, just like Syria did. The Turkish state is using all kinds of NATO technology and banned weapons. Despite this, the guerrilla

have been waging a glorious resistance for more than 6 months. Therefore, all people—no matter if young or old—must rise up against this brutality.

Another dimension of these attacks is the stance of the collaborators and traitors. If it were not for the attitude, policy and practice of the collaborators and traitors that legitimize the genocidal attacks of the Turkish state, it would not dare to do what it is doing. It would not be able to use chemical weapons, tactical nuclear weapons and thermobaric bombs against the guerrilla. The policy of the collaborators and traitors offers every kind of opportunity for the Turkish state. With its statements and speeches, it legitimizes the actions of the Turkish state politically. They say that the Turkish state, the AKP-MHP, only have a problem with the PKK, not with the Kurds. But we should ask the Kurds who the PKK is: The PKK are the children of this people. They give their lives for the freedom of this people, for its political status, for the freedom of Kurdistan and they fight for humanity.

So what are you doing, KDP? You are collaborating. You are betraying. And you are selling the resources of the Kurdish people to the fascist, racist Turkish state. You sell them to the AKP-MHP. You support the murder of the most distinguished children of the Kurds. And you legitimize this massacre internationally. One of the reasons why international powers are so silent about these attacks is because of the KDP's stance. The KDP legitimizes these attacks. On the other hand, the KDP and the Turkish state are already acting together on the ground. The KDP builds roads and bases, provides logistics, all kinds of ammunition and other supplies, transports soldiers, treats the wounded, transports them and gives them clothes. This is how Turkish soldiers are able to enter areas that they would normally not be able to enter. The KDP exploits the sensitivity of our movement in order to prevent a civil war. It exploits this sensitivity and does all kinds of dirty things. Therefore, the attitude of the KDP has made it a part of these genocide attacks. With regard to this issue, there needs to be very strong protests by the public in Kurdistan. And there have been protests, but they are weak.

The KDP said that they seized a lot of gas masks in Duhok. Let's say those masks were meant to go to the guerrilla. Why are you confiscating them? If those masks had been in the hands of the guerrilla fighters, maybe there wouldn't have been so many martyrs. Delegations want to go to the areas where these weapons are used, but they are not allowed to. A delegation recently came and there was a serious international reaction. The KDP then realized that they were being exposed, and in order to prevent their exposure, they only allowed the delegation to go to Amediyê. The delegation wanted to go to the battlefield, to the area where chemical weapons were used, but they were not allowed to go. Consequently, it had to return to Sulaymaniyah. The delegation collected a lot of data. But the KDP tries to prevent them from publishing their data. Who knows what the KDP does and says in the diplomatic arena. The KDP is very active diplomatically.

What does the KDP gain from all this?

The KDP fills its pockets even more. Thus, the KDP and the Barzani family maintain their power, pile up more and more money and increase their capital. We have said this before: they have made many investments in the Gulf countries, the USA and Turkey. They sell the resources of Kurdistan and the people. The Barzani family is trying to strengthen its power, increase its capital and remain on its feet. They have turned South Kurdistan into a province of Turkey and seek to become its governor.

The anniversary of Şehit [martyr] Bêrîtan's martyrdom is approaching. Today, the guerrilla fighting in Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna is led by YJA-Star guerrilla fighters whose resistance is based on the resistance tradition of martyr Bêrîtan. Which connection do you see between this anniversary and today's resistance of the guerrilla against Turkish fascism?

First of all, I would like to greet with respect and love all the comrades who are resisting. They are waging a very honorable struggle on behalf of the Kurdish people, the people of the Middle East and all of humanity. I would like to congratulate all commanders and fighters of the YJA-Star and HPG from the bottom of my heart. I would also like to commemorate with respect and gratitude our 17 precious comrades [recently announced as martyrs as a result of chemical weapons attacks]. I would like to commemorate with great respect, love and gratitude all the friends who have been martyred in the course of the resistance in Zap, Metîna, Avaşîn and all the Medya Defense Zones during the last 6 months. The war still continues and the AKP-MHP will keep it going even longer. Because they need this war.

This month is the month of the International Conspiracy and the anniversary of heval [Kurdish for 'friend' or 'comrade'] Bêrîtan's martyrdom. On October 25, 1992, she was martyred while resisting the genocidal war waged by the Turkish state and the KDP against the guerrilla. Her story is well known by our people. After getting wounded, she threw herself off a cliff in order not to be captured by the collaborating and treacherous KDP and not to surrender. This great action has become a tradition of resistance. The foundation of the women's army resulted from this. The women's army's character and identity originate from Bêrîtan's resistance. Comrade Bêrîtan's stance and attitude against surrender and betrayal have formed the character and identity of the women's army.

Today, the guerrilla are resisting in a very honorable way in Zap, Avaşîn, Metîna and all over Kurdistan. This is due to the legacy of heval Bêrîtan. Today's resistance is based on Bêrîtan's way of resistance. Now, just like in '92, both the fascist Turkish state and the forces of collaboration and treason are fighting against us. The guerrilla still have the same attitude of resistance like heval Bêrîtan. It does not surrender but takes an honorable stance. This is nothing that can just be taken for granted. The resistance is based on a great consciousness, will and passion for freedom. Heval Bêrîtan was also like this. Her love and passion for freedom have made this struggle grow and brought it to this day. On this occasion, I would like to commemorate heval Bêrîtan with great respect, love and gratitude. Based on her way of resistance, this struggle will definitely succeed.

In North Kurdistan [East Turkey] and Turkey, a real election atmosphere can already be felt. The election process has somewhat started, even if people might not yet call it that. Everyone has begun to work towards the elections. At the same time, the Turkish government is putting huge pressure on the Kurds and the opposition in order to tie their hands. As an alternative to this, the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' was formed under the leadership of the HDP. How do you evaluate the state's pressure and the developments on the side of the resisting forces?

The upcoming elections are one of the most important elections in Turkey's history. The government will do everything to win them because its existence depends on this. If the fascist government falls, it will be put on trial for all its crimes against humanity, corruption and theft. In this case, it is very likely that Erdoğan won't be able to stay in Turkey. If Putin remains in power, Erdoğan may take refuge with him. It is not absolutely clear where he will be able to go. He may also seek refuge with NATO. Therefore, there is nothing Erdoğan will not do inside and outside of Turkey to win the election. He will continue to build

all kinds of dirty relations. He keeps himself in power with the help of the war and the Kurdish genocide. And he will intensify this genocidal war even more. He will increase the war in the Medya Defense Zones. He has also been preparing for a new war in Rojava for a long time. He will wage war everywhere.

Turkey is faced with brutal fascism, oppression and violence. Workers and laborers are being massacred every day. The recent massacre in Bartın was just one of a series of massacres carried out by the government. There is the Soma massacre in which 301 workers lost their lives. Every day and everywhere in Turkey, two, three or whole groups of workers loose their lives. And then there are the genocidal attacks against the Kurds. A horrible economic-ecological destruction is taking place in the society of Turkey and twice as much in Kurdistan. A genocide is being carried out in Kurdistan, but there is also social destruction happening in Turkey. Women are also faced with huge attacks. In short, this government has destroyed Turkey as a whole. It has consumed, stolen, extorted, usurped and destroyed all of Turkey's resources and values. It has also destroyed the 100-year-old Kemalist system. The Kemalist state as we know it no longer exists. Now the government wants to build a society according to its own attitude and paradigm. It wants to do so on the basis of the aforementioned destruction and wants to structure the nation-state accordingly. The government wants to do this on the basis of the Kurdish genocide and the destruction of society, women and nature in Turkey. It will seek to build a fascist nation-state system on the basis of all this destruction.

The government is increasingly losing the support of the voters. The Kurds have already broken away from the AKP. Except for a group of collaborators and traitors, no one has stayed with the AKP. There is also a serious rate of undecided voters. The government has not only caused its own collapse but has led Turkey into a process of destruction. And there is also the bourgeois opposition, which is simply another version of the current government. They call themselves the 'Table of Six'. But they do not have a proper solution plan or policy for Turkey's problems, especially for the Kurdish question. The reason for this is that they lack a democratic attitude, a democratic mentality. That is why they are unable to develop a democratic policy. Until now, they have not made a single serious statement on the Kurdish question. They have not presented any serious programs or policies. How will Turkey be democratized if the Kurdish question is not solved? This is simply impossible.

The way to democracy in Turkey is only possible on the basis of the solution of the Kurdish question. So far, the 'Table of Six' has not been able to put forward a single policy because it pursues the classic policy of the state. That's why the opposition cannot put forward a truly different position from the government with regards to the Kurdish question. Since the government knows this, it constantly uses this issue to attack the 'Table of Six'. Thus, the government is trying to shape the opposition according to its own attitude. It is trying to shape the CHP in this way. The IYI Party is already closer to the government. The AKP-MHP are also trying to shape other Islamic parties—Saadet, Gelecek and Deva—on this basis. Consequently, the 'Table of Six' has become part of a nationalist competition with the government. This constitutes a serious handicap.

Therefore, the bourgeois opposition cannot present a policy and a practice that could give confidence to the Kurds and the democratic sections of Turkey's society. The solution lies neither in the government, nor can it be expected from the current bourgeois opposition. From this point of view, the solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey and the solution to the country's problems is the concept of the Democratic Nation, the paradigm of Leader Apo and the democratic politics based on it. The solution lies in the forces that conduct democratic politics. It is the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' that is waging a struggle exactly on this basis. This alliance constitutes the only solution to the problems. In this respect, the 'Labor and Free-

dom Alliance' needs to turn itself into the main force of solution in Turkey without relying on anyone else. It needs to develop the strength to govern the country. It needs to be able to turn itself into an organization and a force of struggle that will be involved in the government of Turkey. The alliance definitely has this potential.

The potential of the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' in Turkey is 60 percent or 70 percent of the votes. If it can effectively strengthen its relations with society, make itself known to the people and organize and mobilize the society on this basis, it will become the strongest force. The values defended by it are very clear. They are the values defended by the society of Turkey: democracy, freedom, justice and democratic law. These are the issues that the whole society deeply cares about and that the HDP defends: the democratic unity of the peoples, living together based on friendship, democracy and equality and a democratic solution to the Kurdish question. These are the values, principles and needs that the Kurdish people represent and demand, just like the peoples of Turkey. In this respect, the growth potential of the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' is very high. Narrow and superficial approaches need to be overcome. This alliance should not only be a narrow election alliance, but an alliance of struggle.

The 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' needs to be an alliance that builds a Turkey based on a democratic and libertarian attitude. It must be able to explain itself to the whole society of Turkey and embrace all sections of society. It needs to meet people everywhere and explain its own ideas. It needs to be able to explain itself to the Alevis, to the democratic conservative Muslims, to the Islamic sections of society, to all non-Muslim sections—e.g. Christians and Jews—and to all other communities. All these groups constitute the basis of the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance'. Women and youth have already become the main forces and the pioneers of this alliance. The Turkish Women's Movement and the Kurdish Women's Movement are the main forces of the alliance. They are currently the strongest women's movement in the region and in the world and consequently also pioneers in the struggle for democracy.

This alliance for democracy and freedom should not only be limited to 5 or 6 parties. It needs to be transformed into a general alliance of all sections of society. The 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' recently published a road map with regards to this issue. I consider this road map as very important. They put forward a manifesto, but it should not remain on paper alone. It must be put into action. In other words, they must work very hard, house by house, street by street, neighborhood by neighborhood person by person, to organize and take action. This struggle is no longer a matter of rhetoric. If the people don't take to the streets, if a serious social force of opposition and resistance does not emerge and if the social opposition does not fill the streets, this struggle cannot achieve results and they won't be able to win the elections. A strong social opposition is the way to win the elections: tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of people filling the streets. The 'Table of Six' has been serving the interests of this fascist government for years. They are doing everything they can to prevent society from taking to the streets. It is the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' that will change this.

This society has the power to overthrow the fascist government. Society is very angry. A strong democratic opposition force has now emerged. And society is sick and tired of all the theft, corruption, massacres, genocide, fascism, injustice and lawlessness of this government. The problem is one of leadership. If society is led correctly and effectively, this government will definitely not remain in power. Therefore, it is necessary to wage a strong struggle before the elections. It is also necessary to strengthen the protests in this context. The AKP-MHP will risk everything, including civil war, in order not to lose its power. For years, it has organized and trained many contras and gangs. All the economic means of the state are in the hands

of this government. That's why it is willing to do everything it can to remain in power. The only way to take the power away from them is by struggling on the streets. The 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' won't be able to overthrow this government just by talking and by saying radical things.

The representative of a mentality that until yesterday insulted the Alevis, marked their houses and massacred them, today says that he will start an 'Alevi Initiative'. As an Alevi, Kurdish and female revolutionary, what would you like to say about this?

The AKP-MHP pursues a plan of genocide and assimilation against the Alevis. They plan to submit the Alevis and put them in the service of the state. Because Alevis' is a society that has lived outside the state for hundreds of years. They constitute the vein of a society that has not recognized the state or power, continues to live based on its own belief, culture and traditions and keeps alive the mentality of democratic and communal life. Therefore, the Alevis are a fundamental component of the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance'. They are also a fundamental component of the general struggle for freedom. But now we can see that nationalists have emerged among Alevis. A very deliberate and systematic special war is being waged with regards to this issue. Certain people who call themselves Alevis have become members of the MHP and the AKP. For example, there are such lowlifes like İzzet Doğan who have been recruited by them.

Alevis call people who betray their own social values 'degraded'. Today, a group of such degraded people has been created. Through these degraded groups, the entire Alevi community is being subjected to genocide with regards to its belief and culture. A horrible policy of assimilation and religious genocide is being carried out against the Alevis. The AKP-MHP have carried this century-old state policy to its peak. I think the Alevi population in Turkey is close to 20 million. For the government and the 'Table of Six' this constitutes a serious potential for voters. Everyone is doing politics based on these potential voters. The AKP-MHP fascist regime pursues a plan that goes beyond the upcoming elections. They want to commit the Alevis to a massacre. They pursue a policy of making the Alevis surrender and thus creating Alevis of the state. The kind of Alevi the state wants to create is a collaborator and traitor. Just as there are Kurdish collaborators and traitors who betray their own society and social values, Alevi culture and belief that is tied to the state and controlled by it is a degraded form of Alevism. Based on the project the AKP-MHP are talking about, they are trying to create an Alevism of betrayal and collaboration.

Cemevis [religious centers of Alevis] have now been put under the control of the Ministry of Culture. In other words, they do not even recognize Alevism as a belief. According to this attitude, Alevism constitutes only a very narrow culture. There are those who fall for this policy. Erdoğan was welcomed by some people [of the Alevi community] and there are also reports that there have been applications to the Ministry of Culture. All those who take such initiatives are, to use the Alevi expression, traitors and collaborators. They have nothing to do with Alevi culture or faith. The Alevi faith is a democratic, free and just faith. What does an Alevi who sides with a fascist, racist and nationalist government have to do with Alevi culture and tradition? They have nothing to do with this. They are simply collaborators, traitors and degraded people. The Alevis need to recognize this.

Those who stoop to this have abandoned their belief and culture and should be considered as degraded. They need to be exposed and excluded from society. Being such a degraded person results in social isolation. It is necessary to wage a strong struggle against these special war and assimilation policies. The government carries out these special war policies in a very intense way. With this policy, the AKP-MHP have been exploiting the religious feelings and beliefs of the people for years. Does the Islam of the AKP have

anything to do with real Islam? The Islam represented by the AKP-MHP means hostility towards Islam. It has nothing to do with Islam. The understanding of religion and belief developed by this regime is absolutely hostile to Islam. The AKP is an un-Islamic tendency that has brought itself to power through the denial of democratic-cultural Islam.

They have nothing to do with Islam. Now they are doing politics over women's hair, skirts, pants and headscarves. They are doing all this to redesign society according to their fascist understanding that is hostile towards religion. Muslim society needs to fight against this policy of special warfare. The government has been exploiting this for years and has thus maintained its power.

On the other hand, there is also a very intense special war against the Kurds. The Turkish state itself is a special warfare state, but the AKP-MHP government is waging a dirty war that has surpassed all previous governments. From drugs to prostitution, they use everything for their war in Kurdistan. For example, they organize festivals in places with a tradition of resistance. They do this in Silopi, Cizre and Amed. In places of resistance where young people have shed their blood and given their lives for the freedom of our people, they gather society and organize entertainment events. Thus, they try to turn people into a ridiculous, degraded and decayed society that makes fun of its own values. This is a policy of decay, amnesia and of turning society into a community of collaborators and betrayers of their own values and culture.

In these places of resistance, every family has its martyrs and resistance fighters. There are so many people whose blood has been shed, who have suffered and paid a huge price. Just as the AKP-MHP government tries to corrupt and degenerate society with prostitution, drugs and spying, it also tries to make society disintegrate with such activities. It is trying to destroy the moral values of society. This constitutes a much more brutal war than military warfare. Against this, Silopi, Cizre and Amed have to stand up, no matter if young or old. This policy constitutes an insult, oppression and betrayal against Silopi, Cizre and Amed. How can this be accepted? To accept this means to accept dishonor, disintegration and degradation. Is this something that can be accepted? A society that betrays its own values is not a society or a people and does not have any dignity.

We must strongly resist such degenerative policies and wage a strong struggle against those who degenerate. We need to expose them everywhere and take a clear stance. No one should apply to the Ministry of Culture. This is simply disgraceful. Accepting these festivals and taking part in them is disgraceful, degrading and dishonorable. This has nothing to do with patriotism. It constitutes treason. When a woman or a child is harassed or raped in Kurdistan, the perpetrator needs to be punished. I am not saying that this hasn't happened at all. There have been protests to a certain extent. But our freedom struggle is now approaching half a century and our people have clear values and a very strong sense of honor. Therefore, a much stronger struggle is needed.

The resistance in Iran led by Kurdish women continues. People of different views and ethnicities have united under the slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' ['Women, Life, Freedom']. Your movement is the creator of this slogan. What is your take on the protests in Iran?

All Iranian women and peoples have come together around Jîna Emînî. There has been an uprising for over a month now. This can almost be described as a state of rebellion. This is a first in recent history. There has not been an uprising of this scope and quality in Iran before. Women have strengthened this uprising with regards to its quality. Iranian society is a matriarchal society. Persians and Kurds are peoples

with very close connections. They lived together under the same confederation for hundreds and thousands of years. They shared governance for many years. Their cultures and traditions are also very close to each other. Therefore, Persian and Kurdish women have a lot in common. In Iran, racism, nationalism and religionism exist, but they are weak. The social culture is much stronger.

Society has a strong democratic-revolutionary vein. It is not a surprise that the current uprising has lasted so long, is of such high quality and has been characterized by the slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî'. This slogan has resonated with Iranian society. Women, men, young, old and children have all embraced this slogan. The slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' is being chanted in every language. It is true that the Leadership [Abdullah Öcalan] developed this slogan. It constitutes the essence of the philosophy of women's freedom. This slogan is a refined version of the women's paradigm. 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' is more than a slogan. It has a depth that goes beyond just being a slogan. It is the refined form of the philosophy of freedom, the paradigm of the Democratic Nation, of democracy, ecology and women's freedom. Therefore, this slogan actually represents a philosophy.

From the first day of the uprising, women and men have taken to the streets in all cities and towns of Iran chanting the slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî'. Men have taken sides with women in a very spectacular way. This is the result of the characteristics of matriarchal culture. All this is very important. This uprising continues to intensify. The slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' transforms both men and society. It has spread around the world. The protests all over the world and in all countries of the Middle East are taking place under the slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî'. A life that is not based on free women is a life of slavery. Life is only life in its true sense if it is based on free women. This slogan expresses this reality. Therefore, Iran needs to respond to the demands of women, society and people.

It would not be accurate to understand this uprising only as the result of provocations of foreign powers or certain organizations. This will not lead to healthy conclusions. Of course, there may be those who want to exploit this uprising and use it for their own interests. The USA, Israel, Europe and Turkey may also want to make use of it. For example, what did they turn the Arab Spring into? But understanding the protests of women and society in this way would be incompatible with reality. Women and Iranian society demand democracy, freedom and justice. There is serious oppression in Iran, not only against the Kurdish people but against all ethnic identities. And now there are protests of the people against this. All of them are demanding freedom, justice and democracy. They want a democratic rule of law. States that do not change and transform themselves accordingly are faced with their own dissolution.

The political crisis in Iraq seems to have somewhat calmed down after the election of the new president. Dr. Latif Reşid has tasked Sudani with the formation of a new government. What kind of impact will these developments have on Kurdistan and the region?

Iraq has been in a state of chaos for a long time. The nation state and the five thousand-year-old state system have been destroyed in Iraq. A huge chaos has emerged from this collapse. Whoever comes to Iraq cannot establish a stable administration. This is nothing new. There are also interventions by external powers. Many powers are waging a war for hegemony here. Iraq has been the scene of a war over hegemony between Iran and the USA for decades. Britain, other European countries and many other states, especially Turkey, are meddling in Iraq. Turkey is organizing Turkmens on the basis of its own interests and is thus deepening the chaos. It has turned Bashiqa into its own military base. It is stirring up Iraq politically, economically and militarily.

Dr. Latif Reşid has now been elected as president and we would like to congratulate him again. We believe that he will play a positive role. It is important that he plays a role in solving the problems between Baghdad and South Kurdistan on a democratic basis, in overcoming the crisis and chaos in Baghdad and in the democratization of Iraq. Moreover, it is important for the Iraqi state to take a clear stance against the Turkish state's Neo-Ottoman, occupying and expansionist policies. A new government will very likely be formed under Sudani's presidency, but it looks like this administration will not last long. After the formation of a new government, the chaotic situation in Iraq will not be easily overcome. The intensity of the Baghdad-based conflicts may decrease a little, but the chaos in Iraq as a whole will continue. Because everyone will want to shape the government based on their own interests. The US will try to make it act in line with its own policy, just like Iran and Turkey will do with regards to their political goals.

Sadr's stance is also important. He has made his stance very clear by saying that he will not take part in this government. Sadr will put serious pressure on the government by gathering popular support around him. Therefore, stability won't be achieved easily. The solution in Iraq is a democratic system, a democratic-confederal Iraqi system based on autonomous regions. The solution is a democratic Iraqi administration. Only such a system can solve the problems in Iraq.

In North and East Syria, Afrin has been handed over to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham—formerly known as al-Nusra—which continues to commit all kinds of crimes against humanity. The attacks by the Turkish state and its Islamist proxies continue. So does the resistance against them. How do you evaluate this issue?

The situation in North and East Syria needs to be assessed very well. During the Astana and Sochi talks, decisions were taken to bring Ankara and Damascus closer to each other. Both Iran and Russia put pressure on Turkey with regards to this issue. As a result, Turkey has started to use a softer language. Afterwards, meetings between the intelligence services of the two countries [Turkey and Syria] became more frequent. There were even discussions about the possibility of talks between Erdoğan and Assad. Thus, attempts were made to ease the tensions between Damascus and Ankara that have been going on for 11 years. Recently, there was also the Putin-Erdogan meeting and talks with NATO.

Then there was a meeting with Biden which was followed by various statements. Turkey, with the support of both Iran, Russia, the US and NATO, wants to destroy North and East Syria. It wants to establish a state for Islamist proxies in this area. Of course, it does not say to Russia and Iran that it will establish such a Islamist proxy state, but instead points to the Autonomous Administration as the problem. Turkey says that if Russia and Iran support it on this issue, it can make some concessions with regards to Ukraine, Idlib and Assad. This is the message Turkey has recently given Russia and Iran. But the current plan of the Turkish state is to implement the Misak-ı Milli [National Pact], i.e. it wants to annex South Kurdistan and Rojava. And it is doing this through carrying out the Kurdish genocide.

We cannot assess the latest developments in Afrin independently from this broader context. There have been many meetings with Russia and the US behind closed doors, and there are others that have not been made public. We cannot understand al-Nusra's entry into Afrin as a plan of Turkey alone, independent of Russia or the US. Many dirty negotiations have taken place behind closed doors. It has been one year that the Turkish state has been trying to complete the Kurdish genocide. We know this very well. We know very clearly that the Turkish state has a plan to achieve its Misak-ı Milli goal by carrying out the Kurdish genocide. That is why it has completely focused its domestic and foreign politics on achieving this goal. In order to carry out this plan, it is selling the resources of Turkey to everyone.

The arrival of al-Nusra [in Afrin] is a plan of Turkey, but there is also international support behind it. For example, we need to understand Russia's approach well. Russia hit some bases of Islamist proxy forces in the area between Azaz and Afrin. Turkey and Russia, especially, have made certain negotiations. There are some Islamist proxy groups that are not under Turkey's control. The groups are very uncomfortable with the relations between Turkey and Damascus. The Islamist proxies that Turkey has established, supported, trained and equipped until now do not want Damascus and Turkey to establish closer relations with each other. They are very disturbed by this new situation. These groups are giving Turkey a headache. They might end up posing a great danger to Turkey in the future and might even decide to fight against Turkey. Turkey is very afraid of this possibility.

Russia's recent strikes against these Islamist proxy groups are not independent from Turkey's policy. Turkey makes Russia attack them. If Turkey itself attacks them, it will only provoke an immediate reaction from these Islamist proxies, cause chaos and force Turkey into a conflict with them. On the other hand, Turkey also makes al-Nusra attack these Islamist proxy groups. All of the groups that are being eliminated by al-Nusra are groups that pose a potential danger to Turkey. They are not under the control of Turkey or have the potential to slip out of Turkey's control in the future. Turkey has moved forces under its control to these areas. Today it moves them to Afrin and tomorrow it will take them to Serêkaniyê. In fact, the first battle of the YPG in Rojava was the battle against Al-Nusra in Serêkaniyê in 2012.

Al-Nusra is the Syrian version of Al-Qaeda. Many IS groups are also part of it. Turkey has made a deal with all of them. In 2016, Turkey made a deal with the Russians when it launched an invasion attack on Jarablus. As part of this deal, Turkey brought all the Islamist proxies to Idlib. Thus, Russia was able to secure Aleppo. Al-Nusra and Turkey have made a deal with regards to North and East Syria. This involves giving the areas controlled by the Autonomous Administration and the occupied territories to Al-Qaeda, i.e. to Al-Nusra, and moving them there.

The Turkish state will use these forces as leverage in its relations with Damascus. It will base its Syrian opposition policy on these forces. Turkey will blackmail Damascus with these forces and try to use them against the Kurds. It will try to make them clash with the Kurds. And the Turkish state will try to convince the international community and Damascus to recognize these Islamist proxy forces as the Syrian opposition. Then, Turkey will crush all the Islamist proxy groups that it considers a source of concern for itself by pitting them against each other. Can Al-Nusra be accepted by Russia, Damascus and the world? No, it can't. That's another matter, but all Turkey cares about is using them as a trump card to be able to carry out the Kurdish genocide and to destroy the autonomous system [in North and East Syria]. Therefore, this is a very dangerous plan. The people of North and East Syria need to act very sensitively and consciously against this.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria needs to conduct effective politics and diplomacy and struggle accordingly. Very serious military preparations need to be made. The society of Rojava, no matter if young or old, needs to prepare itself for a revolutionary people's war. From now on, the fascist Turkish state will wage war against Rojava together with Al-Nusra. The revolutionary people's war in Rojava should have been waged from the beginning. Until now, it has only been put into practice partially. If the revolutionary people's war is waged to a full extent in Rojava, if all people take part in it and struggle, if every member of society fights like the SDF [Syrian Democratic Forces], this plan will definitely be thwarted and the Turkish state will suffer the biggest blow in its history. Then, the system that the fascist

AKP-MHP regime wants to establish in Turkey will be completely destroyed and the way for a democratic Turkey will be paved.



Who Are We?

The International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan” was founded in March 1999, a month after Öcalan’s abduction from Kenya and his imprisonment by Turkey. Since its initial foundation, the International Initiative struggled for Abdullah Öcalan’s release from prison so that he can play his rightful role in the establishment of a just peace between the Turkish state and Kurdistan’s Workers Party (PKK). The International Initiative also aimed at contributing to the repairing of the ties between the Kurdish and Turkish peoples, as well as all other peoples of the Middle Eastern regions.

In order to achieve its aims, the International Initiative followed several related paths. Influencing international and national audiences through international campaigns to interfere with Turkish state’s policies towards Abdullah Öcalan has been one of these paths. A second area of work the International Initiative committed itself is the dissemination of Öcalan’s views through art, publications and conferences. Finally, the International Initiative has also been active in raising awareness for Öcalan’s conditions and the human rights violations he faces through reports, fact-finding delegations and lobbying.

Campaigns

The International Initiative organizes signature campaigns to influence the policies towards Öcalan. One such campaign which was launched in 2012 by one thousand preliminary signatories including Gerry Adams, Prof. Antonio Negri, Prof. Immanuel Wallerstein, Prof. Achin Vanaik, and other intellectuals, politicians, MPs, and NGOs from South America, Europe, Asia, Russia, and the Middle East. The campaign reached 10,328,623 signatures and may be the biggest signature campaign for the freedom of a political prisoner that the world has ever seen. It significantly challenged the isolation that was enforced on Öcalan and possibly paved the ways for the peace talks that the Turkish state and Öcalan led between 2013 and 2015.

The International Initiative also organizes video campaigns that educate the public on Öcalan’s life-story, his prison conditions and the demands for his freedom.

Publications

The International Initiative translates, edits and publishes books written by Öcalan in different languages including in English, German, French, Spanish and Arabic.

It compiles brochures from his works on specific topics, such as democratic confederalism or women’s freedom.

It edits books on Öcalan that discuss his main ideas.

The International Initiative also publishes regular reports on Öcalan’s prison conditions and his isolation.

Conferences

The International Initiative organizes biannual conferences and invites scholars, activists, students and politicians to discuss Öcalan’s ideas in order to initiate a conversation between different Movements around the world.

Delegations

Every year on February 15th, which is the date of the abduction of Abdullah Öcalan, the International Initiative organizes a group of internationally acclaimed people to take a trip to Turkey for a fact finding mission and publicizes their findings.

Lobbying

The International Initiative lobbies in the European Council, CPT and other international organizations against the human rights violations against Abdullah Öcalan and his total isolation in İmralı prison.

Art for Öcalan

This campaign aims to express the relationship between Abdullah Öcalan, Kurdish people, freedom and women’s freedom and to educate the wider public on the past and present of the Kurdish people. The International Initiative has already collected art from Brazil, South Africa, USA, South America, Italy, Germany as well as Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan. These works have been printed in postcards, t-shirts and canvas and made available for solidarity sale.

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