

THE IMRALI POST

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

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Prisons in Turkey

Turkish chemical attacks against guerrillas protested at Justice Vigil for ill prisoners in Izmir

ANF | İZMİR | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

Relatives of ill prisoners have been carrying out a Justice Vigil in Izmir for 131 days. Relatives of the prisoners, who continued their protests in front of the İzmir Courthouse, chanted slogans and demanded the release of ill prisoners and of all prisoners who have completed their sentence.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Aliğa District Organization supported the families on the new day of action.

Prisoner's relative Hanım Sever said: "We do not want the dead come out of prison. There is no democracy or peace in Turkey. Whoever says peace is called a 'terrorist'. However, those who call us terrorists are terrorists. Our children are in prison not because they are doing something, but because they defend their thoughts and language. Enough is enough, they are throwing bombs and poisonous gas at us. We have no patience anymore. We want the isolation in İmralı and the prisons to be lifted."

Medine Kaymaz, another of the relatives of the prisoners who took part in the action, saluted World Kobanê Day and emphasized that it was the resistance that won against ISIS in Kobanê.

Drawing attention to the escalating pressures and arrests by the Turkish state, Kaymaz said: "Why are our journalists inside? Why are you throwing our children inside? Shall we not tell about these crimes? Enough is enough. You tortured and murdered, but enough is enough. If this persecution continues, how will there be peace?"



Prisoners in Amed on hunger strike to protest Turkey's use of chemicals weapons write to UN

ANF | AMED | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

The indefinite alternating hunger strike launched by the prisoners in Diyarbakır No. 1 High Security Prison on 24 October to protest the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish state in the regions of Zap, Avaşîn and Metina has been going on for 12 days.

The 3rd group of prisoners went on hunger strike on Tuesday. Each group fasts for 5 days.

According to Mesopotamya news agency, Ferhat Onkol, Afaşîn Musazade and Baran, the prisoners who were part of the second group of hunger strikers, told their families: "Attacks against Kurds are unacceptable. As a part of this society, we have to be sensitive to this. Likewise, we think that all democratic institutions should be sensitive to this issue."

Letters to UN and relevant institutions

The prisoners added that they "wrote letters to the relevant institutions, embassies, the United Nations and the Ministry of Justice against chemical weapons."



Prisoner sets himself on fire in solitary cell in Konya

ANF | KONYA | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

A political prisoner in the Ereğli maximum security prison in the central Anatolian province of Konya has set himself on fire in protest against the prison conditions. This was reported by a fellow prisoner. According to the report, the person involved is Yakup Brukanli, a Kurd from Iran. He is said to have been seriously injured in the self-immolation, but no exact information about his condition is available.

In Ereğli, probably forty prisoners are currently isolated in solitary cells. The prisoners have started a hunger strike against the harassment and mistreatment in the high-security prison, which is being carried out every ten days. As prisoner Ibrahim Sütcü told his family by telephone, Brukanli was reportedly sanctioned with a one-month ban on visits and communication for resisting a humiliating strip search. Sütcü said the political prisoners have been housed in solitary cells since 23 August. "Initially there were thirty people on hunger strike, now we know of forty people. Maybe there are more. We cannot determine the exact number. We are isolated from each other in solitary cells and have only one hour of yard time a day. Even when we are in the yard, we cannot talk to each other. All social activities are cancelled. Serious criminals are housed next to us, they disturb us. Our hunger strike on a ten-day rotation continues. When we demanded to be moved to cells for three people, the prison management made the 'repentance law' a condition. They want us to commit treason."

His fellow prisoner Yakup Brukanli from Rojhilat set himself on fire in protest against the harsh isolation, Sütcü continued: "We only know that his condition is critical, but we get no news from him. We will continue our hunger strike and resist until our demands are met."

According to Sütcü, the hunger strikers are demanding immediate information about the condition of Yakup Brukanli. Other demands include the grouping of political prisoners, longer yard time, an end to mistreatment by prison staff and separate housing for serious criminals. Sütcü appeals to human rights organisations and politicians to visit the prison and investigate the prison conditions on the spot.



ÖHD lawyers say prisoner who set his body on fire to protest isolation not taken to hospital

ANF | KONYA | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

The indefinite alternating hunger strike started on 4 October by 40 detainees in Konya Ereğli High Security Prison to protest the increasing rights violations and severe isolation conditions continues. One of the prisoners on hunger strike, Yakup Brukanlı from Rojhilat, set his body on fire on 28 October to protest the harsh isolation conditions.

According to the information given by the Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) Mersin Branch, who visited the prison on Friday, 39 detainees remained in single cells in the High Security Prison, where Brukanlı was deported. The lawyers said that Brukanlı set his body on fire at around 10am on 28 October in response to the isolation imposed on the detainees.

Not taken to hospital

The lawyers gave the following information about Brukanlı: “He suffered second degree burns. The whole of his right arm and waist were burned, the fingers of both hands were burned. He cannot use his right arm. The same day he set himself on fire, he was brought back to prison and put in a cell. He is currently staying in the same cell with Osman Pinç. He is not taken to the hospital and he is treated in the infirmary instead. Handcuffs are on while he is taken for treatment. There is a serious risk of infection.”

The lawyers said that Brukanlı was not allowed to meet with his family due to a disciplinary punishment imposed on him.



Seriously ill 79-year-old Hadi Özer still in prison

ANF | VAN | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

80-year-old Makbule Özer and her 79-year-old husband, Hadi Özer, were detained in the Edremit district of Van with their children in the police raid on their house on 24 July 2018.

As a result of the investigation conducted against the Özer couple, a lawsuit was filed. The 2 years and 6 months’ prison sentence given to the Özer couple by the local court was upheld by the higher courts. The Özer couple were arrested on 9 May and sent to prison. Makbule Özer, whose health condition deteriorated, was released on 7 September, with her execution postponed for one year. Makbule Özer’s husband, seriously ill Hadi Özer, has been held in prison for 6 months.

My father unjustly kept in prison

Hadi Özer’s son, Medeni Özer, said that his father was held unjustly in prison for about 6 months. He said that he saw his father as a hostage, and emphasized that this treatment of old people is yet another evidence of the Turkish state’s intolerance against Kurds.

Stating that the policy of denial and destruction is known by every conscientious Kurd, Özer said: “This problem has now become a gangrene for Turkey. Whoever denies or oppresses the Kurdish people more becomes a hero in the country. This has become a tradition. This is not just one person’s issue; hundreds of innocent people are being held unlawfully in prison. There are old, sick, young, women and children in these prisons.”

Özer said that his father's health was not good when he went to visit him last week, and added: "Despite the pain he was feeling, he was trying to show us that he was fine so that we wouldn't be upset. When we looked into my father's eyes, we saw that he was in a lot of pain. His eyes were suffering, his hands started to tremble. He was feeling very cold. Dad is an introverted person. We are very sad. But this is a struggle and we have to resist a cruel, unlawful system. Where there is no justice, there is only persecution. We demand justice as soon as possible for all imprisoned prisoners. The enmity of the Kurdish people began to do more harm to Turkey every day. The Kurdish problem is no longer the only enemy of this state. All the peoples of Turkey have become enemies of this state. We just want to have a country where justice is served.



Political prisoners in Patnos not taken to hospital and prison infirmary for one year

ANF | AGRI | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

Political prisoners in Patnos L Type Closed Prison have not been taken to hospital or infirmary for nearly a year. According to the information given by the relatives of the detainees, it was said that the requests of the ill detainees to be taken to the hospital were not met, the dentist was not brought to the prison and the detainees with dental problems were not taken to the hospital. It was stated that although there was a doctor in the prison infirmary, the detainees were not taken to the infirmary and told that "there is no doctor".

On the other hand, it was learned that the petitions written by the detainees to the bar association, the prosecutor's office and the Ministry of Justice had not been sent for about a year.



Military aggression and occupation

Marking World Kobane Day, SDF vows to defend their regions against any threat

ANF | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) released a statement marking World Kobane Day, which includes the following:

“Today, November 1st marks the World Day of Global Solidarity with the Kobane Resistance against ISIS mercenaries who launched, on September 15th, 2014, a fierce terrorist attack on the region with obvious and explicit regional support. Our YPG and YPJ fighters, in addition to hundreds of Kurdish and international volunteers, showed living paradigms of sacrifice and redemption that will continue to inspire our fighters, our people, and all other people yearning for freedom and free life.

On this occasion, we recall all our heroic martyrs, and we salute the world’s peoples from Amed to Afghanistan, Argentina, and all the countries around the world that demonstrated and took to the squares and streets, declaring their solidarity with the resistance of our fighters. In addition, we salute the personalities, associations, organizations, and syndicates that mobilized all their resources and powers to draw the attention of the international community and urge it to support that great resistance. The screams of millions of demonstrators in the world expressed the unity of nations yearning for freedom in the face of ISIS oppression and its supporters.

There is no doubt that exceptional steadfastness and sacrifices were and still are the precepts for our fighters to confront the evil forces and their remnants. The legendary resistance in Kobane achieved the victory of determination and miracles in the face of a terrorist force armed with heavy weapons such as ISIS, which had defeated regional armies that had all the material power and resources, while our fighters were crawling on their chests towards enemy tanks and blowing themselves up to stop them due to the lack of sufficient weapons and ammunition to stop the massive ISIS attack.

However, our fighters’ will for life and resistance was greater than all weapons, plots, and the regional support of ISIS, so the commando operations were repeated, starting with the Sarzuri resistance operation, then the commando operation of the two martyrs Rivana and Arin Mirkan, and the commando operations of our comrade Avesta Khabur in Afrin and our comrade Barkhdan Amed in Tel Abyad / Girê Spi, in addition to dozens of living examples of commando operations conducted by our comrades. The audacity of combat operations carried out by our fighters—despite the lack of capabilities—to confront ISIS on the front lines and behind the enemy lines in Kobane and achieve victory despite the enormous sacrifices was the message of our people in the North and Eastern Syria to all the world’s peoples and countries that the victory over ISIS is possible despite its numerical and technical superiority and ridding the world of its evils is also possible if there is national, moral and humanitarian determination.

The Kobane Resistance established a new phase of interaction and unity among all peoples of different languages and affiliations, entered its international dimension that fits the sacrifices of our comrades, removed the despair of many who failed to confront ISIS, and restored the reassessment of humanity, freedom and mercy values. Therefore, the international, popular, and official move was an echo of that resistance, loyal to the pure blood shed on the rocks and plains of Kobane, and the beginning of the end for the terrorist organization of ISIS.

The defence of Kobane was the defense of humanity and the women’s revolution that started in North and Eastern Syria, inspired women all over the world, changed the reality of many of them, and became one of the eternal values in the region and the world.

Today, eight years after the declaration of the Global Day of Solidarity with Kobane, the region is still subjected to retaliatory threats, foremost of which are the threats of a new invasion by the Turkish occupation. The revenge for the defeat of ISIS is the core aim of those Turkish threats and attacks. Hence, we once

again call upon the world's peoples and countries that expressed loyalty to our martyrs eight years ago to reiterate their loyalty and pressure the international community to put an end to the Turkish attacks and prevent the Turkish gangster mentality from giving way to ISIS to resurge and attack the region and pose a threat once again to global peace and security.

On this basis, we salute once again all the good efforts of the world's peoples towards our resistance against terrorism and occupation, and we affirm that these efforts can never be forgotten, and they are a source of pride and accomplishment for our forces and our people. We also reiterate our pledge to effectively defend our regions, foremost of which is Kobane, against any threat, whether from ISIS or its supporters.”



From a street in Kobanê to a military victory over ISIS

HIVDA HEBUN | KOBANE | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

On 15 September 2014, ISIS began its large-scale attack on Kobanê. The people of Kobanê and the fighters of the YPG/YPJ (People's/Women's Defence Units) put up tremendous resistance against the highly armed jihadist ISIS mercenaries and set a historic example. Through this resistance and the international outcry for Kobanê, the fighters managed to stop and reverse the attack.

134 days of bitter struggle

In 134 days of fighting for every square metre of the city, the YPG and YPJ beat back ISIS. In solidarity with the people who won the struggle for a free and democratic world at that time, 1 November was proclaimed as International World Kobanê Day. Following this historic call, millions of people around the world took to the streets in solidarity with those resisting the horrors of ISIS in Kobanê.

“They wanted to document the end of Kobane”

How do those who resisted in Kobanê at that time see 1 November, World Kobanê Day, and how do they remember that time? Ismail Mihemed, a member of the Committee of the Veterans of Kobanê, remembers how press representatives from all over the world gathered at the border when the attack began: “They wanted to document this war. But what they wanted to document here was not the resistance. What they wanted to document here was the defeat of those who resisted and stood up for freedom and a democratic life. It was not only the Kurdish people who were meant to be taught a lesson here. It was to teach a lesson to all the peoples of the world through Kobanê.”

“Kobane globalised the resistance”

Ismail Mihemed explains that the whole world has seen how the Turkish state openly supported ISIS jihadists across the border and continues: “However, the resistance in Kobanê has shown the whole world that a strong-willed people can resist at any time and under any circumstances. All the peoples of the world have seen what has happened in this war; they have seen the suffering of the people of Kobanê and

the pain of thousands of people who have fled. If there is a World Kobanê Day today, it is thanks to the peoples of the world who have witnessed this resistance. They wanted to take part in the Kobanê resistance. Hundreds of them came and dozens of them fell. When the mercenaries and their supporters wanted to suffocate Kobanê, the resistance in Kobanê grew even stronger, and when they wanted to destroy the resistance of Kobanê and break its will, Kobanê became global. Kobanê was won through the unity of those who resisted and showed their will.

But one must not forget that there was only one road left in Kobanê, from which we continued to fight with our determination all the way to al-Baghouz, the last place under ISIS control. The resistance in Kobanê became a source of hope and inspiration for the oppressed and the free peoples of the whole world.”

Mihemed underlines that World Kobanê Day is the result of great resistance, great efforts and great will, and concludes, “We dedicate World Kobanê Day to Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan], the idea generator of our philosophy and the carrier of our democratic project, as well as to all peoples who struggle and resist for freedom. We know that the day Rêber Apo is freed will be declared the day of freedom of all the peoples of the Middle East.”

13,000 ISIS mercenaries were defeated in Kobane

Another veteran of the fighting for Kobanê is Ciwan Azad. He joined the YPG precursor organisation YXG (Yekîneyên Xweparastina Gel, People’s Self-Defence Units) back in 2012. The Raqqa-born fighter went to Kobanê during the ISIS attack to defend the city. He recalls: “We had a historic opportunity. It was a great joy for the Kurdish youth to fight for their own country, to liberate our land from the invaders and to establish a free country. This resistance has thwarted the plans of the states that support ISIS. Of course, a people who fight back and stand up for themselves must be supported by the whole world. If a people does not stand up for itself, no one else will support it. The people of Kurdistan have proven this. 13,000 ISIS mercenaries were defeated in Kobanê. For this reason, 72 countries were forced to support the SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) afterwards. The will and resistance of the Kurdish people enabled the coalition to support the SDF. Without this resistance, these countries would never have provided support.”

Ciwan Azad also addresses the current Turkish attacks, saying: “When the Turkish state attacks İmralı so brutally today, when it attacks the Medya Defence Zones with all kinds of cruel methods, including chemical weapons, it is a sign that it is stagnating towards the Kurdish freedom struggle.”

Girê Spî Military Council announces October balance sheet of Turkish attacks in the region

ANF | AIN ISSA | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Girê Spî Military Council Spokesperson Wisam El Omer announced the October month balance sheet of the attacks carried out by the Turkish state against Girê Spî and its countryside.

El Omer said that the Turkish state continued its attacks against the region using all kinds of light and heavy weapons, and added that the targets of the attacks were civilians.

He said that Girê Spî was greatly affected by the attacks, and that the villages of Seyda, Fatısa Erîda, Gul-tep, Huriye and Mişêrfa, and Eyn Îsa and many other villages were bombed every day.

El Omer noted that there were more than 200 attacks on these villages in the month of October and that mortars, artillery and howitzers were used in these attacks.

El Omer said that the Turkish state is trying to displace the people with these attacks and added that what Turkey actually is trying to do is to force people out and settle mercenaries in those areas.

Pointing out that Russia, which is in the region as the so-called guarantor, is only watching all this, El Omer criticized the attitude of the guarantor powers and promised that they will continue to protect the people and the borders despite all attacks. He added that the struggle will continue until the occupied lands are liberated.



Turkish drone attack on Shengal

ANF | SHENGAL | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Shengal was again bombed by a Turkish combat drone on Tuesday. The target of the attack at around 6 p.m. local time was Hesin Meman Dome in central Shengal.

According to information from the ground, there was extensive damage to property, but no people were harmed.

The northern Iraqi region of Shengal is the last contiguous settlement area of the Yazidi people and is permanently at the focus of Turkey's cross-border airstrikes. At the end of last week, two drone attacks were reported in the region. The targets were a residential building in the self-governing town of Khanasor (Xanesor) and a vehicle driving on highway 47 near the village of Cidalê (Jaddala), southwest of Shengal city.

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 victims 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.



Turkey bombs villages near Kobanê

ANF | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

The Turkish army and its jihadist proxies attacked villages in the west and east of Kobanê. In addition to artillery, combat drones were also used, according to information from the region. Three attacks were recorded in the village of Çarqelê, where one soldier of the Syrian army suffered injuries. Other villages attacked near Kobanê were Xerabîsan and Goran. On Tuesday evening, Turkish shells hit the village of Şêx Isa near Tel Rifat. Information about the damage caused is not available.

According to the military council of Manbij, villages west of the town were hit by a total of 65 mortar shells in October, causing property damage to residential buildings.



Turkish drone attack on car in Shengal results in casualties

ANF | SHENGAL | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

Shengal has again been bombed by a Turkish combat drone. The target of the attack was a car in the neighborhood of Elnisir in the centre of Shengal.

According to reports from the ground, a Yazidi youngster named Mihsin Şemo died as a result of the attack which left two other people injured. While those injured were hospitalized, people gathered in front of the hospital.

The northern Iraqi region of Shengal is the last contiguous settlement area of the Yazidi people and is permanently at the focus of Turkey’s cross-border airstrikes. On 1 November, a drone attacked the Qubeya Hesin Meman pilgrimage site in the centre of Shengal, causing extensive property damage, according to reports from the region. Two drone attacks were reported in the region late last week. The targets were a

residential building in the self-governing town of Xanesor (Khanasor) and a vehicle travelling on highway 47 near the village of Cidalê (Jaddala), southwest of Shengal city.

Under the pretext of “fighting the PKK”, Turkish fighter jets and drones have increasingly been carrying out air strikes in Shengal since 2017. The specific targets are mostly representatives and institutions of the Democratic Autonomous Council of Shengal (MXDŞ) and the self-defence units YBŞ/YJŞ, and the victims are mainly people from the civilian population - often survivors of the ISIS genocide of 2014.



HPG reports systematic use of chemical weapons against guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

The Turkish army carried out further attacks on guerrilla positions in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) using prohibited combat equipment on Wednesday.

“The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla launched a process of resistance of historic proportions on the first day of the occupation operation. It is continuing its legitimate defence struggle and dealing heavy blows to the occupiers. The Turkish occupying army cannot break the resistance of our forces who are led with Apoist willpower and great determination despite all the means at its disposal and is trying to achieve its goal with inhuman methods. Although war crimes have been proved and documented, the Turkish army persists in the concept of systematic use of chemical weapons,” said the press centre of the People’s Defence Forces (HPG) in its daily statement providing information about the ongoing war.

According to the HPG statement, the Turkish army used banned bombs in 14 attacks and chemical weapons against guerrilla positions twelve times on 2 November. In parallel, the invading army carried out seven air strikes with fighter jets and dozens of ground attacks with howitzers, tanks and heavy weapons.

Regarding the guerrilla resistance, the HPG said that a soldier was shot dead by a mobile sniper unit in Çemço on Wednesday. In Sîda, a surveillance camera installed by the Turkish army was destroyed. Both areas are located in the Zap region.

According to HPG information, chemical weapons were used eleven times against the Şehîd Bahoz positions in Çemço and once against the Şehîd Felat positions in Sîda. The smoke produced by the chemical weapons was introduced into the tunnel systems by wind machines. The Şehîd Felat positions were additionally attacked 13 times with bombs of extremely high impact, and another prohibited bomb was used against the Şehîd Agir position in the same area.

Air strikes were carried out on Golka and Gundê Beşîlî in Metîna and on Goşînê and Girê Bihar in Xakurke, while artillery attacks were directed against Çemço, Girê Cûdî and Girê FM.



People's Council of Shengal accuses KDP of supporting Turkish secret service MIT

ANF | SHENGAL | 4 NOVEMBER 2022

One person was killed and two others injured in a Turkish drone attack on a vehicle in Shengal on Thursday. On 1 November, the Qubeya Hesin Meman pilgrimage site in central Shengal was attacked by a drone. According to information from the region, there was considerable damage to property. In view of the last attack, the People's Council of Shengal (MXDŞ) is calling for protests and to condemn the South Kurdish governing party KDP.

“They want to prevent people from returning”

The People's Council said about the attacks: “We can see that the destruction of Shengal is planned. This is a joint MIT and KDP operation against our people. These attacks are intended to prevent people from returning to Shengal and to prevent society here from further developing its free will. There have been numerous attacks on Shengal in recent days and the Iraqi government remains silent.”

The People's Council added that “an airstrike on a civilian vehicle took place in Shengal at around 6.20pm on Thursday. In this attack, a young man named Mehsin Şemo Hito from Girzerik municipality was killed while another woman was wounded. On behalf of the Shengal Self-Government, we express our condolences to the family of the fallen and wish the wounded a speedy recovery.”

The Council continued: “This dangerous plan is directed against all Yazidis. On this basis, we call on our people to stand up and not be silent.”

This morning the people organized a demonstration in front of the Shengal People's Council building.



20 young people join guerrilla ranks in response to chemical attacks

ANF | BEHDINAN | 4 NOVEMBER 2022

20 young people from Rojava and North and East Syria have joined the guerrilla troops to avenge 17 freedom guerrillas who were martyred by the latest Turkish chemical attacks in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

“Join the victory campaign, join the guerrilla ranks,” said the statement of the group, which included the following:

“To our people and patriotic youth!

The fascist Turkish state carried out an atrocious massacre against our comrades, the children of this people, using chemical weapons. The chemical attacks have recently claimed the lives of 17 heroic freedom guerrillas. These attacks are not only targeting the revolutionaries but also the rebellious peoples who oppose occupation and want freedom. Most of our 17 comrades who were martyred by the chemical attacks fought ISIS from Kobanê to Baghouz and were injured during the battles. The coalition against ISIS also knows that the PKK deployed thousands of its commanders and fighters to Syria and Iraq to fight ISIS. America and Europe know very well who defeated ISIS in these lands.

Recently, we have seen that the invading Turkish state wants to avenge ISIS by attacking those who defeated ISIS, and this is done with the help of NATO. While Western powers established a coalition against ISIS, they also support the Turkish state, which is a gang state. This is a great hypocrisy. On October 18, images of 2 guerrillas killed by chemical attacks were published.

As the youth of North and East Syria, we will not remain silent. Silence means complicity. We, 20 young people, are taking over the weapons of our 17 comrades who were killed. Everyone should know that Kurdistan never falls short of heroes. This struggle will continue until there is a single honourable young person left. The only way to embrace our martyrs is to take over their weapons. We urge all young women and men, and our people to join the fight for freedom, to take care of their duties and responsibilities, to embrace martyrs and to join the victory campaign and the guerrilla ranks.”



Autonomous Administration condemns statement by new Swedish Foreign Minister

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) Foreign Relations Department made a statement regarding the statement by Sweden’s new Foreign Minister, Tobias Billström.

The statement by the AANES Foreign Relations Department reads as follows:

“As the peoples of Northern and Eastern Syria and all components, we are fighting against terrorism with all our units, the Autonomous Administration, military, civil and security institutions in cooperation with the International Coalition. In this context, we have made many sacrifices and, on this basis, our relations with many states have strengthened. Thanks to these sacrifices, international states supported our people. This shows that our struggle is a struggle for stability and peace for the world and humanity. In this con-

text, a friendly and cooperative relationship was established with the Swedish government and its people supporting the region.

Sweden is a state with a democratic heritage and values. It supports the struggle for democracy of oppressed peoples. On this basis, our relations were established with the improvement of security and the creation of a democratic solution for the country. Sweden showed its support to the people of the region for the implementation of a humanitarian and political solution in Syria. This attitude of the Swedish people is worth appreciation and respect.

‘Fight against global terrorism continues’

Unfortunately, we heard the statement of Sweden’s new Foreign Minister, Tobias Billström, saying that he does not support the Kurds or the YPG. Northern and Eastern Syria and its military forces are fighting against ISIS with the support of the International Coalition. It is sad to hear such a statement by the Swedish foreign minister to please the invading Turkish state and be accepted into NATO. We understand Sweden’s interests well, but it is wrong to protect its interests at the expense of our people, who are still fighting against global terrorism. Right now, our people need your support to defeat these terrorist forces. This withdrawal of support for Northern and Eastern Syria is an act against democracy and the values of the fight against terrorism. This is surrendering and bowing to the Turkish state. As a result, the Swedish state will partner with the invading Turkish state’s policies towards us and the people of the region and the Turkish occupation in the war against terrorism.

We expect the Swedish government not to violate democratic policies and maintain its place in the international community. If this happens, it will be an act that does not benefit the Swedish government, its historical relations with the Swedish people and our people, and it will not suit their values of supporting oppressed peoples. The Swedish government has to maintain a constant relationship with the peoples.”



Turkish army shelling town of Zirgan

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

At around 8.20am local time, the Turkish army began shelling the town of Zirgan in the canton of Cizîrê in Rojava with artillery shells and heavy weapons. So far, there is no information about damage and losses.

Zirgan is located about thirty kilometres east of the already occupied town of Serêkaniyê and lies on the edge of a link road between strategic routes 712 and M4.

The constant attacks by Turkey and its mercenaries on the region not only represent violations of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreements that were signed between the guarantor powers Russia and the US with Turkey in October 2019, but also war crimes. However, neither the international community, nor Moscow or Washington raised the slightest protest.



Images confirm Turkish army setting bodies of its own soldiers on fire

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

In the invasion attacks carried out by the AKP-MHP government in order to complete the Kurdish genocide and maintain its power, images emerged of the army burning the corpses of its own soldiers.

The images that reached ANF seem to have been taken in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area, on the west of Zap on 11 September 2022. Although the HPG shared their names, tags and even images, it is seen that the Turkish army, which concealed its losses, burned the bodies of its own soldiers.

The HPG Press Liaison Center (BİM) said in a statement on 12 September that the Turkish army burned the bodies of its own soldiers. The statement was as follows: “Turkish soldiers who tried to enter the Martyr Çekdar war tunnels of Girê Cûdî Resistance Area on 11 September were prevented from doing so. They were ambushed at 10am, and then hit by guerrillas. In this action, which was carried out simultaneously and in coordination with our forces in the war tunnels and our mobile teams, the invaders were later hit with hand grenades, individual weapons and by snipers. In this action, at least 10 invaders, one of whom was of high rank, were killed and 4 invaders were injured. It was determined that their names were Savaş, Fatih, Gökhan, Serkan, Burak, Naci, Harun, Mert, Oğuz and Fuat.

Turkish army bombed bodies of their own soldiers

The Turkish army bombed the place where the corpses of the soldiers were with warplanes and howitzers so that the weapons and materials on them would not fall into the hands of our forces. One drone flying over the action area was hit by our mobile teams. Later, two more invaders who took action were shot and punished with an assassination tactic.

Bodies set on fire

After bombing the area with warplanes and howitzers, the Turkish army burned the dead bodies of soldiers by bombing and setting fire to the place where their own soldiers were, with incendiary rockets dropped from attack helicopters. The area of action and the bodies of some of the killed invaders are still under the control of our forces. As a result of the actions that lasted from 10am to 4pm, a total of 12 invaders were killed, 4 injured and one drone was hit.”



Turkish attack kills an SDF fighter, injures two civilians in Qamishlo

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

According to the Press Center of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), one of the SDF fighters was targeted along with his two civilian friends by the Turkish occupying army while on leave in Qamishlo on November 6 evening.

“The car carrying our fighter Mitan Shorash and his two friends was targeted by a Turkish UAV, which resulted in the martyrdom of our comrade Mitan while his two civilian friends were injured,” the SDF statement on Monday said.



HRW calls on Turkey to stop aggravating the acute water crisis in Syria

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

Turkish authorities are exacerbating an acute water crisis that is believed to have given rise to the deadly cholera outbreak spreading across Syria and into nearby countries, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said today. All parties to the conflict need to ensure the right to clean water and health for everyone in Syria.

“The Turkish authorities have failed to ensure an adequate water flow downstream into the Syrian-held portion of the Euphrates river and a consistent water supply from Allouk water station, a critical source of water located in an area of northern Syria under their control, to areas held by Kurdish-led forces in northeast Syria. Discriminatory diversion of aid and essential services by the Syrian government as well as ongoing security and access constraints across all of Syria inhibit an adequate humanitarian and emergency response in affected parts of the country,” HRW stated.

“This devastating cholera outbreak will not be the last water-borne disease to impact Syrians if the country’s severe water problems are not immediately addressed, particularly in the northeast,” said Adam Coogle, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “Turkey can, and should, immediately stop aggravating Syria’s water crisis.”

The Syrian Health Ministry declared a cholera outbreak on September 10, 2022, with the former UN Humanitarian Relief Coordinator, Imran Riza, calling it a “serious threat to the Syrian people” and to the entire Middle East region. As of November 1, the World Health Organization had recorded 81 deaths from cholera in Syria and more than 24,000 suspected cases. Cholera has since spread to Lebanon, a country enduring multiple crises.

HRW noted that the Euphrates River is the most significant source of water and electricity for northeast Syria and other parts of the country. Since February 2021, Turkish authorities have severely restricted the flow of water to the Syrian-held portion of the river, well beneath the 500 cubic meters stipulated by a 1987 agreement between Turkey and Syria. Earlier, in July 2020, a UN OCHA report on Syria referred to a 65 percent reduction in the rate of water flowing into the Syrian-held portion of the river.

In the past year, Turkey has denied responsibility for reduced water levels, noting that it is facing its own water shortages. However, a report by an international nonprofit organization said that between January and May 2021, as water levels were sharply declining in Syria's reservoirs and nearly causing significant damage to hydroelectric dams, levels at Turkey's Atatürk Reservoir, one of several operational dams on the Turkish-held portion of the Euphrates, were climbing.

In the past year, both Syria and Iraq, which also depend on the Euphrates river for much of their food, water, and industry, have pressed Turkish authorities to increase the water levels. Iraq is also battling a grave water crisis and a cholera outbreak.

While countries have signed bilateral agreements, there is no comprehensive or long-term treaty between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq on water sharing, HRW said. Syria and Iraq have long accused Turkey of using its hegemony over the river as a political tool, while Turkey has occasionally insinuated that both Syria and Iraq are, in effect, free-riding on a Turkish resource.

HRW pointed out that, "Turkey is an occupying power in parts of northeast Syria. During its 2019 invasion, Turkey and Turkish-backed forces took control of the Allouk water station, near the town of Ras al-Ain (Serekaniye). The water station serves more than 460,000 people in Hasakeh governorate, and the UN describes it as the only viable water source for Hasakeh city and surrounding areas.

Water pumping at the station, first damaged during the 2019 military operation into northern Syria, has been greatly reduced and repeatedly interrupted, forcing people living in Hasakeh to rely on expensive and unreliable private tanker trucks.

Human Rights Watch documented Turkey's failure to ensure adequate water supplies from the Allouk station to Kurdish-held areas in Northeast Syria in March 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, 49 Syrian groups condemned what they described as Turkey's "intentional interruption of water" at the station.

Russian-brokered agreements between Turkish forces and Kurdish-led authorities to supply water through the Allouk station to communities dependent on it in exchange for providing electricity from areas under the control of Kurdish-led authorities to certain Turkish-occupied areas have repeatedly failed.

One aid worker said that as Turkey inches closer towards connecting areas in northern Syria that it occupies to its own electricity grid, it may no longer face meaningful pressure to continue supplying water from the Allouk station to Hasakeh.

Chemical weapons

Kurds demonstrate in The Hague: “OPCW, do your job!”

ANF | THE HAGUE | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Kurdish associations protested in The Hague against the inaction of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The demonstration called on the OPCW to break its silence and investigate and prevent Turkish chemical weapons use in Kurdistan. The demonstration was led by Xoşnav Ata from Germany, who has been holding a vigil for months demanding that the OPCW investigate the death of his niece Binevş Agal (Gülperin Ata) in May in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq).

The march started on the Malieveld and went past the city hall and the Dutch parliament, where a sit-in was organised during a stop. In front of the Turkish consulate there was a police attack on young demonstrators.

“Are chemical weapons accepted because the Kurds have no state?”

Regarding the international silence on Turkish war crimes in Kurdistan, the co-chair of KONGRA-GEL, Remzi Kartal, said, “Everyone is deaf and mute on this issue.” Kartal recalled that human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı, president of the Medical Chamber of Turkey, was imprisoned in Ankara for publicly advocating an investigation into the Turkish army’s use of chemical weapons after seeing footage of dying guerrilla fighters. In the same context, nine journalists were arrested in Turkey to silence the Kurdish media. “If you don’t use chemical weapons, why do you arrest them?”, Kartal asked the Turkish government in his speech.

Addressing the OPCW, Kartal said: “You cannot remain silent in the face of the massacres and the chemical gases used by the Turkish state against the Kurdish people, it is your duty, you have to live up to your responsibility. Will you agree to massacres because the Kurds do not have their own state?” The OPCW’s refusal to investigate allegations of chemical weapons use in Turkey’s invasion of southern Kurdistan is based on its statute, which states that intervention requires a request from a member state. Kartal called on the OPCW to abandon this position and immediately send a delegation to the guerrilla areas to conduct an investigation.

“Do your job!”

Journalist John Hunt of the British Committee Against Chemical Weapons said he had only one message for the OPCW and all relevant international organisations: “Our message is this: Do your job!” Hunt pointed out that there was sufficient evidence of the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish state and that independent delegations were being prevented from investigating by the KDP in Southern Kurdistan. “The Turkish state is practising terrorism against the Kurdish people. It is attacking the Kurds with terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida. The Kurdish freedom movement is against terrorism, it is a peaceful re-

sistance movement,” Hunt said. The massacres of Kurds must stop and those who use chemical weapons must be held accountable, the British journalist added.

“Those who remain silent accept it”

Another speaker at the demonstration was Abdulkarim Omar, representative of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES). Omar pointed out that the Turkish state was once again seeking genocide in Kurdistan in the run-up to the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne. Addressing the OPCW, he said, “Silence on Turkish war crimes means you accept it. It means you are a partner in the chemical attacks and massacres against the Kurdish people.”

“Turkey is encouraged by silence”

The Co-Chair of the Kurdish National Congress (KNK), Ahmet Karamus, stated that the Turkish state is using internationally outlawed chemical and biological weapons against the Kurdish people and said: “The Turkish state is encouraged by the global silence.” Karamus called on the international community to live up to its responsibilities: “On behalf of the Kurdish people, we call on the OPCW, the EU, the UN, the WHO and NATO to live up to their duties and responsibilities.”

“The Kurdish people have risen up”

The co-chair of Eastern Kurdistan’s Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK), Siyamend Moini, said that Turkey and Iran are committing massacres against the Kurdish people in cooperation. “They are also encouraged by Europe’s silence,” Moini noted. He said that the Kurdish people have risen up and are resisting “all occupiers and colonialist powers”, adding that the campaign of extermination in Kurdistan will never succeed.

“Jin, Jiyan, Azadi!”

Dilşa Osman from the Kurdish Women’s Movement in Europe (TJK-E) spoke about the leadership role of women in the liberation struggle in Kurdistan and explained that the slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi” (Woman, Life, Freedom) is now shouted worldwide and unites people.

Speaking for the ADGB alliance, Serpil Arslan pointed out that the Turkish state was using chemical weapons because the Erdogan regime was in decline. The crimes against humanity committed by the Turkish army are an expression of the dead end in which the regime finds itself, she added.

Karayilan: Why is an independent investigation being prevented?

DENİZ KENDAL | BEHDINAN | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

Murat Karayilan, commander of the Central Headquarters of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), spoke to ANF on the use of prohibited combat equipment by the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq). In the interview conducted by Deniz Kendal, Karayilan addressed the following issues, among others:

Release of disturbing video footage

Commenting on the release of the disturbing video footage of the dying guerrilla fighters Baz Mordem (Mehmet Can Evren) and Helbest Koçerîn (Kevser Ete), Karayilan said: "I would like to apologise to all patriotic people and especially to the mothers and families of the martyrs for releasing the footage of Heval (Comrade) Baz and Hevala Helbest. I assume that the families and our people understand that we had to do this so that the reality here on the ground can be seen in a concise way."

The video caused an outcry among the Kurdish people, and there were also strong reactions from democratic circles. The Turkish state immediately denied having or using chemical weapons. In order to nip the discussion in the bud, journalists were arrested in Turkey. The arrest of the prominent forensic scientist Şebnem Korur Fincancı triggered international criticism, and the World Medical Association and other organisations joined the call of the President of the Medical Association for an independent investigation into the allegations.

Why is there no independent investigation?

Karayilan stated: "Our people, our friends, human rights organisations and all independent circles that have a conscience can be completely sure of one thing: The information we publish on the use of banned bombs and chemical weapons by the Turkish armed forces in Southern Kurdistan does not contain any exaggeration or error. It is verified information. We have been reporting continuously on this side of the war since the attack on Gare in February 2021. The Turkish state has been silent about this for the past two years and has not reacted at all. Only last year [Defence Minister] Hulusi Akar made a statement and said: 'We do not use chemical weapons, only pepper gas.' However, pepper gas is also a chemical agent and, according to the law of war, it is forbidden in military conflicts and especially in closed spaces. The Turkish state has signed the Chemical Weapons Convention and pledged not to use such weapons. Yet it uses not only pepper gas, but various lethal agents with different effects on people. It wants to prevent any public debate about this.

The last time concrete evidence was presented, the Turkish state claimed on the same day, without any investigation, that it was PKK propaganda. Our army is clean, there are no such weapons in our inventory', they said. The accusations were immediately denied and the hectic denial showed the consciousness of guilt. At this point I would like to repeat the call that valuable politicians and human rights activists have

already made: If the army is clean and the allegations are bogus, then an independent delegation can be allowed to investigate at the scene. This could, after all, prove that everything is clean.”

On the role of NATO and international organisations

Karayilan said that Turkey is encouraged to commit war crimes at the international level: “When the Turkish state saw that there was no reaction from international circles to the use of prohibited weapons, it dared to use even more chemical gases, tactical nuclear weapons and thermobaric bombs in 2022. The silent attitude of international institutions and especially the support of NATO countries for the Turkish operations, as well as the fact that certain countries offer such weapons to Turkey or manufacture them with it, indicates their complicity. At the very least, the silence of the international institutions as well as the supportive position of the states concerned has encouraged and even made the Turkish state overconfident. In the 21st century, it openly and daily uses dozens of weapons against the freedom fighters of the Kurdish people, which are prohibited by the agreements it has signed.

Is it possible that the international powers do not know about it? No, it is not. So how can the silence of international bodies like the OPCW be interpreted? It is quite obvious how rock-solidly the AKP/MHP war regime assumes that the people of Kurdistan will not be assisted in the international arena. This encourages it to ruthlessly violate international law.”

The Turkish state wants results before the onset of winter

Karayilan pointed out that the Turkish state has repeatedly used poison gas against Kurds since the Dersim massacre in 1937. He warned, however, that war crimes should not be seen as the norm, saying: “It is true that there have been such operations in the past, but there is a difference with today’s operations. In the last two years, and especially since April this year, the Turkish state has been using banned weapons in a very systematic way dozens of times a day. This has to be seen. Chemical weapons have been planned as a basic method to break the resistance of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla. It is imperative that all people with a conscience take a stand against this brutal inhumanity. It is not an isolated case that occurs in a state of greatest distress, but a basic procedure to perpetrate genocide and come to a conclusion. Because Hulusi Akar and Tayyip Erdogan see that they have nevertheless made no progress with this so far, the operations are being intensified because they desperately want to have a result before the onset of winter.”

Gas masks confiscated by the KDP

Commenting on the media reports about the gas masks allegedly bought by the guerrillas and confiscated by the KDP in the spring, Murat Karayilan said: “These masks were not bought by the guerrillas. They were masks bought and sent as part of a campaign by friendly and democratic circles from Europe who stand for human rights and do not want people to die from chemical weapons. Because they did not know how to reach the guerrillas, they brought the masks to Rojava. Only then did we find out about it. From there, the masks were to be secretly transported to the guerrillas in a civilian vehicle. On the way, the KDP grabbed them and even pretended that they had struck a big blow. That is the story of these masks. They were brought in through the efforts of European friends and confiscated by the KDP.”

Turkish Defence Minister not responding independent investigation calls while denying chemical weapons use again

MEDYANEWS | 4 NOVEMBER 2022

Turkish Defence Minister, Hulusi Akar, who went to Hakkari on Wednesday to inspect the Turkish Armed Forces' (TAF) border troops, denied that Turkish security forces used chemical weapons against Kurdish fighters in cross-border operations in an interview with HaberTürk on Thursday.

Calls for an investigation into Turkey's alleged chemical attacks increased after video footage which shows a group of soldiers at the mouth of a cave with a device that the People's Defence Forces (HPG) says is being used to deliver chemical weapons into the cave was released by the HPG on 18 September.

Akar said that various international organisations have information on the military weapons of several states. "It is impossible for us to hide the fact that we have chemical weapons," he said.

On the other hand, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) recently published a video reminding viewers that "An investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons can only be triggered at the request of an OPCW Member State."

Stating that these allegations were not brought to light for the first time, Akar said, "We have really been in favour of international law throughout our history of combating terrorism. We really do our best not to harm any innocent people."

However, according to chemical and biological weapons expert Jan Van Aken of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), Akar had already admitted to TAF's use of prohibited chemicals in military operations in a speech on February 2021 when he said the TAF "only uses tear gas" in the operation in Iraq's Mount Gara.

"Probably he did not know, but using tear gas in a military operation is prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention," Van Aken said.

As Akar stated, the allegation that TAF used chemical weapons against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) guerrillas in its cross-border military operations is not new. According to reports more than a year before the last footage, Turkey was again accused of using chemical weapons against Kurdish fighters.

The HPG commander Murat Karayılan said on Wednesday that there had been no exaggerations in his side's allegations of Turkish chemical weapons use and called on international bodies to launch a proper investigation in the field.

In the interview, Karayılan also mentioned the gas masks seized by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) on April. "Those masks were not purchased by the guerrilla. They were the masks that were bought and sent via a campaign carried out by European democratic and human rights, that is, they do not want people to die by chemicals," he explained.

The RiseUp4Rojava platform had set up a donation drive to buy gas masks for Kurdish fighters in northern Iraq, where reports say Turkish forces have employed the use of chemical weapons hundreds of times in September 2022.

As calls for independent international investigations grow, no organisation has yet to launch any efforts to investigate.

Akar also stated that Turkey has filed criminal and compensation lawsuits against those who made the allegations.

Turkey's top human rights advocate, the chair of the Turkish Medical Association (TBB) Şebnem Korur Fincancı was arrested on 26 October over her comments of allegations of Turkey's use of chemical weapons.



YJA Star guerrilla who survived Turkish chemical attack describes her experiences

ANF | BEHDINAN | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

Zilan Avrîn is one of the guerrilla fighters who resisted the Turkish invasion forces for 47 days in the Şehîd Berxwedan tunnel in the Zap region. Speaking to ANF, the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) fighter told of the war crimes committed by the Turkish army.

“My name is Zilan Avrîn. I come from Afrin, Rojava. My family is patriotic. I was very moved by the attack on Afrin in 2018. The Turkish state killed indiscriminately, including children, elderly people, women. One day my mother was beaten by members of these gangs. This was very hard for me, and this incident became the reason for me to join the struggle. Later, I joined the guerrillas and came to the Zap region. In the Şehîd Şahin resistance area, there were preparations against the enemy. It was a very intense phase, but all the friends participated in the preparations in a very motivated and strong-willed way. Our aim was to inflict great losses on the enemy. Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] said, “If you don't sweat in life, you will spill your blood in war”. We are working hard for Rêber Apo and our people.

The enemy launched an invasion operation on Zap in April. Our preparations against this operation in Şehîd Şahin were complete. Every time the enemy tried to airdrop troops, they were struck by the guerrillas and failed. Before the invasion began, the area was bombed from the air. Afterwards, the enemy invaded the area. Because he was not capable of close combat, he began to attack with chemical weapons. We took action with the means at our disposal. After taking our positions as four friends, we carried out strong actions against the Turkish troops. The Turkish soldiers used all the technical and chemical weapons from their inventory, but they could not break the will of the guerrillas. Against the enemy's technical and chemical weapons, we had only one Kalashnikov. Nevertheless, the enemy could not approach the tunnel.

Our possibilities were very limited

Since the enemy could not fight face to face, they bombed constantly. In the last bombardment, the tunnel was damaged and we were hit. At the moment of the explosion, Heval (Comrade) Bager was thrown to one side and I to the other. We were seriously hurt. The dust that formed after the explosion made it even more difficult for us. I went to Heval Bager but he was no longer there. I found him on the other side. He had been hit in the head and, like me, was struggling a lot. As we could not walk, we tried to crawl down to our friends. When Heval Bager reached the manga, he lost consciousness. Our resources were very limited. We did not have enough medicine to save a person's life. It was the companionship that kept us alive. I checked on Heval Bager. His ears were clogged with dust and he was in severe pain from the blow to his head. He could not stand up. I forgot my own pain as I tended to Heval Bager, but I too could not get up. We were injured by the blast.

Even wounded, Heval Bager said: 'No matter what happens, no matter how limited our means, we will fight, we will not allow the enemy to occupy our land comfortably. Their strength lies in their technical means, ours is our belief in Rêber Apo.' We had nothing but our Kalashnikov, but our conviction and will were stronger than the enemy's technology. Rêber Apo always says that the best technique is man.

To penetrate the tunnel, the enemy used an extreme amount of poison gas. In the last chemical attack, they first used tear gas. Of course, the tear gas troubled us until we took our precautions. But then we took action against the enemy.

After the tear gas, the enemy used a burning gas that smelled like rubber. Then they used a gas that was sweet to the taste and odourless. The effect of this chemical weapon was very strong; we had headaches, our pulse rose very quickly, we became unconscious. When we tried to get up again, we felt like we were going to fall. Of course, we took immediate action. Then they used a yellow chemical gas. It was a gas that inflicted wounds on the body, caused headaches and stomachaches, and accelerated the heartbeat. It was a very powerful chemical. We could no longer lift our arms. Although we were wearing clothes, we had skin lesions on our backs, stomachs and fingers.

Different chemicals used 24 times in one day

Three of us were very affected by the chemical weapons. For example, the others talked to me but I could not answer them, nor could I stand up. I could not even lift my arm. The chemical weapons also had this effect on Heval Avzem and Şervan. Because the enemy used chemicals one after another, we could not open the door of our manga for three days and could not get oxygen. This affected us very much. Accordingly, we became tired. This situation lasted for a week.

Meanwhile, the enemy tried to enter the tunnel again. We could hear the conversations between them, they told us that they had entered the tunnel from the north. However, they exaggerated because they were very afraid. Since they could not enter, they told their commander that they would ask us to surrender. At the same time, they knew the will of the PKK members very well.

Because they could not enter the tunnel, they detonated a bomb and thus sealed the tunnel. Then they used chemicals again. They used different chemical weapons 24 times in one day. When they used a yellow

chemical, a yellow liquid came out of our nose and mouth. Of course, we didn't know what effect it would have. Yellow liquid came out of the nose in particular.

For the Turkish state, its soldiers are of no importance

We planned an action against the enemy who used chemicals so intensively. We couldn't do it without masks anyway. We carried out an action with masks and oxygen bottles against the soldiers who were standing at the entrance of the tunnel. At that moment, Heval Bager and I noticed the stench of a burnt corpse. When we looked outside, we saw with our own eyes that the enemy had thrown the bodies of several soldiers on top of each other. For the Turkish state, its soldiers are of no importance.

After the action, we returned to our place. The others had made something to eat. We had no appetite because of the smell of the corpses and the chemical weapons. Heval Avzem and Bager insisted that we should eat something and fortify ourselves. They also fed us sugary things to give us energy. Chemical weapons harm all living things. For example, in our camp there were small mice. These mice were bloated after the chemical weapons attack. Normally, mice run away when they sense movement, but they were so under the influence of the chemical weapons that they could not even run. It also bothered us that the chemicals were destroying our things. The water we drank from the glass left a bitter taste. So we tried not to use anything that the chemical had come into contact with. We took precautions to prevent the chemical from coming into contact with our spoons, glasses and supplies.

We did everything to defeat the enemy

The facilities in Şehid Şahin were limited. There was no water to wash our hands and face. For three months we had to wear the same clothes. Both the chemicals and the dust caused by the attack stuck to our clothes. That is why we always had a very bitter taste when our hands touched the clothes and we touched our faces afterwards.

Because of the chemical weapons and explosions, our hair also fell out. One day we had the opportunity to collect our clothes and wash them. It was around six o'clock. The enemy's air movements had begun. Two by two, we went to wash clothes. I kept watch and Heval Bêrîvan did the laundry. Despite wearing a mask, she could no longer stand the strong smell of chemicals in the tunnel and left. Heval Arjîn came in her place.

Since our clothes could not dry, they immediately became contaminated with the chemicals and we had it on our skin again. We changed our clothes as often as possible once a week, but some of us had no spare clothes. Our hair kept falling out because of the chemical weapons. We wanted to cut it off. When Heval Arjîn told Heval Bager, he was very impressed and said: 'It's too early, wait for that.' When the enemy carried out an air raid or used chemical weapons, our hair would get so tangled that we couldn't comb it. Our options were very limited, so we cut them off.

We risked everything to defeat the enemy. That was the attitude of my friends. It is not easy to describe the attitude, the struggle and the resistance. Heval Avzem had not known Heval Bager for long, but she was very impressed by his attitude. She said: 'I want to be like Heval Bager and Viyan, to reach their level.' All our friends are trying to be worthy of this people. Heval Bager led a selfless struggle on the model of

Rêber Apo. He said that no matter how limited our resources were, he felt the Chairman in the most difficult moments and gained strength from him.

All the friends fought a great battle for 47 days. The companionship between each other was very impressive. When we looked outside one day, we saw two Turkish soldiers fighting. They were clinging to each other, insulting each other. When we killed soldiers, we said to the enemy, 'Come and get your corpses', but they did not even care about burying their own soldiers. They just burnt the bodies of the soldiers who were with them a few minutes ago.

They burnt the bodies

I have been in the Kurdish freedom movement for years and have met many valuable friends, but the companionship of Heval Bager and Şerzan was different. For example, if a friend was not motivated, they always supported him. Heval Bager used to say: 'I am very touched when a friend of mine is not doing well'. We were together many days, but never once did anyone hurt anyone. Everyone always said: 'We will be successful no matter what.' We fought with this conviction and determination. All the friends gave each other motivation and strength.

The enemy had intensified their chemical weapons attacks in the last few days. Some of our supplies were destroyed in the chemical attack and we could not use them, our drinking water was poisoned. We could not wash or drink.

Three soldiers had entered the tunnel. One was called Aslan, one was called Bora and the other was called Melih. Two of them died, while Melih was injured. Later, he also died. The enemy then intensified their attacks even more. They wanted to get their dead, so we let them have them, but then they burned those bodies.

When the Turkish state detonated its soldiers, everything around us was also destroyed. We wanted to sit down together and discuss how to get out of the tunnel. Heval Bager said very clearly: 'I will not leave Şehîd Şahin under any circumstances.' We said that we would not leave the area either, we would only go out of the cave. Then we could attack the enemy. Because Heval Bager did not want to go out, Heval Avzem and Arîn did not want to go either. Based on a joint decision, four friends stayed there. We knew that they would carry out a self-sacrificing action. We said goodbye to them. It was very difficult for us to say goodbye to our comrades, with whom we had fought for days in the same place. When we came out, the distance between us and the enemy was not great; it was about 25 metres. A few hours after we left the cave, there was an explosion sound. We knew that the others had carried out an action. When we heard the explosion, we felt as if a piece of our soul was being torn out. We know that these brutal attacks by the enemy will not go unanswered and that the friends will be avenged.

The party has thousands of Avzem and Bager

In any case, we knew that we had to pass on the perspectives that our friends had given us. We had a long way to go. For our people to know the truth, we had to deliver the documents we had intact. Our people needed to see what happened. On the way, we were both hungry and thirsty. Some of us ate vine leaves. We thought, never mind, as long as we get there. We had a big responsibility. Whatever was going to happen, we had to pass on the photos and recordings to our friends. On the way, there were plenty of air op-

erations by the enemy. The enemy relied heavily on their technology, but still could not stop us. We also had photos and videos of soldiers with us.

Our people should see this truth. Heval Avzem and Heval Bager are not only the daughters or sons of one family, as the martyrs are the children of all the people of Kurdistan. Everyone must stand behind them. Now is the time of the people's revolutionary war and the liberation of Rêber Apo. What we want from our people is that they know their enemy better and know how the guerrillas fight in the mountains. Because there are thousands of Avzem and Bager in this party. Those who are against the enemy should do what they can. The guerrillas are the people and the people are the guerrillas. Our people should not be silent about these brutal attacks of the enemy. The people of Kurdistan should be proud of the guerrillas and claim their martyrs. This is what we expect from our people.

The enemy called the invasion operation 'Claw Lock'. He wanted to destroy us in the Zap and was trapped there himself. In Avaşin he experienced the same defeat as in the areas of Metîna and Bakur. No matter what weapons the enemy attacks with, they will not be able to break our will. They will not be able to invade our land so easily. The enemy also knows that they have been defeated since the launch of invasion operations, but they cannot admit it. I repeat again the promise that I will fight this enemy on the line of Heval Bager, Avzem, Zilan. We will definitely avenge our fallen friends. The price we pay does not weaken us; on the contrary, it intensifies our anger and hatred towards the enemy. We will take revenge for every loss. As Heval Bager said, we will give any price we have to pay for our people and our chairman. We will never kneel or bow before the enemy. No matter how difficult our circumstances, we will not desist from our struggle."



561 intellectuals call for action against Turkey's crimes in Kurdistan

ANF | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

The Turkish state continues its attacks against the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) where its army has been conducting an invasion operation since mid-April. The Turkish military has since remained unable to break the resistance of guerrilla forces who are mostly acting in mobile groups in the scope of the "new-era guerrilla warfare" in response to the increasingly ongoing airstrikes and attacks with chemical and banned weapons.

According to Rojnews agency, 561 intellectuals from Kurdistan and abroad condemned the Turkish state's invasion attacks, calling for a clear stand and action against the use of chemical weapons and banned bombs.

"As intellectuals, writers, activists, journalists, artists, politicians, scientists and environmental activists, we strongly condemn the occupation, attacks, killings, and the use of banned and chemical weapons, said the joint statement released on Saturday.

Pointing to the Turkish state's vicious war against the pro-freedom population and revolutionaries, the statement continued, "The Turkish state, on the one hand, uses chemical and banned weapons, while it, on the other hand, arrests journalists, civil and political activists in North Kurdistan. In Rojava, it carries outUCAV (unmanned combat aerial vehicle) attacks against civilians, and in South Kurdistan, it slays freedom fighters thanks to the collaboration of traitors. 80 freedom fighters have been martyred as a result of Turkish use of chemical weapons."

The statement cited Turkey's genocidal aggression on the Kurdish people and the nature of Kurdistan as proof of the Turkish state fascism and invasion, and an attempt to change the demography of Kurdistan.

In the face of the war crimes and inhumane crimes committed against the Kurdish people and freedom guerrillas, the UN, human rights advocates, international bodies against the use of banned weapons, parliamentarians, Europe and world countries remain silent, said the statement which continued, "The governments of Iraq and Kurdistan Region have failed to take a stand against these attacks. The KDP aids the Turkish state's war against our people and revolutionaries. The KDP does not only prevent gas masks from reaching the guerrillas but also blocks journalists and international bodies that want to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons on the ground."

Appealing to international bodies, the intellectuals called for action against the Turkish state's ecocide and dirty war against the freedom guerrillas in Kurdistan.

"With these terror attacks, the Turkish state violates the sovereignty of the soil of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region and harms nature. This crime is a part of the strategy to occupy Iraq and the Kurdistan region within the AKP-MHP government's neo-Ottoman project. This silence and inaction only cause the Turkish state to increase its attacks," the statement said.

Intellectuals urged all political parties and civil society organizations to adopt a stand against the Turkish state's war crimes in South Kurdistan.



Turkish police arrest dozens in İstanbul protest against Turkey's use of chemical weapons

MEDYANEWS | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

The Turkish police arrested dozens of people and obstructed journalists during a protest in İstanbul organised to call on international organisations to investigate allegations about Turkey's use of chemical weapons in north Iraq.

The district governor of Beyoğlu in İstanbul, referring to a general ban on demonstrations, refused to grant permission for the “Humanity March”, organised by several institutions, including pro-Kurdish People’s Democratic Party (HDP).

The protestors joined the march to protest against the silence of the international community despite footage shared by Kurdish fighters showing devices used by the Turkish military in north Iraq in operations against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Those devices allegedly contained chemical weapons used against Kurdish fighters positioned inside caves.

The police surrounded the protestors gathered in Beyoğlu’s İstiklal street, as well as recording them from above using drones, and also physically pushed away journalists who were trying to report on the protest, Artı Gerçek reported.

They later also surrounded the HDP district headquarters preventing several HDP MPs from joining the protest, including former co-chair Sezai Temelli.

Footage shared on social media show HDP MPs Musa Piroğlu surrounded by police forces.

“The İstanbul police are doing the same thing again. Whenever there is a demonstration for rights, whenever we pursue the facts, the police block us,” Piroğlu said.

“They have been holding me here for one hour,” he added. “This is police terror. This is state terror. You will answer for it.”



Thousands protest in Silopi against Turkish use of chemical weapons

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

Thousands staged a march in the town of Tilqebın in Şırnak’s Silopi district on Sunday in protest at the Turkish state’s use of chemical weapons in its invasion operation in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), which has been ongoing since mid-April.

The ‘March for Humanity’ against the use of chemical weapons is organized by the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), Free Women’s Movement (TJA), Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), Peace Mothers Assembly, Federation of Legal Solidarity Associations with the Families of Prisoners and Convicts (MED TUHAD-FED), the Association of Assistance, Solidarity, Unity and Culture for Families Losing Their Relatives in the Cradle of Civilizations (MEBYA-DER), Mesopotamia Cultural Center (MKM), Migration Platform and Mesopotamia Ecology Movement.

While the road leading to Khabour Border Crossing was closed by the police and the army, the crowd gathered at different locations before marching towards HDP Tilqebîn branch office.

The people were attacked by the soldiers with pressure water and gas bombs after reaching the town. The march to Khabour Border Crossing began after the arrival of hundreds from several meeting points, chanting “PKK is the people and the people are here”, “Long live the guerrilla resistance”.

The people were stopped by the army once again after reaching the Silk Road on the way to the border crossing. Closing the road to traffic, they were attacked with pressure water and gas bombs again. Not dispersed after the crackdown, the protesters continued their march through the side streets after keeping the road closed to traffic for a while.

One of the rubber bullets fired by the police hit HDP deputy Nuran İmir. In the face of the violent crackdown, demonstrators erected barricades with trash cans on the streets, responding to the attack with stones.

In the meantime, soldiers did not only fire into the air for minutes in front of the HDP building but also attacked the locals attending a wedding ceremony in the town. The resistance against the violent crackdown continued for hours.

On the other hand, journalists covering the demonstration were also brutally attacked by soldiers and prevented from doing their job.

Turkish troops raided several flats in the wake of the demonstration and detained dozens of people including TMMOB (Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects) Mardin İKK Secretary Aydın Aslan, HDP Mersin provincial co-chair Hoşyar Sarıyıldız, Eğitim Sen Mardin branch co-chair Mustafa Bozan and BES Mardin branch representative Mehmet Emin Özel.



‘March for Humanity’ in Istanbul against chemical weapons

ANF | ISTANBUL | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

Despite a large police presence, blockades and violence, many people took to the streets of Istanbul on Sunday to denounce Turkey’s use of chemical weapons in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and to demand an independent investigation by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) and its organising body HDK (Peoples’ Democratic Congress), together with the United Fighting Forces (BMG) alliance, called for the demonstration under the slogan “March for Humanity”. Leading politicians, members of parliament and activists from Kurdish civil society took part in the protest.

March to İstiklal Avenue

The original route of the demonstration was from Taksim Square in the central Beyoğlu district to Tünel Square via İstiklal Avenue. The police took up positions with numerous anti-riot units, barricades were set up in the side streets leading to İstiklal and plainclothes police officers were assembled to patrol the area and remove posters with the slogan “Chemical Weapons Operations are War Crimes - Come to the March for Humanity” that had been put up in many places in the district during the night. Nevertheless, they managed to get past the barriers on almost every side street. The slogans “Shoulder to shoulder against fascism”, “No to war crimes”, “The oppressors cannot intimidate us” and “Martyrs are immortal” were shouted again and again.

Sezai Temelli: “Those who do not revolt against chemical weapons are part of the crime”

Crowds gathered in front of the Istanbul Bar Association headquarters for a rally, which was immediately surrounded by police. HDP deputies Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit, Fatma Kurtalan, Sezai Temelli, Tayip Temel and Ayşe Sürücü moved across Mis Street to İstiklal Avenue and also ended up in the encirclement. Temelli gave a much-applauded speech: “We are facing a regime that is trying to impose itself with arrests and detentions against all those who take a stand against war. Şebnem Korur Fincancı is one of them. Without any legal basis, she is in prison. Why? Because she has spoken out in favour of investigating allegations of the use of chemical weapons. We are also making this demand. Because the use of chemical weapons is a blatant and brutal violation of international law. Those who do not revolt against it are part of the crime. We all experience together how devastating war is. To speak out against war is to speak out against poverty. That is why we say, raise your voices wherever you are. If you are afraid to speak up, all you will be left with in the end is what keeps this cowardly government alive: Guns and violence.”

Temelli announced that the protests of his party and affiliates would continue until the goal of an independent investigation into the allegations was achieved.

Many detained

An unprecedented number of detentions were made on the fringes of the demonstration. Numerous people were harassed by the police and dragged off the street with their hands tied behind their backs. Among those affected are several activists of the Kurdish Prisoner Solidarity, who have been demanding the release of their sick relatives for months with their weekly “justice vigils” in Istanbul. A “March for Humanity” has also taken place today in the Kurdish town of Silopi in the province of Şırnak.

Protest in front of OPCW continues

ANF | THE HAGUE | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

Xosnav Ata, who lost his nieces Gülperin Ata and Mihriban Ata in the chemical attacks of the Turkish state, has been carrying out a vigil in front of the OPCW for three months. Ata calls on the OPCW to step into action and launch an investigation into the chemical attacks of the Turkish state in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The vigil of Xoşnav Ata in front of the OPCW continued on its 95th day with more visitors, who included a delegation from KOMAW (Association of Relatives of the Martyrs and Disappeared).

Xoşnav Ata stated that he drew strength from solidarity visits which, he said, proved his rightfulness. Ata called on the people to do their humanitarian duty.

Background

The fact that the Organisation for the Prohibition of the Use of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has no interest in reports on Turkish use of chemical weapons in Kurdistan has been known for some time. However, it is also no secret that this is a violation of its obligations. To bring this to public attention, Xwaşnav Ata launched a “Justice Vigil” in front of the OPCW headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands on August 5. Every day between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., Kurdish activist from Germany appear in front of the building to remind those responsible of the reasons for the creation of the OPCW and to demand their action against Turkey’s use of toxic weapons in Kurdistan.

“The Turkish state killed my niece with chemicals. Why won't you investigate?” is written on a purple cardboard sign held by Ata. It refers to the guerrilla fighter Binevş Agal (Gülperin Ata), who died at the end of May while resisting the Turkish invasion at Kuro Jahro in the Zap region of southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). The People’s Defense Forces (HPG) had said about the circumstances of the death that the Turkish army had fired chemical warfare agents over several days against guerrilla positions where Binevş Agal was in action. For months, the HPG has been reporting daily documented chemical weapons attacks by the military of the Turkish state.

But the OPCW, of which the Turkish state has been a member since 1997, prefers to remain silent. Despite all the reports by the HPG on the use of chemical weapons, calls by Kurdish institutions, research results by relevant organisations and individuals, as well as mass protests by the Kurdish diaspora community, the OPCW is not willing to become active regarding the accusations against Ankara. Even attempts by Kurdish delegations to hold talks with the organisation’s officials have been repeatedly refused. And even the receipt of a dossier with concrete documents and evidence of the use of chemical weapons was out of the question for the OPCW. Turkey can break the international law of war with impunity.

“I do not and will not accept this,” says Xwaşnav Ata. He states it cannot be that “the children of the Kurdish people” are murdered by brutal chemical weapons attacks by the Turkish state, and the OPCW stands by and watches. “The public should know that the only goal of our society is to experience justice. We

want the OPCW to investigate Turkey's chemical weapons use and punish it accordingly. As long as this demand remains unfulfilled, I will not end my protest.”

Another of Ata's nieces was martyred in Dersim last December.



Iran

Protests continue in Iran and Eastern Kurdistan

ANF | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

The protests, which started right after the murder of young Kurdish woman Jina Amini by the “morality police” in Tehran, on 16 September, continue.

The protests, which spread to approximately 200 cities, have been continuing for the last few days, especially under the leadership of students.

Sine University students in Eastern Kurdistan also protested on 31 October, despite the attacks of the regime forces.

While students protested in Meriwan, young people took to the streets and lit fires in Saqqez.

As the fortieth day commemoration of the 3 people murdered in the city of Shino in Eastern Kurdistan, the shutters were closed and protest actions were carried out.

A funeral ceremony was held for a 16-year-old boy named Komar Deroftade, who was murdered in the city of Piranşar.

Koma's father, in his speech at his son's grave, said that he was proud of his son.

A funeral was held for 16-year-old Sarina Saadi, who was also murdered in the city of Sine. The ceremony, attended by hundreds of people, turned into a protest action.

Protests continued in many cities of Iran, and especially in universities. University administrations threatened to expel students from school.

The persecution of the protesters by the Iranian judiciary continues. According to Tasnim news agency, indictments have been prepared against 1,000 people since the beginning of the protests. Officials reported that the activists will be tried publicly in revolution courts.

The exact number of those detained and arrested could not be learned. However, according to opposition sources, between 200 and 450 people were killed and around 25,000 people were detained.



Hengaw says 17 Kurdish young people killed on 40th day of Jina Amini's murder

ANF | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

According to the latest report published by the Iranian human rights organization Hengaw, 17 young Kurds were killed by the direct fire of the police on the 40th day of Jina Amini. On that day, 26 October, a ceremony was held for Amini and many actions in different cities were attacked by police.

Three children killed

According to the Hengaw Human Rights Organization and Statistics and Documentation Center, the police attacked demonstrations in different cities on the 40th day of Amini's murder. As a result of the attacks, 6 Kurds were killed in Mahabad, 5 in Sanandaj, 3 in Baneh, and a total of 3 in Kasrîşirin and Piranşehir. While 3 of the murdered were women, 3 of them were under 18.

According to the report, Ebrahim Mirzaei from Dehgolan and a Kurdish youth from Sanandash died from suffocation from tear gas, while a young woman named Sarina Saedi from Sanandaj died of cerebral haemorrhage due to multiple police baton blows she received in the head.



University students from Rojhilat join the guerrilla ranks

ANF | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

A group of young students from Eastern Kurdistan announced their participation in the guerrilla struggle. They justify their taking up the armed struggle with the repression and oppression by the Mullah regime. Since the murder of the Kurdish woman Jina Mahsa Amini by the Iranian morality police, Eastern Kurdistan and Iran have been in revolt. According to human rights organisations, 270 to 320 people, including 30 minors, have been killed since September. More than 25,000 people have been arrested. The uprisings have spread to around 200 towns.

On 26 October, the protests in Eastern Kurdistan entered a new phase. In the face of increasing threats and attacks from the regime, thousands of people took to the streets. Students and especially young women took the lead in the protest.

According to Nuçe Ciwan, a group of young people from Rojhilat Kurdistan joined the guerrilla ranks to resist oppression and persecution and to defend the revolution.

The statement made by young people from Sina Kurdistan University in Kurdish and Persian includes the following:

“To the Kurdish people and the oppressed peoples of Iran,

As a group of young students at the University of Sine in Eastern Kurdistan, we declare our joining the guerrilla to resist all forms of oppression and to defend the revolution of women’s liberation that has started in Eastern Kurdistan and Iran. 44 years of resistance and legitimate struggle of the Kurdish and Iranian people against the oppression of the bloody and patriarchal regime in Iran have reached the final stage.

The murder of Jina Amini has inflamed the hatred of all nationalities. The unification of the legitimate demands and the self-organisation of the people are an important step and bring us towards a new tomorrow. In this situation, women and youth, as the most oppressed sections of society, are shattering the pillars of power and laying the foundation for a free life in a historic alliance. The women’s slogans stand for freedom and life. Their words are the harbingers of unity and victory of the people’s freedom forces over the conservative forces of the region that consider women as slaves. That is why the occupying states of Iran and Turkey are attacking the people and the guerrillas with their last resources and brutally.

As women and youth, we call on Kurdish, Persian, Azerbaijani, Baloch, Arab and Gilak women and youth to take revenge on the occupiers, to lead the women’s liberation revolution to victory and to organise more strongly at the class and national level. In this way, we will widen the fields of struggle. In order to defend and sustain the revolution in the streets, we have to expand the field of struggle in the mountains and strengthen the guerrilla as a force of organising women and youth. Join the guerrilla to protect the revolution of women, the freedom of women and society and the freedom of Kurdistan.”



Kurdish artist sentenced to death in Iran for participating in protests

MEDYANEWS | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

Saman Yasin, a 27-year-old Kurdish artist and songwriter, was sentenced to death by a Tehran court on Friday for participating in mass protests in the country.

The court made its ruling in 10 minutes during a hearing that was broadcast live on TV, Artı Gerçek reported.

The songwriter, composer, and rapper from Kermanshah was arrested by Iranian security forces at his home on 2 October and was later charged with 11 accounts including Moharebeh (war against God).

The court's decision triggered further protests in Iran, particularly in the country's Kurdish-populated Rojhilat region.

The protests that have been sweeping the country since September started after a 22-year-old Kurdish woman lost her life in hospital due to brain injuries she suffered following her arrest by the Iranian security forces for disobeying the hijab code.



Iranian forces detain journalist who interviewed Jina Amini's father

ANF | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

Iranian human rights organizations reported that journalist Nazila Marufyan, from East Kurdistan and living in Tehran, was detained in a raid on her home on Sunday.

Nazila Marufyan was born in Saqqiz in Eastern Kurdistan and lives in Tehran.

Marufyan's interview with Jina Amini's father, Amjad, was published on the website *Mustaqil* on 19 October.

Marufyan added the link of a comment stating that she was aware of what would happen to her after the interview and said: "I do not intend to commit suicide and I do not have any disease that could push me to do so."

The *Mustaqil* site later published the interview in which Jina's father, Amjad, denied the authorities' alleged 'health problems' his daughter was suffering from. The interview was published with the headline "Jina Amini's father: They're lying!"

After Nazila Marufian was taken into custody, she was sent to the notorious Evin prison. The jail has been exposed for years for the torture carried out there.

According to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 54 journalists have been arrested since 16 September. About 10 of them were released on bail.



Iran executes 15 more prisoners amid protests

MEDYANEWS | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

The Iranian authorities executed 15 prisoners in Zahedan Prison on 6 November, amid the ongoing protests sparked by the death of Jîna (Mahsa) Amînî by the morality police, Yeni Yaşam news site reported.

The Initiative of Baluchi Activists, a local civil society group, said the prison administration had not informed the families of the victims before executing them.

The prison authorities also left the information requests of prisoners' families about the executions unanswered, and only two executed prisoners had been identified as of Monday, the group said.

The southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan has been a focal point of protests since anti-government demonstrations spread across Iran after the 16 September death of Jîna (Mahsa) Amini, who is believed to have died of injuries inflicted by the country's morality police.

The protests have continued in cities across the country in spite of security forces' violent interventions, leaving Iran's theocratic government under mounting pressure.

The Iranian parliament has passed a law that enables the death penalty for activists arrested while participating in protests, reported Turkish news site Gazete Karınca.

About a thousand people have begun to be tried in open courts in the capital Tehran, but there is no reliable news flow from more than 20 other provinces where demonstrators have been arrested, Gazete Karınca reported.

Iran Human Rights (IHR) and Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM) reported an increase in the number of executions in 2021. At least 333 people were executed that year, and the authorities failed to announce the vast majority of these executions, the report said.



Iran protests, at least 304 people including 41 children killed by security forces

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

According to information obtained by Iran Human Rights, at least 304 people including 41 children have been killed by security forces in the nationwide protests so far.

Of the 41 children, nine were girls and three were Afghan-nationals. The 41 children were all 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.

Death Toll by Province

Protesters have been killed in 22 provinces, with the most reported in Sistan and Baluchistan, Mazandaran, Tehran, Kurdistan and Gilan respectively.

Deaths have been recorded in 21 provinces: Sistan and Baluchistan: 118 people; Mazandaran: 33 people; Tehran: 30 people; Kurdistan: 26 people; Gilan: 22 people; Western Azerbaijan: 21 people; Kermanshah: 13 people; Alborz: 9 people; Khorasan-Razavi: 4 people; Isfahan: 4 people; Zanjan: 4 people; Lorestan: 2 people; Markazi: 2 people; Qazvin: 2 people; Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad: 2 people; East Azerbaijan: 2 people; Ardabil: 2 people; Ilam: 2 people; Khuzestan: 2 people; Hamedan: 2 people; Bushehr: 1 person; Semnan: 1 person.

The highest number of deaths were recorded on 21, 22 and 30 September (Baluchistan's "Bloody Friday"). November 4 was the bloodiest day this month with 16 recorded deaths.

Detainees at risk of heavy sentences

According to official reports, dozens of protesters have been charged with the security-related charges of *moharebeh* (enmity against god) and *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth), which carry the death penalty. The Islamic Republic's history and current evidence indicate that they intend to use the death penalty as a tool of political repression to intimidate their opposition.



Femicide

Turkey records at least 36 femicide, 21 suspicious deaths in October

JINNEWS | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

At least 36 women have been killed by male violence in Turkey in October, with another 21 dying under suspicious conditions, according to JinNews' monthly monitoring report.

The report showed that 21 women were killed by their husbands and six by a relative and the most murders were committed in capital Ankara and Istanbul respectively.

According to JinNews, a total of 299 women were killed by men in the first ten months of this year.

Last year, the news outlet reported a total of 311 femicides and 181 suspicious deaths.

Male violence which remains a serious problem in Turkey has further increased after the country withdrew from an international treaty to combat violence against women, according to rights groups.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last year pulled Turkey out of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention, after pro-government conservative and Islamist groups argued that it undermined Turkish family values and promoted homosexuality.

In July, the United Nations urged Turkey to reverse the decision of ditching the accord, saying that the implementation of domestic legislation protecting women from abuse “had been weakened” after the withdrawal. Turkish Family and Social Services Minister Derya Yanik in September said there is no possibility of reversal.



Ecocide

‘Turkish attacks cause serious damage to Kurdistan’s environment’

ANF | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

The invading Turkish state has been attacking to occupy the lands of Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) with any means available. Frustrated by the guerrilla resistance, the invaders are destroying the nature of Kurdistan. The invading Turkish state has been plundering forest areas in Southern Kurdistan for years. The Turkish attacks are causing serious harm to the nature of the Kurdistan Region. Despite repeated calls and official statements against the Turkish plunder of nature, the Kurdistan Region government remains silent and has not taken any step so far.

Helkewt Abdulrahman, General Director of Forestry of the Kurdistan Region Ministry of Agriculture, spoke to Rojnews and stated that cutting trees in forest areas is against the laws of the Kurdistan Region, and it harms the nature and environment of the Kurdistan Region. “We and the entire world know that the forest areas within the borders of the Kurdistan Region are being destroyed and plundered. Something must be done to prevent it. The Ministry of Agriculture has submitted several requests to the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kurdistan region and the consulates of various countries to prevent the massive tree felling.”

Abulrahman noted that they do not know the extent of the damage caused by the attacks of the Turkish state, since fighting is going on in the border regions. “Attacks are negatively affecting the environment of the Kurdistan Region and trees should not be cut down anymore,” he said.

Emphasizing that the felling of trees by Turkish forces within the borders of the Kurdistan Region poses a major danger, Abulrahman added, “It is possible that this is being done for trade or use of wood for heating. Moreover, the threat to the forests is growing even more with the winter ahead of us.”



Iraqi President: Turkey and Iran’s water cuts pose a threat to Iraq’s water security

ANF | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

Speaking at the 31st Arab League Summit in Algeria on Wednesday, Iraqi President Latif Rashid said that the dams built by Iran and Turkey on the rivers in Iraq threaten the country’s water security and cause water levels to drop.

“I hope that the water resources in Iraq will improve. Dialogue should be established with Turkey and Iran for a solution to the water problem,” the Iraqi President said.

After being elected president, Rashid made his first foreign visit to Algeria to attend the Arab League Summit.



Zilan River is being poisoned

ANF | VAN | 4 NOVEMBER 2022

The Zilan Gorge in the North Kurdish province of Van was once a region of wild beauty and many endemic plant and animal species. Today, many areas resemble an ecological dead zone and, in particular, the Zilan River, with its unique fish population, is being poisoned.

Zilan, in the focus of destruction for almost a hundred years

The Zilan Gorge is not only of huge ecological importance (it is, for example, a spawning ground for pearl mullet), which is only found in Lake Van, but is also of great historical importance. The region was one of the areas with a very strong Kurdish identity. Because of this, it was repeatedly attacked by the Turkish state.

In 1930, thousands of Kurds were murdered by the Turkish state in the Zilan valley massacre. The surviving villagers were expelled. The areas occupied by the displaced population were then used by the state for factory farming. In the 1980s, the demographics were further changed by the targeted settlement of Kyrgyz people in the evacuated villages. Since then, new dams, mines and quarries have been built in the region. The cultural memory and the ecology of the region suffer severe damage.

The Zilan River and its tributaries, once famous for their clear and clean water, are now contaminated by poison and garbage. Sediments from mining silt up the rivers. At the same time, the level of the rivers dropped rapidly due to the dams. Countless creatures have died as a result of the valley drying up, water receding and poisoning.

“Poisoning leads to mass deaths of fish”

The spokesman for the ecology platform Zilan, Mir Bahattin Demir, said that such an ecological catastrophe can hardly be put into words. Zilan is the largest tributary of Lake Van. The pollution by heavy metals is due to mining activities carried out on the river, but at the same time, untreated sewage from the villages is also contaminating the water. In addition to these negative aspects, Demir noted that the Regional Directorate for State Hydraulic Engineering Works (DSI) has altered the natural structure of the streams and rivers under the slogan “water sanitation”.

Demir said: “As a result of the deterioration of the water quality caused by the Koçköprü dam and the power plant built with the reservoir previously built in the Zilan valley, as well as the lack of oxygen, there is an algal problem in the water. Although we informed the authorities in writing about the catastrophic results of our water analysis, nothing happened. This is how the mass extinction of fish and other living things that we had predicted occurred. Scientific studies of the fauna and flora in Zilan by Ankara University revealed that there is a diversity of 430 species of plants and numerous species are endemic. Three new endemic species have been discovered. In view of the destruction of the habitats of salamanders and otters, we expect that the decision of the Council of State, which has granted our applications, and the three lawsuits we submitted to the 1st Administrative Court of Van, will result in positive decisions for nature and our common habitats will lead.”



Human Rights Violations

Turkish opposition blames interior minister for soaring meth trade

MEDYANEWS | 1 NOVEMBER 2022

Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu blamed Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu for the increasing use of methamphetamine in Turkey, calling the minister "Breaking Bad Süleyman" in a video he shared on Twitter.

Kılıçdaroğlu shared the 31 October video on the use of methamphetamine in Turkey, accompanied by Hacer Foggo, the founder of the Deep Poverty Network, which has been monitoring issues related to drug addiction in the country.

Kılıçdaroğlu accused the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu of using billions of dollars he said had come from the sale of illegal drugs to finance Turkey's current account deficit.

The opposition leader said the cash-strapped Turkish government had offered to turn a blind eye to illicit cash entering the country, referring to a September report that some \$24 billion in unexplained funding had entered the country in 2022.

"Let me say this in the language of the young people who pose with it. 'Breaking Bad Süleyman' allowed the country's children to be poisoned. Shame on you," said Kılıçdaroğlu.

Soylu hit back with a video accusing the CHP leader of trying to cover corruption and what he called "dirty relations with terrorist groups."

The Turkish Police Force shared a tweet of its own announcing it would file a criminal complaint against Kılıçdaroğlu for slander.

The Turkish Gendarmerie General Command shared the same tweet and stated that they too would file a criminal complaint.

The CHP leader's accusation called to mind previous claims made by Sedat Peker, a convicted mafia boss and one-time AKP ally with deep links to security services and Turkish politicians.

Starting in May 2021, Peker released a series of videos in which he revealed allegations of dirty dealings by multiple Turkish government figures including Soylu.

In the videos, Peker accused Soyulu and his party of trafficking drugs from Colombia to Mersin, a city on Turkey's southern coast.

Germany's 2021 organised crime report gave details on organised crime in Turkey as it continues to play an important role as a transit country in drug smuggling. Due to this position, it has become a haven for western Balkan gangs, according to the report.

The German Customs Directorate stated that although Turkey was not on the cocaine smuggling route to Europe from Central and South America and the Caribbean, the rate of Turkish involvement in crime was very high. According to the report, Turkey's role in global cocaine trafficking is also increasing, with the country fast becoming a transit point.



Defendant handed three-year sentence for sharing video of Kurdish songs

MEDYANEWS | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

A person has been sentenced to three years imprisonment in Turkey for sharing a live video of Kurdish songs being sung on a bus carrying people to the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP)'s conference in Ankara in February, Mezopotamya Agency reported.

There have been numerous incidences of Kurdish music being suppressed throughout the years of the Turkish Republic. This latest conviction came in the run-up to major elections in which the HDP are expected to play a crucial role.

An inquiry was initiated into the individual, known only as K.İ., who shared songs being sung in a bus travelling from the south-eastern province of Hatay to the HDP Congress in Ankara on their social media account on 22 February.

The individual was accused of "making organisation propaganda"—the implication being that the organisation in question is the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which the Turkish state regards as a terrorist organisation and persistently implies has links to the HDP.

In their testimony in court, the individual agreed that they had shared a video of the songs being sung by a local musician on the bus on their Facebook account.

But, they said, "I understood the general meaning of the songs, but I didn't pay attention to the lyrics. I was unaware that they were by way of being propaganda. I didn't share them with the intent of praising the organisation."

The individual was sentenced to two years on the charge of “making organisation propaganda”, with the sentence raised to three years because the offence “had been committed by the means of press or broadcast.”

The prosecution noted that the songs contained praise for “the guerrillas, their rebellion and their resistance”, and dismissed the notion that the individual had shared the songs for fun, noting that “they did not stop at making propaganda by broadcasting a live recording, but also posted the video on their profile to stay there available for all to see.”

This is by no means the first time Kurdish music has been penalised. Among numerous recent examples is Yusuf Güneş, who was sentenced to 18 months on the same charges in September.

Opera singer Pervin Chakar was prevented from performing a concert at a university in Mardin (Mêrdîn) due to the Kurdish songs in her repertoire.

Singer Veysi Ermiş was sentenced to 18 months for using the word ‘Kurdistan’ in a song.

A flurry of Kurdish music concert bans imposed earlier in the year prompted a protest in the Turkish parliament.



Şenyaşar family continues Vigil for Justice on day 604

ANF | URFA | 2 NOVEMBER 2022

On 14 June 2018, the bodyguards and relatives of AKP Urfa MP Ibrahim Halil Yıldız attacked the Şenyaşar family’s shop in Suruç during the election campaign.

In the attack, brothers Celal, Adil, Mehmet, Fadıl and Ferit Şenyaşar were injured. Relatives and supporters of AKP MP Yıldız, badly injured Celal and Adil Şenyaşar, and their father Hacı Esvet Şenyaşar, when he went to the hospital to visit their sons. He was brutally murdered, being lynched in front of his wife Emine Şenyaşar.

Emine Şenyaşar and her son Ferit (who was injured in the attack), have been holding a ‘Justice Vigil’ in front of the Courthouse of Urfa since 9 March 2021, demanding those responsible to be brought to account.

The family continued their vigil at their house, since the court is closed on weekends. The vigil has reached day 604.



Court sentences two journalist to prison for news they wrote and shared on social media

ANF | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

The verdict hearing of the case where 4 people, including ETHA editor Semiha Şahin and journalist Pınar Gayip, were tried on charges of “membership of a terrorist organization” and “making propaganda for a terrorist organization” was held.

While Şahin and Gayip did not attend the hearing at the Istanbul 23rd High Criminal Court in Çağlayan, their lawyers Kader Tonç, Sezin Uçar, Gülbin Aydın and Hasan Yaman did.

Lawyers Tonç, Uçar and Aydın requested the suspension of the sentence in case of a possible punishment. The prosecution did not make any changes to its previous sentence.

Gayip’s lawyer, Kader Tonç, stated that the police illegally gathered evidence before the investigation against his client started.

Lawyer Tonç said that ETHA was being criminalized and demanded acquittal for the journalist.

Lawyer Aydın stated that 4 posts belonging to his client were used as evidence, adding that three of these posts were news and one was a poem.

Announcing its decision, the court sentenced Ferhat Harun Pehlivan and Gülsen Imre to 3 years, 1 month and 15 days each for allegedly making “propaganda for a terrorist organization”.

The court acquitted Pınar Gayip and Semiha Şahin on the charge of “membership in a terrorist organization”, but sentenced Gayip to 3 years, one month and 15 days on the charge of “making propaganda for a terrorist organization”.

Şahin was sentenced to 10 months in prison for some of the charges and to 3 years, 1 month and 15 days for sharing posts on social media.



Network of counterinsurgency and organised crime in Van

ANF | VAN | 3 NOVEMBER 2022

The province of Van in northern Kurdistan has a rapidly growing drug problem. The age of users is constantly decreasing. At the same time, the number of people forced into prostitution is increasing. After Istanbul and Adana, Van now ranks third on the list of cities with the most forced prostitution and drug

trafficking. Although AKP Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu visits Van every month, he has not yet issued a statement on the problem. The regime apparently only deals with drug use in western Turkey.

Paramilitaries act as drug mules

Especially since 2020, forced prostitution and drug trafficking have increased rapidly in Van. The pandemic seems to have acted as a catalyst. But who is behind organised crime? The supply chains for drugs are controlled by the regime's paramilitaries, the so-called "village guards". They can bring drugs into the city and districts without any control and distribute them in the region. Some families close to the regime play an important role in drug trafficking and forced prostitution. These families have de facto immunity. According to research, one of these families is the village guard clan Kahraman. The AKP mayor of the district of Çatak, Abdurrahman Şeylan, who is also the head of a village guard force, is also centrally involved in organised crime in the region.

The transport and distribution of drugs is apparently run jointly by the notorious village guards "Black Lightning" from the 90s, the Kahraman family and the village guards of the AKP mayor of Çatak. The drugs are brought to the cities by the village guards and handed over to dealers. There they are sold in bars and in car parks. Drug trafficking and forced prostitution go hand in hand in Van.

The car parks where drugs are trafficked belong to the Kahraman and Şeylan families. More of these car parks belong to so-called "Aghas" and village protectors. Drugs are sold there in broad daylight. At the same time, drugs are sold and prostitution is practised via the internet. For money, telephone numbers of dealers and forced prostitutes are procured. Meetings are then held in certain bars. Due to the spread of forced prostitution, the number of syphilis patients in Van has recently increased by one hundred percent.

Forced prostitution organised by the army

While the village guards have the drug trade in their hands, forced prostitution is in the hands of the military. In particular, poor, young, often homeless women are driven into drug addiction and forced into prostitution. Forced prostitution takes place not only on the streets and in bars, but also in so-called massage parlours. These "massage parlours" received their operating licence from the municipality of Ipekyolu, which is under trustee administration. The municipality approves these "massage parlours" without any control. They are also turning into drug outlets. Last summer, one such parlour was raided and it was found that it was run by a police officer and a sergeant.

Migrant women are forced into prostitution

In particular, the precarious situation of migrant women is exploited to force them into prostitution. The Turkish judiciary seconds this. Most recently, five women who had fled from forced prostitution to the public prosecutor's office were handed over directly to the migration authorities for deportation. The threat of deportation deprives women of the possibility to escape from their precarious situation.

Prostitution and drug trafficking part of counterinsurgency repertoire

Drug trafficking and forced prostitution are part of the Turkish state's counterinsurgency repertoire. Within this framework, a complex of paramilitaries, right-wing extremists, the secret service, the military and the government emerged in the 1990s. Again and again, these connections come to light. For example, Osman Yarbaş, prosecutor general for the southern Turkish province of Adana, turned out to be the head of a drug trafficking gang when he was caught transporting heroin. His network also included police officers.

The links between the regime and organised crime became particularly clear in the Susurluk accident. In November 1996, a traffic accident occurred in the northern Aegean near the town of Susurluk, which brought to light the interconnectedness of the state, organised crime and politics and the existence of a secret counter-guerrilla network: the deep state. In the armoured Mercedes-Benz 600 that crashed into a turning truck were Abdullah Çatlı, wanted by Interpol for multiple murders and heroin trafficking, who was also a functionary of the fascist "Idealist Associations", the high-ranking police functionary Hüseyin Kocadağ, former commander of the special forces in Hakkari, as well as the deputy police chief of Amed (Diyarbakir), the parliamentarian and village guard leader Sedat Bucak and the former Miss Turkey, Gonca Us. Of the four inmates, only Bucak, a Kurdish tribal leader from Siverek and member of the then ruling party (DYP) of Tansu Çiller, who had a private army of 20,000 village guards from 90 villages of the clan he controlled against the PKK, survived. For the provision of the village guards, Bucak received state funds amounting to 1.3 million US dollars per month. The mafia killer, Abdullah Çatlı, had gun licences, a diplomatic passport and a police ID card issued by the then Interior Minister Mehmet Ağar. Seven high-tech firearms with silencers were seized in Bucak's Benz limousine, as well as cocaine.



DFG: Number of jailed journalists rose to 87

ANF | AMED | 4 NOVEMBER 2022

The Dicle Firat Journalists Association (DFG) released its October Report on Violations of Rights Against Journalists. "Journalists and journalism once again faced murder, arrest, detention and censorship in the month of October. Our colleague Nagihan Akarsel, who worked in the free press many years, was killed and 11 colleagues were arrested, one of whom was subjected to house arrest," the report said.

'They gave a message by killing Nagihan'

The report emphasized that in October, the AKP-MHP government resumed its policy of murder, a complete substitute for the notorious '90s.

"Journalist Nagihan Akarsel, an academic and member of the Jineology Research Centre, was assassinated in the city of Sulaymaniyah in the Kurdistan Regional Government on October 4. Through Nagihan, a message was given to those who expose government abuses and violations of rights. After the murder of

Nagihan, our colleagues who covered the women-led protests in many cities were also targeted by security forces.

Censorship bill and arrest of Kurdish journalists

The report also addressed the Censorship Bill recently passed by the Turkish parliament. “Even though professional press organizations raised their voices against the bill most loudly, it is an undeniable fact that the bill concerns all segments of society. With this bill, a citizen’s effort to have himself heard against a right violation will be deemed ‘disinformation’ and blocked. In other words, the bill will prevent the publication and spread of news about crimes, especially those perpetrated by men and state officials.”

The DFG recalled that one week after the bill was published in the Official Gazette, opposition JINNEWS and the Mesopotamia Agency (MA) were targeted and, subsequently, 11 journalists were arrested. “The imprisonment of 26 free press workers in a few months could not end the tradition of the free press. However, it showed once again that the government’s fear of truth drove it to the verge of its own collapse. The revived versions of the crackdown staged by the governments of the notorious 90s and JITEM will not be able to subjugate the free press.”

Calls for solidarity

The report also mentioned the campaign “Bir Haber de Senden” [A Report from You] launched to protest the pressures, detentions and arrests against the free press. “We call upon our colleagues to share their reports with JINNEWS and Mesopotamia Agency to show that journalism is not a crime.”

Violation of rights

The report listed the following violations of rights against journalists in the month of October:

- * Journalists attacked: 1
- * Journalists whose houses were raided: 12
- * Detained journalists: 23
- * Arrested journalists: 11
- * Journalists subjected to ill-treatment: 14
- * Threatened journalists: 2
- * Journalists blocked during news coverage: 6
- * Violations against journalists in prisons: 23
- * Journalists fined: 5

- * Journalists on trial: 59
- * Number of jailed journalists (as of 1 October): 87
- * Violations of economic rights: 2
- * Broadcast ban: 1
- * Broadcast suspension penalty: 5
- * Closed websites: 4
- * Access bans: 49
- * Social media bans: 2



Turkey's Saturday Mothers demand justice for villagers executed 27 years ago

MEDYANEWS | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

Saturday Mothers, a group who have been organising weekly vigils to demand justice for the victims of forced disappearances in Turkey since the mid 1990s, gathered on Saturday in Istanbul to raise the case of three villagers who were arrested, shot and later burned 27 years ago.

Abdulkerim Yurtseven, Mikdat Özekan and 13-year-old Münür Sarıtaş were brutally arrested by the Turkish military during an operation in a village in the south-eastern province of Hakkari in 1995.

However, when families went to the military headquarters to ask for their relatives, they were told that nobody was under custody. The families kept on receiving similar statements from authorities responding to applications to ask the whereabouts of the three villagers.

The case was later brought to court, and according to official recordings, the three villagers were beaten by soldiers led by Major Mehmet Emin Yurdakul. Yurtseven lost his life due to the injuries he suffered, while the two remaining villagers were shot and then burned over fears that they could become witnesses in a potential investigation into Yurtseven's death.

Despite witness statements and confessions, the suspects who were accused of killing the three villagers were released by the court in 1999. The case was later brought to the European Court of Human Rights and Turkey paid compensation for failing to effectively investigate the case.



Turkey: Kurdish cancer patient arrested and imprisoned in place of twin brother

MEDYANEWS | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

A man arrested in place of his identical twin brother in Turkey's Kurdish-populated southeastern province of Diyarbakır has become a hostage of Turkey's failing judicial system, Mezopotamya News reported.

Hasan Kocakaya, a cancer patient, was arrested and put in prison in place of his brother Hüseyin on 31 October.

Although fingerprints taken at police headquarters revealed that they had the wrong man, Hasan Kocakaya was still charged with being a member of a terrorist organisation and sent to prison.

His lawyers and family had assumed that the mix-up would be resolved in court, but Hasan Kocakaya remained in prison, and as he is registered there in his brother's name, he has also been unable to access his medication.

"According to the family, they were told to bring Hüseyin in if they wanted to get Hasan back," his lawyer told Mezopotamya.

To complicate matters still further, the lawyer is not able to obtain power of attorney documents from his client because of him being down as his brother at the prison.



Study shows Kurds in Turkey think human rights situation worse than 90s

ANF | 5 NOVEMBER 2022

Tahir Elçi Human Rights Foundation and Rawest, a pollster focusing on the country's Kurdish regions, announced the results of their joint study, "Human Rights Perception of Kurds", Bianet reported.

According to the report, the results of the study show that the Kurds living in different parts of Turkey believe that mostly Kurds, women, children and the poor are subjected to violations of human rights, while the most violated right is "the right to live."

The joint study has been carried out through face-to-face meetings with 1,363 people in Istanbul, İzmir, Adana, Mersin, Diyarbakır, Mardin, Van and Urfa.

The study revealed that the participants aged over 30 expressed that the recent period and 90's are similar with respect to the situation of human rights in Turkey. The average of the participants' scores has been 3,84 for today, while 3,94 for 90s. This shows that the weight attached to human rights has dropped behind that in the 90's.

What comes to your mind when you hear “human rights?”

The interviewees were first asked the question: “What comes to your mind when you hear the expression “human rights?” 33 percent of the interviewees responded saying “justice,” 24 percent “rights and freedoms,” and 10 percent “law.” Those saying “the right to live” and “welfare” were 5 percent each and those saying “women’s rights” and “education” were 4 percent each.

“Rights are not given by the state, they exist naturally”

Every 9 out of 10 participants indicated that humans had rights originating from being human and more than 83 percent believed that “a state is not entitled to grant rights, that the rights existed naturally.”

Human rights are being violated

79 percent of the interviewees answered the question about whether human rights were being violated in Turkey, saying “yes.” 8 percent said “no” while 13 percent said they did not have an idea.

Right to life being violated in Turkey

72 percent said that the right to live was the most important human right. “Freedom of expression”, “right to live” and “women’s rights” were the three mostly violated rights, with 63, 60 and 53 percent of the interviewees indicating them as the mostly violated human right respectively.

“Kurds and women subjected to violations of rights most”

The researchers also asked about the groups that are mostly subjected to violations of human rights. 67 percent responded saying the women, 61 percent the Kurds, 19 percent the poor, another 19 percent the children and 13 percent saying that the unemployed were mostly subjected to violations of human rights.

Ethnic identity is the most important cause of discrimination

According to the participants, “ethnic identity” is one of the most important reasons for being subjected to discrimination. 50 percent of the interviewees said that ethnic identity was a reason for discrimination, while those saying that gender was a reason for discrimination followed next with 15 percent and those saying that religion and religious sect followed next, with 7 and 6 percent respectively. 39 percent of the participants said that they had been discriminated against for some reason in their lives until now. 52 percent of those who said that they had been subjected to discrimination also said that they were HDP voters.

The state was mentioned as the institution causing human rights violations the most. Participants listed the men, the media and the companies next for causing most human rights violations. The family was also listed among the institutions violating rights.

Human rights not getting better

73 percent of the participants thought that the situation of human rights has gotten worse in Turkey in the last 10 years. The ratio of those who thought that human rights got better in this period was only 9 percent. 15 percent of the interviewers thought that the situation of human rights has been the same in the last ten years.

“Lifting parliamentary immunity a violation”

73 percent of the participants agreed that “all are equal before the law, independent from gender, language, religion, political view, ethnic identity,” while 7 percent disagreed.

Those who disagreed with the statement “The legal system in Turkey is treating everyone equally” were 51 percent.

72 percent agreed with the statement “that the cases not being concluded for a long period of time is a violation of rights.”

67 percent agreed that “that torture of prisoners was a violation of human rights no matter what their crimes are.”

The idea that “lifting parliamentary immunity is a rights violation” was accepted by 58 percent.

57 percent agreed with the statement that “the legal processes concerning unidentified murders in the 1990’s are not being carried out fairly.”

Again, 61 percent of the participants did not find the appointment of trustees to the municipalities just.

“Education language should be dual”

76 percent agreed that “men and women should be equal in all areas.”

70 percent disagreed that “men should receive a higher wage than women even when they do the same job,” while 44 percent disagreed that “the state should shut down associations of homosexuals.”

While 72 percent agreed that “it is a violation of a child’s rights that children younger than 16 should work,” 56 percent agreed that “it is a violation of human rights that children have to read the national oath.”

65 percent agreed that “it is a violation of rights that the Turkish children in Germany cannot receive education in Turkish,” while again 65 percent agreed that “it is a violation of rights that the Kurdish children in Turkey cannot receive education in Kurdish.”

62 percent of the participants in Kurdish majority cities agreed that “the education language should be dual, both Turkish and the mother tongue, while 45 percent agreed with this in the west provinces.”



German court acknowledges validity of Kurdish struggle but sentences man for PKK membership

MEDYANEWS | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

A German court in Munich has sentenced a Kurdish activist to three years in prison for membership of a terrorist organisation, despite acknowledging the validity and the legitimacy of the Kurdish struggle.

Kurdish activist Mirza Bilen, who was arrested in May 2021, was sentenced for knowingly and willingly participating in activities of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has been outlawed in Germany.

“Though the Kurdish people make up a large population, they are a nation with no country. Their struggle is valid and legitimate,” the court said in its decision.

Germany banned PKK activities in 1993 and since then, it has expanded the ban to include the use of symbols related to the Kurdish group, and the display of posters of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK.

Two lawyers this year lodged an official application to Germany’s Federal Interior Ministry calling for the lifting of the 28-year-long ban, saying that it gave the Turkish government leverage to put pressure on Kurds.



Turkish interior minister praises individuals for assaulting opposition officials

MEDYANEWS | 7 NOVEMBER 2022

During a speech to security officers, Turkish Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu praised individuals who beat officials from the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), the only pro-Kurdish political party in Turkey’s parliament, Demokrat Haber reported.

Referring to accusations claiming that the HDP is involved in forcing young people to join outlawed Kurdish militant groups, Soylu said parents of the young people had beaten unnamed officials from the party in retaliation.

“Congratulations to them, they’ve done well,” Soylu said.

The interior minister’s remarks come during a period of extreme pressure on the HDP, which many view as key in the upcoming national elections, expected next year.

Turkey’s Justice and Development Party (AKP) government has ratcheted up the pressure on the country’s political movement since a peace process broke down with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in 2015.

As a result, HDP members and officials have come under increased threat both of arrest and of physical violence.

Many view the government’s hard-line, repressive stance as a way to foster Turkish nationalist support and divide the opposition bloc, which includes nationalists who refuse to collaborate with the pro-Kurdish HDP.

As a result, voters in Turkey’s predominantly Kurdish southeast have seen their elected mayors removed and replaced with government appointees, HDP MPs and co-leaders prosecuted and jailed, and MPs and activists from the party assaulted and manhandled by police officers.

Two HDP deputies, Habip Eksik and Sait Dede, were beaten by police during a demonstration demanding the release of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in October. Eksik underwent surgery for a fractured leg after the assault.

Another HDP MP, Semra Güzel, was roughly manhandled as she was arrested in September for alleged terror links.



Interview

HPG Press Spokesman: Figures do not fully reflect the extent of attacks

ANF | 6 NOVEMBER 2022

The press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG-BIM) reports daily from the guerrilla-controlled Medya Defence Zones on the current developments of the clashes with the Turkish army. Daily and monthly reports of the battles, detailed information on fallen fighters, videos of guerrilla actions or the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish army as well as detailed reports on the attacks are continuously shared with the public. Thus, the HPG press centre is one of the most important sources of information on the actual course of the war in the region. The editorial team of the Kurdistan Report had the opportunity to conduct an interview with the HPG press spokesperson Serdar Yektaş for the November/December issue. The focus of the conversation was the question of the use of chemical and other internationally outlawed weapons by the Turkish army in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq).

The HPG reported more than 2000 attacks by the Turkish army with chemical weapons against the guerrillas in Southern Kurdistan since April this year. For readers in Germany, this number may be difficult to comprehend. Can you therefore briefly tell us about the kind of weapons the Turkish army is using against the guerrillas?

Between 14 April and 14 September this year, the Turkish army used internationally banned weapons a total of 2004 times against our guerrilla forces in the Zap, Avaşın and Metîna areas. These three areas are all in Southern Kurdistan, in a region we call the Medya Defence Zones. The use of these weapons continues after 14 September.

I suspect that many of your readers are not fully aware of the geographical conditions and the course of the war in the region so far. Therefore, I would like to briefly discuss these two issues so that readers can better understand the situation on the ground. In the said areas of Zap, Avaşın and Metîna, the guerrillas have built a large number of underground positions and tunnels to defend Southern Kurdistan. They are used both as defence installations and as places for everyday life. The guerrillas have positioned themselves and defend themselves in these underground positions and tunnels. Some of these facilities are small and uncluttered, while others are very large and complex. For tactical reasons, I cannot give detailed information on this subject, but in brief we can say that all the underground positions and tunnel facilities that our forces have built in numerous mountain peaks play the role of underground defensive fortresses. No matter how much the Turkish state bombs these positions with its fighter jets, it is simply not able to achieve the desired results in this way.

One of the main reasons why the guerrillas have built these underground positions and tunnels is to take advantage of the depth of the terrain and to be able to defend themselves in this way. Since the Turkish

state dropped its soldiers in the said areas of Southern Kurdistan with the help of helicopters from 17 April this year, they have been confronted with underground defensive fortresses. The Turkish army knows that it has to capture the underground fortresses if it wants to control and eventually occupy the areas. But it cannot do so with the help of its conventional forces. Their attack helicopters, warplanes, artillery and lighter weapon systems are no match for the underground positions and tunnels. Moreover, the Turkish soldiers are not brave enough to go into these tunnels and fight there. Therefore, counter-forces [Kurdish village guards paid by the Turkish state], paramilitary forces [Arab-Islamist proxy forces] and mercenaries were initially deployed. They were supposed to take the underground tunnels, but they did not succeed. Dogs were then sent into the tunnels. We have recently published videos of these operations which clearly prove this.

When the Turkish army realised that despite all these attempts, it could not defeat our forces in the underground positions and tunnels, it began to use internationally banned weapons. In order to suffocate our comrades in the tunnels, they first used poisonous gases that severely irritate the eyes and massively restrict breathing or lead to death by suffocation. But because our forces had gained important experience in the use of these weapons during the war in the southern Kurdish regions of Gare [four-day war against the Turkish army in February 2021] and Avaşîn [the war there has been going on since 23 April 2021], we had managed to take certain precautionary measures beforehand, for example in the form of gas masks. So the Turkish state had to realise that it could not defeat the guerrilla forces in the tunnels even with the help of these poisonous gases. In response, the Turkish army began to use even heavier weapons. These include, above all, phosphorus bombs, thermobaric bombs [also called vacuum bombs; double effect through pressure wave and subsequent negative pressure] and chemical weapons.

Regarding the five types of chemical weapons that have been used against our forces so far, we can share the following information with you: First, the nerve gas Tabun has been used. Second, the chemical agent chloropicrin, also called Green Cross, which causes death by suffocation. Third, the chemical warfare agent mustard gas, also known as the Yellow Cross. This agent causes extensive burns to the human body. Fourth, a gas that causes loss or severe impairment of consciousness. It also leads to long-term impairment of human memory. And fifth, pepper gas, which leads to death by suffocation or cardiac arrest in enclosed spaces. These are the types of chemical weapons that were or will be used mainly by the Turkish army in 2021 and 2022. In addition, other comparable weapons were used this year. For example, certain plastic materials were repeatedly burnt in front of the tunnel entrances and the resulting smoke was released into the tunnels. Without precautionary measures, this threatens suffocation or poisoning.

In the five-month balance sheet of the war in Southern Kurdistan that we published, we reported on the 2004 deployments of internationally banned weapons. But in the end, this number is much higher. I would like to go into this in more detail here so that it can be better understood: Turkish soldiers, as already reported, repeatedly come to the tunnel entrances and use chemical and other internationally banned weapons there. Sometimes these weapons are also thrown into the tunnels in the form of hand grenades from a certain distance. In other cases, machines are used and positioned in front of the tunnel entrances. From there, they then pump poisonous gases into the tunnels for hours. In some cases, chemical weapons are also used in the form of larger bombs in the tunnels, where they first explode, then start fires that last for hours. Some of these chemical warfare agents burn for five to six hours. If the air circulation in the affected tunnel systems is good, the effect of these weapons wears off quickly. But again and again, they unfold their effects for hours. We count each such attack as a single attack. But it is important to be aware that a single one of these attacks with internationally banned weapons sometimes lasts for

hours, or that explosions are repeatedly carried out in front of all tunnel entrances at the same time so that our forces in the respective tunnel system are definitely hit. So it is difficult to express the scale of these attacks through numbers alone. Therefore, it is important to realise that our guerrilla forces have been facing these attacks for more than five months, more than 160 days.

I would also like to share the following information with you: So far this year, 58 of our comrades have been killed by the use of chemical weapons (as of 22.09.2022). According to the possibilities available to us in the contested areas, we have sent soil samples, water samples and also skin, hair and clothing samples from some of our fallen comrades to the corresponding institutions abroad. We have also published a large number of videos and photos that prove the use of these weapons by the Turkish army.

You also repeatedly report the use of tactical nuclear weapons. How do you arrive at the assessment that the Turkish army is using these weapons?

In the answer to the first question, I first of all only referred to the use of chemical weapons and poisonous gases. The Turkish army is using these weapons intensively against us. However, as I have already mentioned, our forces have now managed to take certain precautions against these attacks. With every comrade killed by chemical weapons, we have learned and adapted our protective measures accordingly. That is why these weapons have not caused excessive damage to our ranks so far.

When the Turkish army realised that the guerrillas could not be brought to their knees by these weapons and instead resolutely continued their resistance, they started to use a new method - to detonate different kinds of bombs in the guerrilla tunnels in order to make them collapse or to make the protective measures of the guerrillas ineffective and to be able to use chemical weapons accordingly more effectively. But the guerrilla forces also developed precautions against this method.

In response, the Turkish army relied on even stronger explosions. Our underground tunnels are characterised by certain peculiarities. They are located entirely under mountain rock. Some of them are hundreds of metres underground and have a length of several hundred metres. Therefore, they cannot be brought down with the help of normal bombs and explosives. Recently, the Turkish army started to carry out explosions of enormous dimensions. At first, we didn't know what exactly was going on there either. The comrades who had witnessed attacks with this kind of bombs reported explosions that practically made whole mountains shake, i.e. they had the effect of small earthquakes. We then investigated more closely and carried out targeted observations. This enabled us to establish that these were bombs with an extremely powerful explosive force. A Turkish general [General Erdoğan Karakuş (ret.) in the programme "Tarafsız Bölge" on CNN Türk on 23.03.2022] himself admitted that the Turkish army used tactical nuclear weapons against the PKK.

Not that this is misunderstood: nuclear bombs and tactical nuclear weapons are different. Tactical nuclear weapons are bombs that, using relatively small quantities of explosives (approx. 50 kg), unleash a blast force of one kiloton. To make their effect even more comprehensible, we can take the explosion in the Lebanese capital Beirut on 4 August 2020 as an example. These are such enormous explosions that entire city districts can be completely destroyed. The decisive difference to classical nuclear bombs is that no radioactive substances remain after explosion.

When you hear about such a massive use of chemical weapons and tactical nuclear weapons, you naturally ask yourself how the guerrillas protect themselves against this or are able to continue to resist under these conditions. Can you give us more detailed information on this?

The guerrillas use the terrain both in depth and in breadth. We protect ourselves from the Turkish state's air force by spreading out in the form of mobile, small units in the terrain. In this way, we make the attack targets very small for them. In addition, our forces use effective camouflage. These measures make it very difficult to spot the mobile guerrilla units in the field. In depth, we rely on the aforementioned tunnel systems. Your question is exclusively directed at the attacks of the Turkish army, which is why I have mainly dealt with this aspect. But it is also important to know that we carry out actions against the occupiers everywhere and all the time. Therefore, the Turkish army cannot carry out its attacks so easily. I would like to give a concrete example so that this aspect can be better understood: If Turkish soldiers position a tactical nuclear weapon or chemical weapons at the tunnel entrances, they cannot penetrate to the inside of the tunnel facilities to use these weapons there. Because whoever of them goes into the tunnels will not come out again. We killed many Turkish soldiers who tried to enter the tunnels and took their weapons and equipment under our control. Therefore, the occupiers can only position the bombs or chemical weapons at the entrances of the tunnels, then move away from there and set off the explosions from a certain distance. As a result, 80 to 90 per cent of the explosion effect fizzles outwards and only a small part unfolds its effect in the underground tunnel systems. So the tunnels serve as protection against this type of attack. Without them, defence against these weapons would be simply impossible. The Turkish state has also come to realise this and has recently started using excavators and other heavy equipment to collapse the tunnel entrances, rendering the guerrillas' precautions ineffective and thus achieving its desired goals.

Do you, the HPG, have information on where Turkey got these weapons? Is it capable of producing chemical weapons and tactical nuclear weapons itself?

In the course of this war, it has become very clear that NATO is supporting the Turkish state both overtly and covertly. This is because virtually all of the Turkish state's weapons—whether its fighter jets, helicopters or other war technology—come from stocks of NATO countries. The technological know-how and the financial possibilities of the Turkish state do not allow it to produce these weapons itself. We therefore know very well that Turkey obtains its weapons from abroad, especially from NATO. Before the Turkish state started its recent occupation attacks [on Southern Kurdistan], there were numerous diplomatic meetings with representatives of the German state. The German state is openly providing support.

It is well known that the use of the aforementioned weapons is outlawed by international agreements as a crime against humanity and a war crime. Therefore, all states that provide Turkey with these weapons take great care to ensure that this does not become public knowledge. But, in the meantime, it can no longer be concealed, because the use of these weapons is obvious. We have documented this extensively and made it public. No matter how hard they try to cover it up, the Turkish state has committed and continues to commit war crimes thousands of times in the Zap, Avaşîn, Metîna and Gare areas. All the states that have signed international agreements on the use of prohibited weapons and have clearly named these weapons are silent today on the war crimes of the Turkish state. This clearly confirms that they support the Turkish state and are accordingly complicit.

Since the spring of last year, you have repeatedly reported on the use of these banned weapons. Internationally, however, this has not met with much response, either in the media or politically. How do you perceive the reactions of the international public?

Already in the past, the Kurdish people were repeatedly described as “a people without protectors”. Nobody defends their rights. If we go by international law and the laws of the regional states, we simply do not exist as Kurdish people! Nobody has recognised our existence, identity and status so far. Only through an enormous struggle and at great sacrifice have the Kurds managed to achieve certain results and create their own values. But the international powers have still not officially recognised this. They are still holding on to the Treaty of Lausanne [a treaty signed in 1923, which, among other things, stipulates the division of Kurdistan into four parts]. Because, as the Kurdish people, our existence is still not recognised. We are not considered free people with our own status, which is why our voice is not really heard. Accordingly, the Kurdistan Freedom Movement is also under an encirclement of the occupying states. Our party, the PKK, is isolated everywhere and our legitimate calls and statements are dismissed as unjustified. Even if they are noticed, it is pretended that nothing has happened. Of course, there are many reasons for all this: the interests of the states, political balances, the political conjuncture and others. But whatever the reasons for this silence, it does not change the truth. Because we are simply speaking the truth. We give our lives for the existence and freedom of the Kurdish people. The use of these banned weapons has now been extensively documented and has thus already gone down in history. In the future, this issue will be put even more on the agenda. We will not allow this to be forgotten. Just as we have not forgotten Halabja [poison gas attack by the Saddam regime on 16 March 1988 on the southern Kurdish town of Halabja, which killed up to 5,000 people; ed.] we will never forget the current events, which surpass Halabja by a thousandfold.

Even though it was only possible for a short time in this framework, I tried to share the current situation with you. It may be that the occupying states and the hegemonic forces are sticking to their policies. But we, too, will continue to insist on the truth and share it with our people and the world public. We act first and foremost out of respect for history and the truth. For this reason alone, we will hold on to the truth until the end. We are already giving the sacrifices necessary for this on a daily basis in the form of all our so cherished comrades who are falling. No matter what the attitude of the rulers is, our patriotic people and our international friends are on our side. We are convinced of our ideology of democratic socialism and therefore consider the strength of the people as the most important thing. As long as their hearts beat for us and they support us, we will never be defeated. In this sense, we salute all our active and resistant people. In addition, we would like to thank you for enabling us in this way to bring up all the above facts, that is, the truth. The interview was held on 22 September 2022.

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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