

# THE İMRALI POST

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

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# Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

## Nearly three million signatures collected in North-East Syria handed over to the CPT

ANF | STRASBOURG | 8 AUGUST 2023

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative in North-East Syria has met with officials from the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) in Strasbourg to discuss the isolation imposed on the Kurdish leader on the Turkish prison island of Imrali.

The delegation from North-East Syria, made up of the co-spokesperson of the initiative, Idris Said, co-chair of the initiative, Xanim Ayo, and HDP European Council Representative Faik Yağızay, handed over the signatures collected in Rojava, North-East Syria, Aleppo and Damascus to demand freedom for Öcalan to the CPT of the Council of Europe.

Following the meeting, the delegation made a statement to the press. Speaking here, Idris Said stated that 2,646,211 signatures had been collected in the campaign from 12 January to 12 March. The campaign, he said, saw the active participation of Kurdish, Arab, Armenian, Syriac, Assyrian, Turkmen and other communities from across Rojava.

Said said the signatures were handed over to a delegation of the CPT, adding: “We demanded an immediate meeting with Öcalan by the CPT, as well as by his lawyers and family members. They told us that they had been monitoring the situation of Abdullah Öcalan and that they would convey our demands to the concerned authorities. They said that they had met with Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners on Imrali last year, for which we thanked them.”

Xanim Ayo, who attended the meeting on behalf of the Union of Lawyers in Syria, stated: “During our meeting with the CPT, we conveyed our demands for an end to the isolation of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan and for his physical freedom. They provided us with information about their last meeting in Imrali. They prepared a report on it but cannot make it public because they need the permission of the country to do so.”

## FEDA members take over vigil for Öcalan in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 9 AUGUST 2023

FEDA members took over the Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg. The vigil has reached its 581st week.

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil was launched on 25 June 2012 in Strasbourg, to demand freedom for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and to end the isolation imposed on him in Imrali.

This week, the Democratic Alevi Federation (FEDA) executives took over the action. The group includes Aytaç Özveren, Ali Samer and Hasret Özveren.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Aytaç Özveren said: “We have not heard from our President for 29 months. This is not acceptable. We do not accept what the inhumane AKP-MHP fascism has done to our President and to the Kurdish people.

We will protect our president, our struggle and our people. We call on the Council of Europe and the CPT to do their job. They should stop playing three monkeys now. They cannot ignore a population of 50 million. This attitude does not suit Europe. We are ready to pay any price for our President.”

— ★ —

## Prisons in Turkey

### Two prisoners see their release postponed for 3 months

ANF | 5 AUGUST 2023

The release of Kasım Karataş (60) and Osman Guide (49), who are held in Tekirdağ No. 2 F Type High Security Closed Prison, was postponed for 3 months on the grounds that they showed “no remorse”.

Both prisoners served a 30-year sentence. Kasım Karataş was tried at the İzmir 8th High Criminal Court and was sentenced to life imprisonment on 4 September 1993 for “separatism”.

Karataş was transferred to various prisons, such as Izmir-Buca, Aydın, Antep, Karabük, Urfa and Tekirdağ during his 30-year sentence.

Karataş, who is currently being held in Tekirdağ No. 2 F Type High Security Prison, was supposed to be released on 2 August 2023. However, his release was postponed due to the decision made on the report prepared by the Prison Administration and Observation Board.

The Board claimed that Karataş “did not act in accordance with the rules, did not agree to participate in group activities, did not show remorse, did not help the personnel during the searches, did not use his rights in good faith during his imprisonment, received disciplinary punishments many times and was not ready to integrate into society”.

Karataş, who is on the list of ill prisoners of the Human Rights Association (IHD), underwent open-heart surgery in 2016. In addition to chronic diseases such as diabetes and blood pressure, Karataş also has stomach ailments.

### **Osman Kılavuz not released for same reason**

Osman Kılavuz, who is held in the same prison, was tried at Diyarbakır 5th High Criminal Court and was sentenced to life imprisonment on 25 August 1993 for “separatism”. He remained in Kocaeli-Kandıra, Ankara No. 2 F Type, Bursa H Type, Aydın-Nazilli, Manisa T Type and Tekirdağ prisons.

The release of Kılavuz was also postponed for 3 months by the same board for the same reason, i.e. that the prisoner did not “show remorse”.

The lawyers of Karataş and Kılavuz will appeal against the decision.



## **Journalist Karakaş denounces violation of rights in prison**

ANF | 6 AUGUST 2023

Ibrahim Karakaş, a journalist of Yeni Yaşam newspaper, who is imprisoned in Adana Kürkçüler F-Type Prison, conveyed the violations of rights they are subjected to in a letter he sent to Mesopotamia Agency. He said that many constitutional rights, especially the right to health, have been violated. Karakaş wrote that their applications to the prison administration and the relevant ministries are not taken into account.

Karakaş said: “Many issues within the scope of freedom of thought and expression are used against us to delay the release.” Karakaş stated that isolation was imposed on them by the Administration and Observation Board. The journalist said that many social and cultural activities were prevented for various reasons, and limited to 3-4 hours a week instead of 10. Karakaş underlined that they were not allowed to attend activities such as courses and workshops.

### **Applications not answered**

Karakaş said that although the hospital referrals were made with an “urgent” code, they were subjected to the imposition of a mouth search by the gendarmerie. Karakaş said: “Even though this inhumane practice is imposed on us under the name of ‘security’, it is being implemented as a result of a completely hostile approach. The applications we make to all the institutions to which the gendarmerie personnel are affli-

ated are either given a decision of non-authorization or are rejected. Preventing our right to be treated is one of the most serious violations.”

The journalist said that the prisoners who received aggravated life imprisonment were placed in the same ward with groups other than political prisoners, and added that the detainees were often subjected to verbal attacks and provocation. Karakaş continued: “Our friends are exposed to policies of isolation within isolation. In addition, publications such as books and magazines are either given late due to months of review or confiscated on the grounds that they are ‘inconvenient’.

The journalist said that “as political prisoners, we will continue to oppose such arbitrary practices, and we will continue to carry out the necessary legal struggle. We also call on relevant institutions and organizations to be sensitive on this issue.”



## Kurdish prisoner released after thirty years in prison: “We did not bow down”

ANF | İZMİR | 8 AUGUST 2023

Kurdish prisoner Kemal Çelik has been released after thirty years in Turkish prisons. The 57-year-old man held in the Şakran prison in İzmir province was hospitalised and operated on due to severe health problems on Friday. Yesterday was his regular day of release from prison, and today he was able to leave the hospital and be received by his family. Friends, board members of the HDP İzmir branch and members of the Aegean prisoners’ aid organisation TUHAYDER also came to greet him in front of the hospital.

Çelik was 27 years old when he was arrested and fell ill in prison. Over the past thirty years, he has had to undergo several operations. Despite this, he never gave up hope, he said during the welcome outside the hospital: “Getting out of prison is not a success in itself. I am now no longer with my friends, and that is sad for me. However, I hope that they will also be released. It’s hard to describe the feelings in prison. We went through very hard times, but we shared everything with each other. We did not bow down and I come out of prison with dignity. That is a success for us. The friends I left behind in prison will also come out with their heads held high. I always had hope and it was my conviction that made me survive these thirty years. Once I was on hunger strike for a hundred days, I wouldn’t be able to do that now. People are strong through their will, and we believe in our will.”

After the welcome, Kemal Çelik and his relatives left for his home in Siirt.

In recent months, many prisoners have been released in Turkey who were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1993 by the now abolished State Security Courts. However, about 200 political prisoners are not released even after serving their regular sentence. No court decides on release, but a committee of the prison at its own discretion. Without the approval of this committee, the release from prison can be repeatedly postponed by three or six months on arbitrary grounds.



## New cameras monitor prisoners in Sincan Women's Closed jail

ANF | 9 AUGUST 2023

In Sincan Women's Closed Prison, new cameras capable of recording 360 degrees are being installed instead of the fixed cameras in the corridors. With these cameras, which also have the feature of recording sound, the common living area in the wards is being monitored. With the new cameras, areas that were previously only seen by passers-by will be visible to the entire administration.

Cameras were also placed in areas where prisoners used to go to chat, sports and painting workshops. In addition, the area where the lawyer's meeting room is located has also started to be monitored. The detainees applied to the administration with a petition to have the cameras removed. The prison administration claimed that in line with the decision of the Ministry of Justice, the cameras were renewed and installed for "security" purposes.

The prisoners stated that they will protest at all available avenues until the cameras are recognized as an attack on privacy and an intrusion into their private living space is removed.



## Release of 9 Kurdish political prisoners prevented

ANF | 9 AUGUST 2023

The release of 9 Kurdish political prisoners, who were arrested for different reasons in the 1990s and are now held in Karabük T Type Closed Prison, has been prevented by the Prison and Observation Board.

One year has passed since prisoners Ejder Doğan, Mustafa Karakaya, Ali Koç, Aydın Kudat, Abdurrahman Güner and Mehmet Sarı were supposed to be released. Abdullah Ok is waiting to be released for 6 months and Halil Temel and Adem Oktay for 3.

The 9 Kurdish political prisoners, who did not accept the repentance imposed by the Prison Administration and Observation Board under the name of "good behavior", are being kept in jail on different disciplinary grounds. The applications made by the lawyers are also rejected with fabricated reasons.



## S-Type prisons, new places of repression

ANF | 10 AUGUST 2023

New reports of assaults and human rights violations against prisoners in the new S-type isolation prisons in Turkey continue to increase. Most recently, prisoner Burhan Barut was tortured by guards with the so-called pig shackle. This cruel method consists of tying the body together under tension on the back at the neck, hands and feet and causes excruciating pain up to and including slow death by asphyxiation. According to Barut, he almost died in the five-hour torture. Such attacks are primarily aimed at political prisoners, for whom these S-type prisons were specially set up. There are currently more than a thousand political prisoners in the S-Type prisons. A testing ground for new forms of torture, these isolation prisons are the successors to F-type prisons has toilets.

More than a third of Type S inmates are political prisoners. Lawyer Naim Eminoğlu from the People's Lawyer's Office explained the special features of the new type of prison. So far, six of these prisons have been opened in Manavgat, Kavak, Bodrum, Antalya, Iğdir and Kırşehir. There are currently 3,312 people held in these prisons, over a thousand of whom are political prisoners. Eminoğlu said that three S-type prisons were opened in 2021 and the total has increased to six by 1 September 2022. Each of these prisons has a capacity of 552 inmates. The People's Lawyer's Office currently serves three clients in S-type prisons.

### Stricter isolation and surveillance down to the intimate area

“As is well known, the F-type prisons are built as prisons with small cells,” Eminoğlu said, adding: “The capacity of an F-type prison is 368. There are two key differences between F-type prisons and S-type prisons, which consist of one- and three-person cells. In the S-type prisons, the number of one-person cells is higher than the number of three-person cells. In the F-type prisons, the ratio is exactly the opposite. Another difference is that in the three-person cells of the S-type prisons, there is a camera at the bottom. The fact that the bathroom and toilet area is also monitored in this lower area makes a clear difference and is problematic.”

### Those who defend themselves risk life and health

Eminoğlu reported that his clients detained in S-type prisons are exposing increasing cases of torture. He said: “Our clients have told us about two different types of torture in S-type prisons. The first is related to the practice of strip searches upon admission to these prisons. That alone is torture, but it also includes the severe assaults that take place when people resist the practice. Our clients in Kavak and Antalya S-type prisons were victims of torture as a result of strip searches.”

The lawyer continued: “Subsequent reports of torture are related to the aforementioned cameras monitoring the private areas of the cells. Our clients in -S-type Manavgat Prison were attacked by the prison staff for covering with a napkin the camera that monitors the toilet and bathroom exit on the lower floor. Reports of this mistreatment appeared in many media. After the attack, both prisoners were forcibly thrown into padded cells.”



## Continuous tightening since 2000

Eminoğlu underlined the continuity and development of the policy of isolation from political prisoners. With the prison massacre of 19 December 2000, the F-type prisons were enforced. Meanwhile, the isolation of political prisoners through the S and Y type prisons has reached a new dimension. This process is about breaking the political prisoners.

## Isolation affects society as a whole

Eminoğlu continued: “Clearly, this situation does not only affect political prisoners. The isolation is to be extended from prisons to society as a whole. With the opening of S- and Y-type prisons, the message should be sent to the public: ‘Don’t go out on the streets, don’t discuss, don’t think, or you’ll end up in these prisons.’ The state wants to intimidate and isolate society with this new type of isolation prisons.”

Eminoğlu summarized the extent of isolation in the S-type prisons as follows: “The isolation practices in the S-type prisons go so far that prisoners are monitored and controlled with cameras at all times. Those who don’t accept this are tortured. The prisons are architecturally similar to the F-types. So far, the isolation policy in the S-types has shown itself in the form of abuse by the guards and camera surveillance in the lower area of the three-person cells.”

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## 2,157 child prisoners in Turkish jails

ANF | ANKARA | 12 AUGUST 2023

The Ministry of Justice General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Centers has released new statistics regarding the prisoner population in the country’s jails.

According to the latest figures, there are a total of 403 prisons in Turkey, including 278 closed penal institutions with a total capacity of 293,473, 93 independent open penal institutions, 4 juvenile correctional facilities, 11 closed women’s institutions, 8 open women’s institutions, and 9 closed juvenile correctional facilities. These prisons are currently housing 270,607 inmates.

56,826 inmates are in open prisons, while 213,781 are in closed prisons.

### 38,391 are pre-trial prisoners

Of these inmates, 232,216 are convicts, and 38,391 are pre-trial detainees.

Among the inmates, 200 are LGBTI+, 15,008 are foreigners, 581 are disabled, and 1,453 have been sentenced to life imprisonment.

### **39,519 inmates are students**

6,223 are aged 65 and above among all inmates.

There are 39,519 inmates continuing their education within prisons, and 60,767 inmates have previously engaged in occupational activities with insurance coverage.

### **383 children in prison with their mothers**

There are 2,157 children under the age of 18, including 83 girls, in prisons. The number of children staying with their mothers among the 10,899 female inmates is 383.

In addition to these statistics, inmates without health problems receive a daily food allowance of 50 lira (1.67 Euro), while the food allowance for children aged 0-6 staying with their mothers is 75 lira.

### **101 prisoners died in 2022**

The number of inmates who died in prison was 107 in 2019, 95 in 2020, 128 in 2021, and 101 in 2022.



## **Prisoner in Sincan jail on hunger strike for 111 days**

**ANF - 12 AUGUST 2023**

Nedim Öztürk has been on hunger strike in Sincan No. 2 High Security Prison for 111 days. His sister Meral Halisdemir said that Öztürk's body began to feel numbness.

The indefinite hunger strike launched by Nedim Öztürk on 24 April with a request to be transferred to another prison, continues on its 111th day.

Öztürk was said to have lost 19 kilograms during the hunger strike and began feeling numbness in his body.

His sister Meral Halisdemir, who visited Öztürk in prison 2 days ago, noted that although he did not receive a heavy life sentence, he was kept alone in the high security prison, and that he repeatedly tried to reach the authorized institutions and individuals to get out of isolation to no avail. Halisdemir stated that it was unlawful to keep Öztürk in the High Security Prison.

Halisdemir said: "We went to see him on the 109th day of the hunger strike. He dropped from 64 kilos to 45 kilos. Numbness started in his shoulders. He has no problems with his consciousness, my brother went on strike to achieve his basic rights."



# Military aggression and occupation

## Rural areas in Nusaybin declared special security zones

ANF | BEHDINAN | 5 AUGUST 2023

The rural areas of 9 villages in the Bagok Mountain countryside of Mardin's Nusaybin (Nisêbîn) district were declared "special security zones" for 15 days by the Mardin Governorate.

The Mardin Governorship said that the rural neighborhoods of Xarabalî (Üçköy), Hibab (Guzelsu), Badibbe (Dibek), Ewşî (Kaleli), Elin (Yakince), Arboi (Taşkøy), Yol, Şekrin, Derik to be considered security areas - and therefore closed - as of 4 August and until 18 August.

Citizens will be prohibited from entering the said zones without permission, added the statement, warning that "those who do not comply with the ban will be punished in accordance with Article 66 of the Provincial Administration Law No. 5442."

### New military operation

On the other hand, it was reported that military helicopters took off from the Cevatpaşa Military Barracks in the Midyat district and moved towards the Bagok region. Local sources said that a military operation was launched in the region.



## At least three soldiers killed in Girê Cûdî

ANF | BEHDINAN | 5 AUGUST 2023

The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla's actions in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area continue.

According to the information obtained from HPG sources, many actions were carried out on Friday, leaving at least 3 soldiers dead.

In a statement released on Friday, the HPG Press Center wrote about the guerrilla actions as well as the Turkish invasion attacks. The statement said that at least 3 Turkish soldiers were killed and 3 positions were hit in the actions carried out by the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area on 3 August."



## Van Governor's Office bans demonstrations and open-air meetings for 2 days

ANF | VAN | 5 AUGUST 2023

The Van Governor's Office stated that all kinds of press releases, marches and open-air meetings will be prohibited in the city with an announcement published on its website.

The statement said: "Except for those deemed appropriate by the Governor's Office and District Governor's Office, the activities in the form of press releases, sit-ins, setting up/opening of tents and stands, organizing signature campaigns, distributing leaflets, leaflets and flyers, and all kinds of protest actions are prohibited for 2 days, from 6 to 8 August."



## Military operation in Amed

ANF | AMED | 5 AUGUST 2023

The Turkish army has launched a military operation in the province of Amed (tr. Diyarbakir).

The area of operation in Amed includes the rural neighborhood of Dêrqam in Lice district as well as the neighborhood of Hure and the hamlet of Bateyt in Hani district. According to reports from the area, armoured and civilian vehicles were stationed on the access roads. Troop transport is taking place on the road between Amed and Bingöl.



## HPG: 7 Turkish soldiers were killed in guerrilla actions

ANF | BEHDINAN | 5 AUGUST 2023

The guerrillas continue to put up massive resistance against the Turkish invading forces in the Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). According to the Press Office of the HPG (People's Defence Forces), seven soldiers of the Turkish army were killed in guerrilla actions in the Girê Cûdî resistance area on 4 August.

The fighters of the HPG and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) used snipers as well as semi-automatic and heavy weapons and stopped several advance attempts of the invading troops, who have been trying to take the mountain massif on the western Zap front of Şehîd Delîl for more than two weeks. The guerrillas operate in small mobile units in the field. The YJA Star guerrillas carried out a coordinated action against a Turkish unit from two flanks.

In the resistance area of Sîda in the Zap region, a shovel excavator was attacked by the guerrillas at 8.30 am today. The Turkish army is trying to penetrate the guerrillas' tunnels with demolition machines. The action by guerrillas of the YJA Star stopped the work of the damaged shovel excavator.

In the Heftanîn region, a position of the occupying forces at Girê Koordîne in Bektorya was shelled with heavy weapons and damaged on 3 August.

Regarding the latest attacks by the Turkish army, HPG Press Office reported that Gundê Bazê in Metîna as well as Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî in the west of Zap were bombed by fighter jets a total of five times on Friday. In addition, the Turkish army carried out artillery attacks on the Zap and Metîna regions.



## Four YPG fighters killed in Turkish drone attack in Qamishlo

ANF | 5 AUGUST 2023

The General Command of the People's Defence Units (YPG) released the identity information of the four fighters killed in a drone strike by the Turkish state in Qamishlo on Thursday. The fighters belonged to the YPG, which forms the backbone of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

In a statement released on Saturday, the YPG accused Turkey of avenging the military victory over ISIS with attacks on its forces, saying the following:

“The Turkish occupying state, which continues its attacks against northern and eastern Syria unabated, wants to undermine peace and stability in the region by bombing our villages and towns. Taking advantage of the silence of the international community and local actors, Turkey carried out a dastardly attack on a vehicle carrying six of our commanders and fighters in the village of Hirmeşêxo in Qamishlo Canton on 3 August, the ninth anniversary of the beginning of the genocide in Shengal. Our comrades Diyar, Garzan, Hîwa and Orhan joined the caravan of martyrs as a result.

With attacks like these, the Turkish occupying state is taking revenge on the terror gangs of ISIS, which were defeated in the face of the resistance of our selfless fighters in Shengal. Our four friends who lost their lives in the attack in Qamishlo have defended our region for many years with courage and with great sacrifice against any kind of attacks perpetrated by terror gangs such as the so-called FSA, Al-Nusra and ISIS. They tirelessly took place in the fight, in particular in the war against ISIS in the years between 2014 and 2019. In this respect, the actions and sacrifices of these comrades will never be forgotten and their memory will last forever in our struggle. On this basis, we extend our condolences to the families of our fallen

comrades and to all patriotic people in North and East Syria. We reaffirm our pledge that we will follow the ideals of our comrades and retaliate for their deaths.”

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## Turkish drone strikes a village in Sulaymaniyah

ANF | 6 AUGUST 2023

According to RojNews, a reconnaissance plane belonging to the invading Turkish army carried out an attack on the village of Çınarto in Çemçemal this morning.

According to information obtained from local sources, a fire broke out in the area after the attack.

There was no further information available. In the past year and a half, Turkey has used drones to hit specific targets both in South Kurdistan (North Iraq) and in North-East Syria.

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## HPG: Two Turkish soldiers were killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 6 AUGUST 2023

The Press Office of People's Defense Forces (HPG) released a statement providing the latest information about the Turkish occupation campaign in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the HPG statement on Sunday, the guerrillas continued their actions against the Turkish forces.

Details of the guerrilla actions against the Turkish forces in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area in the Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region are as follows:

Guerrillas from YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) struck the occupation forces at 06:30 on August 5, and damaged an emplacement of theirs.

At 13:25, the occupation forces were struck at 13:25 and one of them was killed.

At 16:30, YJA Star guerrillas hit and damaged an emplacement of the Turkish forces with heavy weapons.

At 16:40, a member of the Turkish forces was killed by a guerrilla sniper.

At 17:00, YJA Star guerrillas hit and damaged an emplacement of the Turkish forces.

At 19:10 on August 3, guerrillas struck the occupation forces in Girê Ortê Resistance Area in Metina region.

On the other hand, the Turkish army carried out artillery attacks on the regions of Zap and Şehîd Delîl in western Zap.

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## Nine water stations in Tabqa go out of service as Turkey uses water as a weapon against Rojava

ANF | TABQA | 6 AUGUST 2023

Members of the Water Department and Democratic Civil Administration in Tabqa made a statement to the press regarding the water shortage in the region.

The press statement was read out by the Co-Chair of the Tabqa Water Department, Hemûd Şêx, who highlighted the fact that the invading Turkish state continued to use water resources as a weapon as it employed all inhumane measures against North-East Syria.

Hemûd Şêx pointed out that the Turkish state continued the violation of the agreements regarding the waters of the Euphrates River, resulting in a decrease in the level of dams and lakes, including Tabqa Dam, which lost 4 billion cubic meters of water as a result of these practices.

Hemûd Şêx remarked that nine water supply stations had completely gone out of service, leaving the people depending on them without water.

The statement concluded with a call upon the United Nations to play an effective role and prevent the Turkish state from continuing its war crimes against the people.

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## Occupation forces attack a village in Til Temir

ANF | TIL TEMIR | 6 AUGUST 2023

Turkey continues its war of attrition against North and East Syria. Two mortar shells hit a village near Til Temir on Sunday afternoon. Luckily, no one was injured and no property damage has been reported so far, according to the local military council.

The village of Al-Dardara (also Dirdara) affected by the attack is located in the north of Til Temir and is populated by Assyrians. According to information from security forces, the starting point of the bombardment was the illegal occupation zone that Turkey operates along its southern border in alliance with jihadist militias in Rojava. This was the third artillery attack on the village in ten days. In the nearby village of Al-Aboush, five young men were injured in a Turkish bombardment on Sunday.

Largely unnoticed by the Western public, Turkey is waging an open war against northern and eastern Syria, bombing civilian settlement areas, autonomous administration facilities or units of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on a daily basis. The town of Til Temir, which is located a good 30 kilometres from the Turkish border in the Christian-dominated Khabur Valley, is one of the preferred targets of Turkey and its Islamist proxy troops.

Til Temir and its population have already been in the crosshairs of the aggressors since 2019 as part of a war of attrition, with phases of high intensity alternating with phases of low intensity. Over thirty villages have since been either occupied, depopulated or extensively destroyed. Almost as many villages lie directly on the front line - and thus in the permanent sights of the occupying forces.

The constant incursions by Turkey and its Islamist allies constitute violations of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreements agreed between the guarantor powers Russia and the USA with Turkey after the occupation of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) in October 2019. Both Moscow and Washington nevertheless give Turkey a free hand.

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## A civilian killed, another seriously injured in Turkish attack in Çemankê

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 AUGUST 2023

The Turkish state bombed a vehicle in which three people were traveling. The three were on the way to their village in Çemankê in the Garê region. One of the three men, Alan Ismail from the village of Xelata, died, while another was seriously injured.

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## Turkish state bombs a village in Amadiya

ANF | 7 AUGUST 2023

The Turkish state continues its attacks on civilians in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

This time it targeted the village of Guherzê in Amadiya just hours after killing a civilian in Garê on Sunday.

The Turkish state's artillery hit the roof of a house, causing material damage to it.

The Turkish state systematically commits serious war crimes by targeting civilian settlements.

On Sunday, a civilian vehicle was bombed near the village of Bilindbasa in Garê.

A villager named as Alan İsmail lost his life in the attack, while another, Haşim Şekir, was seriously injured.

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## KDP advances further into Zap region in cooperation with the Turkish army

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 AUGUST 2023

Turkey has been trying to occupy the Zap region in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) for three years. So far, the attempt has failed due to the resistance of the HPG (People's Defence Forces) and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops). Now, in cooperation with the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) dominated by the Barzani clan, troops have been stationed in the region. The KDP is laying roads along the foothills to penetrate deeper into the region and has established bases on the southern front of Zap. Road construction continues uninterrupted and is intended to open up the terrain for the Turkish army. Several points have been taken by the KDP and there is a large contingent of troops in the area.

On 2 August, military units of the KDP were deployed to the Amadiya district and from there towards the guerrilla areas. The KDP has been supporting the Turkish occupation attacks on the guerrilla areas for a long time and often participates directly in them. The Turkish army is moving in many areas with the support of the KDP to advance against the guerrillas. On several occasions, Turkish military personnel have been found to be acting as supposed peshmerga, especially in the Zap, and attacking the guerrillas from KDP's bases.

A Turkish military operation in the guerrilla area of Girê Ortê in Metîna on 29 and 30 July was also supported by the KDP. According to the HPG, bodies of soldiers who died in the operation were transported out of the operation area by land with the help of the KDP. The HPG stated on 30 July: "The Turkish army is unsuccessful in the face of resistance from our forces and is attacking our forces in the Girê Ortê resistance area in Metîna in cooperation with the KDP in order to capture the area."

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## HPG: Turkey deliberately attacks the civilian population in South Kurdistan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 AUGUST 2023

The Press Office of People's Defense Forces (HPG) released a statement providing the latest information about the Turkish occupation campaign in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The HPG statement on Monday listed the details of the latest actions by the guerrillas and attacks by the Turkish army as follows:

### **Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region:**

On August 6, guerrillas from YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) struck the occupation forces in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area three times, demolishing three of their emplacements.

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

The Turkish state bombed a civilian vehicle in the village of Bilindbasê in the Çemankê sub-district in Garê region at 18:20 on August 6. The bombardment by a fighter jet claimed the life of Alan İsmail and left Haşim Şekir heavily wounded.

Three hours after this attack, the Turkish state carried out an artillery attack on the village of Guherzê in Amadiya.

Both incidents show that the Turkish state deliberately bombs the region, targeting the civilian population.

On August 6, the Girê Bahar Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region was shelled 3 times by fighter jets and 6 times by attack helicopters.

On the other hand, the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap and Metîna were targeted by artillery attacks.

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## Explosion near Derince port leaves at least 10 injured

ANF | KOCAELI | 7 AUGUST 2023

A huge explosion occurred at the Turkish Grain Board (TMO) Directorate port silo in the coastal area of the Derince district in Kocaeli province in western Turkey on Monday.

A large number of firefighting, medical, and police teams have been dispatched to the scene of the explosion, which could be heard from various parts of the Kocaeli Gulf.

The Governor of Kocaeli, Seddar Yavuz, stated that 10 people were injured as a result of the explosion, 2 of them seriously. According to the governor, the explosion was caused by a technical failure.

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## HPG releases identity of YJA Star guerrilla martyred in Nusaybin

ANF | BEHDINAN | 9 AUGUST 2023

The guerrilla who fell as a martyr in July in Nusaybin (Nisêbîn), in the province of Mardin (Mêrdîn) has been named as Destan Botan. The press center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG), released the identity of the fallen guerrilla in Behdînan on Monday.

Destan Botan was in Nusaybin on a mission and fell a martyr on 25 July in a self-sacrificing action. She was a member of the Kurdish freedom movement and a fighter for the Free Women's Troops (YJA Star). The HPG said that the guerrilla was surrounded by hundreds of security forces, against whom she fought alone for hours. In order not to be captured, she fought to the last moment.

The HPG said: "Comrade Destan knew that freedom doesn't come without a price. She selflessly devoted herself to creating free life opportunities that the enemy had completely taken from us." The HPG paid tribute to Destan Botan as a heroine and representative of Botan's tradition of resistance, which did not surrender and has gone down in the history of the struggle of the Kurdish people.

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## SDF kills six mercenaries

ANF | QAMISHLO | 9 AUGUST 2023

In a written statement, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said that they were carrying out against the Turkish mercenaries.

The SDF said: “The invading Turkish state and its gangs continue their attacks against our regions and our people without interruption.”

The statement continued: “Our forces, following the traces of the gangs that participated in the attacks, carried out an operation against their refuge in the village of Erişa between Serêkaniyê and Til Temir on 7 August, with the aim of avenging the fighters killed by a Turkish state’s drone in Qamishlo on 3 August.

During the operation, 6 mercenaries were killed and one of our fighters, a member of the Til Temir Military Council, who took part in the operation, fell as a martyr.”

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## Turkish attack injures a civilian in Til Temir

ANF | HESEKE | 9 AUGUST 2023

Turkey continues its war of attrition against North and East Syria.

The village of Um El Kef to the west of Til Temir district of Heseke Canton was attacked early Wednesday morning.

According to information provided by local sources, a 26-year-old villager, named Deham Ehmed Mihemed, was injured as a result of the attack with howitzers and taken to the Lêgerîn Hospital in the district.

Largely unnoticed by the Western public, Turkey is waging an open war against northern and eastern Syria, bombing civilian settlement areas, autonomous administration facilities or units of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on a daily basis. The town of Til Temir, which is located a good 30 kilometres from the Turkish border in the Christian-dominated Khabur Valley, is one of the preferred targets of Turkey and its Islamist proxy troops.

Til Temir and its population have already been in the crosshairs of the aggressors since 2019 as part of a war of attrition, with phases of high intensity alternating with phases of low intensity. Over thirty villages have since been either occupied, depopulated or extensively destroyed. Almost as many villages lie directly on the front line - and thus in the permanent sights of the occupying forces.

The constant incursions by Turkey and its Islamist allies constitute violations of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreements agreed between the guarantor powers Russia and the USA with Turkey after the occupation of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) in October 2019. Both Moscow and Washington nevertheless give Turkey a free hand.

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## Turkish attack kills three people from the same family in Ain

### Issa

ANF | AIN ISSA | 9 AUGUST 2023

Ignored by the world, the Turkish army and its jihadist mercenaries have once again intensified their attacks on the autonomous region of North and East Syria in recent days. Last night, the occupation forces carried out a massacre in Ain Issa.

Three people from the same family were killed in the attack on the village of Al-Shirka (El Şirkê) on the eastern outskirts of Ain Issa. The victims are a 60-year-old man and his three and ten-year-old grandsons. The children's mother was seriously injured, as were two other children of hers, aged twelve and five. They were taken to a hospital in Raqqa where they are undergoing emergency surgery. The hospital has not yet provided information on their condition.

Ain Issa has been one of the preferred targets of the Turkish army and its Islamist proxy troops for years. The town is located south of the Turkish occupation zone around Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) and is strategically important as a link between the self-governing regions of Euphrates (Kobanê) and Cizîrê, as it lies on the important M4 motorway, which runs through northern Syria like a lifeline and represented a strategic supply route for ISIS. Ain Issa has been in the crosshairs of the invading forces since 2019.

Immediately after the occupation of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and Girê Spî in October four years ago, a war of attrition was launched against Ain Issa. The bombardments are mainly directed against civilian settlements. Dozens of villages in the region have already been destroyed and depopulated by the belligerent actions of Turkey. Positions of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are also repeatedly under fire. The international community ignores Turkey's crimes in its neighbouring country.

The documentation centre for violations of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreements concluded between the guarantor powers Russia and the USA with Turkey after the last war of aggression against AANES in October 2019 has since counted at least 118 dead and injured civilians in Ain Issa alone as a result of attacks by the Turkish army and its Islamists. A Turkish air offensive last November also laid waste to large parts of the infrastructure.

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## HPG reports ongoing guerrilla resistance against the Turkish army

ANF | BEHDINAN | 9 AUGUST 2023

The Free Women's Troops (YJA Star) and the People's Defence Forces (HPG) continue their resistance against Turkey's occupation efforts in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) unabated. According to the HPG statement on Wednesday, the defence of the guerrillas continues to focus on parts of the western Zap region, from which the Turkish army withdrew in flight at the end of last year.

In the Girê Cûdî resistance area alone, the guerrillas carried out actions against the invading forces a total of eight times in the last 48 hours. The target of seven of these actions were enemy positions, which were attacked with semi-automatic and heavy weapons.

Another action, which took place on Tuesday evening, was directed against two helicopters of the Turkish army. In addition to a Sikorsky aircraft with airborne troops on board, an attack helicopter guiding the transport was also hit. Both helicopters had to turn around and leave the combat area as a result of the shelling.

In the resistance area of Sîda, the guerrillas targeted a heavy construction machine used to demolish their defense positions two days ago. The demolition work was then stopped. Today, the HPG and YJA Star guerrillas in Sîda targeted several soldiers moving in the area. The group was taken under fire with heavy weapons.

Regarding the latest attacks by the Turkish army, the HPG Press Office reported that the Girê Bahar near the Şehîd Delîl front in the west of the Zap, the Sîda area and the village of Gundê Şêlazê in the Metîna region were each bombed once between 6 and 7 August by Turkish warplanes. The Girê Cûdî was attacked several times by combat helicopters at the same time. Shells fired by ground troops also hit all the places affected by these attacks.

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## Turkish drone strikes a car in Sulaymaniyah

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 9 AUGUST 2023

A drone of the invading Turkish state struck a civilian car on the move on the Dukan-Xelekan road in the border area of Sulaymaniyah city in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to reports from the ground, two people were injured as a result of the attack, which also started a fire in the area. The fire has since been taken under control.

Dukan district governor's office stated that a preliminary examination had been conducted and the two injured citizens had been taken under treatment at Dukan Hospital.

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## 9 Turkish soldiers killed in revolutionary guerrilla operation in Zap

ANF | BEHDINAN | 9 AUGUST 2023

According to information obtained from HPG (People's Defense Forces) sources, guerrillas carried out a revolutionary operation against the Turkish army in the Gire Cudi resistance area in the Şehid Delil western Zap region.

Three soldiers of the Turkish army were killed as a result of strikes at close range, and six others were killed by guerrilla snipers.

According to reports from the ground, the revolutionary operation of the guerrillas continues.

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## 208 people kidnapped in Afrin since the beginning of 2023

ANF | SHEHBA | 10 AUGUST 2023

Members of the Afrin-Syrian Human Rights Organization came together at the Serdem Camp in Shehba, where refugees from Afrin have settled after the invasion of their region in 2018.

The group held a press conference about the crimes committed by the Turkish state in Afrin since the beginning of 2023. Lawyers in Afrin and Shehba cantons and residents of Serdem Camp also attended the press conference.

Mihemed Ebdo, spokesperson of the Human Rights Organization, read the statement. Stating that the Turkish state continues its policy of changing the demographic structure in the Afrin region, Ebdo said: "The invading Turkish state systematically violates human rights by carrying out crimes such as massacres, kidnappings, violence, ransoms, confiscation of people's properties, reselling the confiscated materials in the market and plundering the environment."

Mihemed Ebdo listed the balance sheet on rights violations and crimes since the beginning of 2023 as follows:

\* 208 citizens, including 24 women and a child who was raped, were abducted.

\* 13 people, including 3 women, were killed.

\* More than 16,000 trees were cut down, more than a thousand trees were uprooted and more than 70 hectares of land were burned.

\* Turkey demolished most of the historical places and protected areas such as Eyn Dara, Nebî Horî, Şikefta Duderî, Gora Marmaron, which are on the UNESCO world heritage list. Historical artifacts were looted and sold on world black markets.

\* Changing the demographic structure and the construction of colonial houses in occupied Afrin continue with the financial support of Turkish, Gulf and Palestinian organizations. The invading Turkish state built nearly 30 colonial houses with the support and financing of Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan) associations such as Eyadî El Beyda, Kuwêt El Rehme and Binyan El Qatari.

## Cultural genocide

Ebdo said: “The most dangerous of these crimes and violations is the demographic change that has reached the level of cultural genocide.”

In addition, Kurdish names of strategic places were replaced with Turkish names. The Turkish flag and Erdogan's photos were hung on every sign and everywhere in the village, district and city center.

Turkish materials are now used in schools. The Turkish flag was sewn on the students' clothes. The names of the signboards in the shops were written in Turkish.

In addition to all these racist practices, the invading Turkish state also destroyed Yazidi, Alevi and Christian religious places and temples.

## Turkey wants to deprive people of the hope to return

Ebdo pointed out that the Turkish state forces and Syrian armed gang groups attack the villages and refugee camps in the Shehba region every day. He said: “The aim of the invading Turkish state is to pressure the citizens in the camps and villages, forcing them to leave the region, and deprive them of their hopes to return to their homes and lands in Afrin.”

## Call to the UN

Ebdo called on all international and humanitarian organizations, especially the United Nations, to fulfill their moral-political humanitarian responsibilities as well as their legal responsibilities and added: “The international organizations and the UN in particular, should put pressure on Turkey to pull out from Afrin and the occupied region of Northern Syria. Likewise, criminals should be prosecuted in international courts, and the safe return of refugees to Afrin should be guaranteed.”



## SDF: Horrific massacre by the Turkish army claimed the lives of innocent children and women

ANF | QAMISHLO | 10 AUGUST 2023

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) issued a statement to condemn the killing of civilians by the Turkish army in the village of al-Shirka on Tuesday.

The statement reads as follows: “A new massacre and another war crime committed by the Turkish occupation army targeted children, the elderly, and women from a single family in the safe village of al-Shirka (encompassed by the ceasefire agreement), located south of Suluk town and adjacent to the M4 road.”

The statement continued: “On 8 August, utilizing heavy artillery, the Turkish occupation army ruthlessly attacked civilian residences within the village, resulting in the martyrdom of 3 civilians from the Khamis Al-Hadi Al-Khalawi family. Among the victims were Grandma Doza (60 years old), young Heba Al-Khalawi (10 years old), and Abdullah Al-Khalawi (3 years old), while three others suffered injuries: Malak Al-Khalawi (12 years old), Tahani Al-Khalawi (5 years old), and their mother Haya Omar (25 years old).”

The statement added: “This appalling massacre stands as another in a series of such heinous violations committed by the Turkish occupation army against civilians in our secure regions. Previous instances include the Safawiya, Dibs, and Al-Alimat massacres, among others. The persistent violations of the ceasefire agreement by the Turkish occupation army and its continued perpetration of massacres and war crimes against civilians in our secure regions demand swift intervention from the agreement’s guarantors, the global community, and human rights organizations to curb the occupation’s reprehensible conduct and bring an end to its war crimes.”

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## 12 Turkish soldiers killed in Girê Cûdî

ANF | BEHDINAN | 10 AUGUST 2023

According to information received from guerrilla sources, at least 12 Turkish soldiers were killed in the revolutionary operation in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area.

The Turkish army bombed the Resistance Area for 5 hours nonstop. Girê Cûdî is located in the Zap region.

The same sources reported that 9 soldiers were killed on Wednesday, 9 August. It was learned that 3 more soldiers were killed in the ongoing actions.

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## Autonomous Administration of Euphrates Region calls for an end to Turkish occupation and attacks

ANF | 10 AUGUST 2023

The Democratic Autonomous Administration of the Euphrates Region in North-East Syria released a statement denouncing the increasingly ongoing attacks by the Turkish state against the region, which claim more lives every day.

The statement referred to the deadly Turkish attack that killed three civilians from the same family and injured three others in the village of al-Shirka to the east of the Ain Issa district yesterday, August 9.

“The Turkish state continues its hostile policies and violations against the people of North and East Syria, as well as its policy of demographic change. The international community maintains its silence against the crimes committed by the invading Turkish state in violation of laws,” said the statement released on Thursday.

The Democratic Autonomous Administration of the Euphrates Region called on the international parties to uphold their political, moral and humanitarian responsibilities and duties towards the people of North-East Syria and end the Turkish occupation in Syria to restore security and stability in the region.

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## Turkey bombs water supply network in a village of Zirgan

ANF | HESEKE | 10 AUGUST 2023

In its ongoing attacks against North-East Syria, the Turkish state systematically targets the substructures in civilian settlements in an attempt to displace the local population and occupy further regions.

According to reports from the ground, the Turkish state forces attacked the village of Merzi in the Zirgan town in Heseke Canton at around 10 am local time today.

The occupation forces also bombed the water supply network in the village, causing material damage.

On August 9, an attack by the Turkish state killed three people from the same family and left three others injured in the village of al-Shirka to the east of Ain Issa.

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## State terror in a village of Şırnak

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 10 AUGUST 2023

The rural areas of the Bilbes village in the Beytüşşebap district of Şırnak have been subjected to an intense bombardment by the Turkish army for the past 24 hours.

The region has been under a military blockade since July 29 and access to the area is banned. The ban officially ended on August 4, but remains in place de facto.

In the meantime, a local by the name of İzzettin Cin was detained during house raids on August 1 and remanded in custody two days later.

As the siege and blockade have continued for the last 13 days, residents are not allowed access to their vineyards and orchards.

For the past 24 hours, the immediate vicinity of the village has been bombed by F-16 fighter jets and helicopters.

A large number of police and military forces, as well as tanks, have been dispatched to the region this morning amid reports of clashes in the area.

The residents of the village state that they are not allowed to go out, calling for a delegation of human rights advocates and politicians to come to the region.

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## HPG: 31 Turkish soldiers were killed in revolutionary operation by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 10 AUGUST 2023

The Press Office of People's Defense Forces (HPG) released a statement providing the latest information about the Turkish occupation campaign and guerrilla resistance in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

“The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas, who started their march with the first bullet fired by our immortal commander Egîd (Mahsum Korkmaz) on August 15, have been waging a relentless struggle for 39 years. Following in the footsteps of martyrs in an Apoist spirit, our guerrillas are leading our freedom struggle with great self-sacrifice. Fighting with the same spirit, consciousness, commitment, determination and resolve today, our forces gave a historic lesson to the invading Turkish army on 9-10 August, on the eve of the Day of Resurrection,” said the HPG statement on Thursday.

HPG stated that the guerrillas carried out a revolutionary operation against the Turkish occupation forces that sought to advance in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area. The guerrillas employed a wide range of tactics ranging from assassination, sabotage, strikes and heavy weaponry. Mobile and professional guerrilla teams acted in coordination during the course of the operation, which lasted 24 hours, and carried out 44 actions, in which 31 invaders were killed and 7 others were injured. The guerrilla forces suffered no losses during the successful actions.

Guerrillas also struck the Turkish forces in Girê Cûdî, Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê.

A total of 32 soldiers were killed and 11 others injured as a result of the actions carried out on 9-10 August, the details of which are as follows:

### **Girê Cûdî Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region**

On 9 August, YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) guerrillas struck the occupation forces three times and killed a soldier.

On 9 August, the invaders seeking to advance in the area were hit by the guerrillas. 9 soldiers were killed and 7 others injured as a result of the strikes with hand grenades and weapons. The Turkish forces retreating after the action were also struck by the guerrillas and 2 more soldiers were killed.

On 9 August, 4 Turkish soldiers were killed by YJA Star snipers.

On 9 August, guerrillas hit the Turkish forces deployed to the area to replace those killed. Strikes by YJA Star guerrillas left 2 soldiers dead.

On 9 August, guerrillas destroyed a drone.

On 9 August, 2 Turkish soldiers were killed by YJA Star snipers.

On 9 August, guerrillas stopped an advance by the Turkish forces.

On 9 August, a soldier was killed by a guerrilla sniper.

On 9 August, Sikorsky helicopters on a mission to airdrop troops were intervened 9 times and forced to leave the area.

On 9 August, guerrillas struck the occupation forces advancing in the area 15 times and killed 3 soldiers.

On 10 August, 2 soldiers were killed in a sabotage action.

On 10 August, guerrillas infiltrated the position of the occupation forces and struck them with hand grenades and weapons, killing 2 soldiers.

On 10 August, 2 soldiers were killed by guerrilla snipers.

On 10 August, 1 soldier was killed by a YJA Star sniper.

Having suffered a heavy defeat in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area, the invading Turkish army carried out an intense bombardment with fighter jets and helicopters throughout the night of 9 August. The army retreated one step in an attempt to retrieve the casualties from the area.

### **Zap region**

On 9 August, guerrillas struck and damaged the heavy construction equipment used by the Turkish troops trying to demolish the guerrilla positions in Sîda Resistance Area.

### **Metîna region**

On 9 August, guerrillas struck the occupation forces in Girê Ortê Resistance Area with heavy weapons.

### **Xakurkê region**

On 8 August, the occupation forces partaking in an operation in the area of Girê Şehîd Qehreman were sabotaged by the guerrillas and 2 soldiers were injured.

On 9 August, the occupation forces partaking in an operation in the area of Girê Şehîd Qehreman were sabotaged by the guerrillas four times. 2 soldiers were injured and one other was killed, while the operation was concluded without success.

The actions in Xakurkê region were carried out by YJA Star guerrillas in memory of Egîd Garzan, who fell a martyr on 11 August 2020 as the field commander.

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

On 4,7,9 August, the Girê Hakkarî Resistance Area in Metîna was shelled 3 times by fighter jets.

On 9 August, the Girê Hakkarî Resistance Area in Metîna was shelled 4 times by attack helicopters.

The regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê were attacked by artillery.

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## **Turkish drone attack kills 3 in South Kurdistan**

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 11 AUGUST 2023

A drone of the invading Turkish state struck a civilian car on the move in the Pêncîwên district of Sulaymaniyah in South Kurdistan on Friday.

According to a local official in the town of Nalparêz, the three people travelling in the car lost their lives as a result of the attack.

The Turkish state uses drones to kill people in Kurdistan every day. On Thursday, a civilian died who had been seriously injured the day before in an attack on his car in Sulaymaniyah governorate. On Sunday, a civilian was killed in a Turkish airstrike in Dohuk governorate, and another suffered serious injuries. Shortly before that, a drone strike occurred in the town of Çemçemal, west of Sulaymaniyah, killing two people, according to unconfirmed reports. On 28 July, a car was attacked by a drone in the Şarbajêr region north of Sulaymaniyah.

Deadly drone attacks on Iraqi territory also target the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and in the self-administered refugee camp of Maxmur. In the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria, people are also killed almost daily by Turkish killer drones. The attacks are directed against the civilian population and freedom fighters.



## Guerrillas welcome 15 August with actions against the Turkish army

ANF | BEHDINAN | 11 AUGUST 2023

The Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) reported continued actions against the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the statement on Friday, four soldiers of the Turkish army were killed in guerrilla actions which were carried out to welcome the anniversary of the offensive of 15 August 1984, when the guerrillas fired the first shot at the Turkish occupation forces and launched the armed liberation struggle.

HPG refuted reports by the Turkish Ministry of Defence that four of their members had been "neutralised" in Girê Cûdî. "The Turkish state is using untrue allegations such as these to cover up its own losses as a result of heavy guerrilla strikes. All our friends are unharmed and still in action," said the HPG.

According to the statement, guerrillas of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) struck the Turkish occupation forces at Girê Cûdî, located on the western wing of the Zap Front, which is the focus of the invading forces. The strikes with semi-automatic and heavy weapons on 10 August left two soldiers killed.

In another action in the Girê Cûdî resistance area, the occupation troops were brought under fire at mid-day.

On the same day, helicopters with airborne troops on board were targeted by the guerrillas a total of four times between 20:20 and midnight.

In the region of Xakurke, two soldiers were killed and an enemy position was completely destroyed as a result of an action carried out by YJA Star guerrillas in the Girê Şehîd Derwêş area with heavy weapons on 4 August.

On the other hand, guerrillas destroyed a tactical photo trap of the Turkish army in the region of Yüksekova in Hakkari province, North Kurdistan, on 6 August. Immediately afterwards, the Turkish army launched a military operation, which focused on the area surrounding the village of Memkaya. After two days, the operation was stopped without results.

With regard to the attacks by the Turkish army, HPG stated that various areas in southern Kurdistan were bombed at least twelve times by fighter jets on 10 August. The areas of Girê Bahar and Girê Cûdî in Zap as well as Girê Zengil and Gundê Zêvkê in Gare were targeted by these attacks. While Girê Cûdî was attacked twelve times by attack helicopters, artillery fired by Turkish military ground forces hit various areas in Zap and Metîna.

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## Turkish drone attack on Friday killed three members of a family from Duhok

ANF | 12 AUGUST 2023

A drone of the invading Turkish state struck a civilian car on the move in the Pêncîwên district of Sulaymaniyah in South Kurdistan on Friday.

According to THE latest reports from the ground, the attack claimed the lives of three members of a family from Duhok.

The victims were identified as Hasan Ahmed Newzad, Jiyan Mustafa and Riyam Hasan Mustafa.

The Turkish state uses drones to kill people in Kurdistan every day. On Thursday, a civilian died who had been seriously injured the day before in an attack on his car in Sulaymaniyah governorate. On Sunday, a civilian was killed in a Turkish airstrike in Dohuk governorate, and another suffered serious injuries. Shortly before that, a drone strike occurred in the town of Çemçemal, west of Sulaymaniyah, killing two people, according to unconfirmed reports. On 28 July, a car was attacked by a drone in the Şarbajêr region north of Sulaymaniyah.

Deadly drone attacks on Iraqi territory also target the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and in the self-administered refugee camp of Maxmur. In the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria, people are also killed almost daily by Turkish killer drones. The attacks are directed against the civilian population and freedom fighters.

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# Femicide

## Dozens detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers

ANF | ISTANBUL | 5 AUGUST 2023

Saturday Mothers have continued their action in Istanbul for their relatives who disappeared in state custody and the punishment of the perpetrators for the 958th week. Despite a contrary ruling by the Turkish Constitutional Court, the initiative was again denied access to their ancestral rally site in front of the Galatasaray High School on Istiklal Avenue.

The Galatasaray Square in front of the high school of the same name in the central district of Beyoğlu, where the Saturday Mothers' sit-in was to take place, was widely cordoned off by police barriers. Galatasaray Square is considered a symbolic place for the struggle for human rights in Turkey.

The Saturday Mothers were supported today by parliamentarians from the Green Left Party, the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) and the Workers' Party of Turkey (TIP), including HDP c-chairs Pervin Buldan and Mithat Sancar, as well as DBP co-chair Keskin Bayındır, Green Left Party MPs Sırrı Süreyya Önder and Meral Daniş Beştaş and former HDP MP Musa Piroğlu. The parliamentary group was stopped and surrounded by police on their way to Galatasaray Square.

Denying access to the square, the police staged a violent crackdown on the crowd and detained dozens of people, while members of parliament were surrounded by police.

In 1995, women in Istanbul took to the streets for the first time to draw attention to relatives who had been arrested and then disappeared. Since a large-scale attack on the Saturday Mothers ordered by the Ministry of Interior in the summer five years ago, Galatasaray Square has been a no-go zone for the Saturday Mothers. But this is contrary to the right to freedom of assembly and demonstration, ruled the Turkish Constitutional Court on 22 February 2023, rejecting the ministry's objection that the Saturday Mothers threatened the "protection of public order". "Everyone has the right to take part in unarmed and peaceful assemblies and demonstrations without prior permission," says Article 34 of the Turkish Constitution, which the security authorities violated by banning the Saturday Mothers' forcefully dispersed action in August 2018 and all subsequent ones. The blockade of the square is therefore invalid, said the court ruling. The Turkish Interior Ministry and the Istanbul police ignore the ruling and continue to violently crack down on Saturday Mothers.



## Turkish state and its mercenaries sexually assault three women in Afrin

ANF | 6 AUGUST 2023

Sources from Afrin said that the Turkish state and its mercenaries continue to carry out horrific crimes in Afrin. The city and surrounding villages were occupied by Turkey in 2018.

According to local sources in the region, Sultan Murad gangs affiliated with the invading Turkish state sexually assaulted three women in the town of Bilbilê on the Syrian-Turkish border.

Inhumane crimes against women such as rape, violence, massacre and kidnapping were documented in other regions occupied by the Turkish state and its mercenaries, especially in Afrin.

Although these crimes against women are committed and documented in front of the whole world, international forces and human rights organizations remain silent against the Turkish state and its gangs.

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## French women salute the KJK campaign for women in Shengal and Afghanistan

ANF | PARIS | 7 AUGUST 2023

The Kurdistan Women's Community (KJK) launched a campaign to draw attention to the struggles of women in Shengal and Afghanistan. Between 3 August, the anniversary of the Islamic State attack on the Yazidi area of Shengal in South Kurdistan in 2014, and 15 August, the day the Taliban took power in Afghanistan in 2021, the fate and struggles of women will be discussed.

In two separate events, women in France expressed their solidarity with the KJK campaign launched under the motto "We Stand with Afghan and Shengal women against the attacks of hegemonic men".

One of the events was organized by internationalist women at Larzac, where women set up a camp and wrote "Jin, Jiyan, Azadî" (Woman, Life, Freedom) with their bodies.

"At our resistance meetings, we express our solidarity with the women in Shengal and Afghanistan. Feeding on capitalist modernity, patriarchy stands at the root of femicide and ecocide. We will respond to attacks with solidarity and organization from an internationalist perspective."

The second message of solidarity with the KJK campaign was voiced during an event organized by the Coordination of Feminist Women in France. Speaking after the gathering, women denounced 3 August as

the day of femicide in Shengal and 15 August as the day of femicide in Afghanistan. Calling for self-defense in response to femicide, women said: “Long live women’s resistance against patriarchy and all dictatorships. Self-defense against ISIS and the Taliban. Jin, Jiyan, Azadî.”



## Kurdish political woman prisoner goes on hunger strike in Urmia Central Prison

ANF | 7 AUGUST 2023

Soheila Mohammadi, is a Kurdish political woman prisoner from Salmas. She was sentenced to 5 years in prison for membership in the PJAK in Iran and has been in prison for 3 years. She has now started a protest in the Urmia Central Prison.

Mohammadi went on hunger strike by sewing her lips to protest the ill-treatment against the Kurds. In February, the woman was injured after trying to protest ill treatment of Kurds.

The hunger strike was launched on Sunday, and Mohammadi said it will continue until the conditions are improved.



## Forum in Raqqa ends with a number of proposals to support Yazidi and Afghan women

ANF | RAQQA | 8 AUGUST 2023

Women's organizations in Northern and Eastern Syria held a forum at the Sharq University Conference Hall in Raqqa with the slogan “Let’s create a free life against the genocide of women”.

Representatives of Women’s Defense Units (YPJ), Kongra Star, Yazidi Women’s Union, Jineology, Zenûbya Women’s Community, women’s councils of political parties, Syrian Women’s Council and civil society organizations attended the forum, which was held to support Shengal and Afghan women.

The forum addressed the issue of genocide and femicide of women in both Afghanistan and Shengal. Witness accounts of the Yazidi genocide and the determination to fight based on self-defense were also discussed at the forum.

Participants underlined that women should raise their level of education and establish a strong organization so that they can lead in the political, military and social arena. The importance of strengthening the unity of all Kurdish women, including Arab women and Yazidis, was emphasized.

The forum also welcomed the KJK initiative to support the women of Shengal and Afghanistan and stated that action must be taken to ensure the freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

### **Women's problems need to be solved**

The forum ended with the reading of the final declaration. Zozan Şemo, vice president of the Women's Assembly of the Syrian Future Party, said that the women's problem in the Middle East needs to be solved in order to solve social problems, and that it is not possible to find a solution to all existing problems without analyzing their nature and ancient history.

### **The final declaration reads as follows:**

- 1- The fight against sexism, abuse and violence targeting women should be carried out. This is possible in a society where there is the establishment of a democratic family, justice and equality.
- 2- Women should be made aware of the special dangers of war being waged against them on social media.
- 3- The slogan "Jin, Jiyan, Azadî" should be spread.
- 4- With the support of the international community, ISIS mercenaries should be tried in the Autonomous Administration courts and 3 August should be the day when the rights and culture of the Yazidis are recognized.
- 5- Women's problem is one of the unsolved problems. If a woman cannot find a real solution to the problem, other problems cannot be solved either. Mass killings are recognized all over the world, but massacres against women are not. As women's organizations and movements, we will stand up to achieve the recognition of femicides.
- 6- In order to ensure the security and peace of women in the Middle East and North Africa, initiatives against the occupation and massacres of women should be supported and enlarged. Crimes and massacres against women should be exposed and shared with the public.
- 7- Works will be carried out to protect and advance the identities of women from different cultures, religions and components.
- 8- The fate of all missing women should be discovered.
- 9- The policies of the invading Turkish state should be exposed. The Turkish state must be removed from all regions of Syria that it occupies.
- 10- A movement for women at the world level should be established and women's confederalism should be implemented.

11- Work will be carried out to end the isolation of Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

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## Remembering journalist Deniz Firat

ANF | 8 AUGUST 2023

Deniz Firat was one of the first journalists to report on the attacks of the so-called ISIS in Kurdistan in 2014. She was from Van province and lived with her family in the Maxmur refugee camp in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). In August 2014, ISIS attacked Maxmur in addition to the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal (Sinjar) and other locations. The camp had to be evacuated. Deniz Firat documented the events on site with her camera and was killed on August 8.

Deniz Firat was born in 1984 in Çaldıran district of Van. Her family was systematically politically persecuted by the Turkish state. Instead of seeking refuge in Europe or moving to western Turkey, the family chose Kurdistan and crossed the Turkish-Iranian border to the east of the country. Deniz Firat's sister Binevş joined the guerrillas there. The Iranian regime also left the family alone, and the parents were arrested. Deniz and her sister Sarya were left alone and did not know what had happened to their parents for two months. After their release from prison, the family crossed the Iran-Iraq border to Zelê camp in southern Kurdistan. The camp was bombed by the Turkish air force and Delil, Deniz's little brother, died of an illness because there were no facilities for medical treatment.

After that, Deniz and Sarya also joined the guerrillas. Deniz was still very young and learned to read and write only in the mountains. After the experiences of her childhood and youth, the guerrilla meant a whole new way of life for her. She expressed her attachment by saying, "I can't live without the mountains, I can't breathe without my friends, nothing has meaning without work, and I can't exist without the struggle." She spent many years with the guerrillas in Qandil, Rojhilat, Behdinan and Botan.

In her media work, she placed great emphasis on her Kurdish mother tongue. Her last place of operation was Maxmur. When ISIS attacked the camp on August 6, Deniz stayed with her camera and phone with the fighters defending Maxmur against the Islamists. On August 8, she reported from the front lines by phone for the last time and was hit by a shell fragment.

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## At least 26 women killed in July

ANF | 8 AUGUST 2023

According to the data compiled by JINNEWS from the press every month, 26 women and 2 children were killed in July. In addition, 9 women and 4 children died under suspicious circumstances, and 3 escaped murder.

While 9 of the 26 women were murdered by their husbands, 4 of them were in the divorce phase.

In addition, 7 women were murdered by their boyfriends, 3 women by their sons, 2 women by their ex-husbands, 2 women by relatives-acquaintances, one woman by her fiancée, 1 woman by a colleague.

A woman was killed by someone whose relationship with her could not be established.

JINNEWS said that “7 women were killed in Istanbul, 2 in Mersin, 2 in Ankara, 2 in Nevşehir, 2 in Manisa, 1 in Bursa, 1 in Antalya, 1 in Çorum, 1 in Mêrdîn, 1 in Samsun, 1 in Êlih (Batman), 1 in Dîlok (Antep), 1 in Sakarya, 1 in Giresun, 1 in Meleti (Malatya), 1 in İzmir.”

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## Young woman murdered in Sulaymaniyah

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 8 AUGUST 2023

According to Sulaymaniyah Police Directorate Spokesperson Serkewt Ahmed, a 23-year-old woman was subjected to a knife attack.

The young woman was hospitalized with severe stab wounds, to which she succumbed in hospital.

Ahmed announced that an investigation had been launched into the incident.

There has been a significant increase in femicides in South Kurdistan in recent years as perpetrators are granted impunity for the killing of dozens of women every year.

According to the Kurdistan Region Organization for Legal Support for Women, 13,584 women were killed in 2021 and 15,897 in 2022.

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## The life of women in the highlands of Hakkari

ANF | HAKKARI | 9 AUGUST 2023

In the highlands of Hakkari, women decide for themselves and their production. While the men mostly stay in the city, the women move to the high mountain pastures. Life there is characterised by hard work that starts early in the morning. Some of the women work in the household, others in handicrafts, some in animal husbandry and some in agriculture.

Thus, on the one hand, the women in Hakkari shape their lives and play a decisive role in production. With their work, they oppose the economic crisis and patriarchy. The women of Hakkari have never lost touch with nature and live in deep connection with the mountains. Even in the city surrounded by high mountains, women spread the bond with nature.

Zozana Merga Butan (Mergabütan Highland) is located about 12 kilometres from the centre of Hakkari. Year after year, people come here to spend the summer producing agricultural products. Merga Butan, with its natural beauty, clear water, thousands of different plants and wild animals, is a beautiful place where people live for about six months. People come here between May and October and earn their living by selling the natural products they produce and through subsistence farming. Life in the highlands is dominated by women. While the men usually work in the city, the women carry out all the work of live-stock farming in the highlands.

### “In the highlands we can breathe”

Gülbeyaz Keskin, mother of four children, talks about how life in the beautiful highlands gives her breathing space. She talks about her everyday life, which starts early in the morning by milking the animals. Yoghurt and cheese are made from milk. “Sometimes people come here and buy it from us. What we can't sell, we keep for ourselves. We preserve some of it for the winter months,” she says.

### “The crisis hits us too”

Zübeyde Yetiş, mother of seven children, states that life in the highlands is nice, but the economic crisis is also hitting them hard. “We sell five liters of milk for 150 TL, but people say it is too expensive,” says Zübeyde Yetiş, adding, “But compared to the increased costs, it is very cheap. Nowadays, you can't buy anything for 150 TL. We should be selling these products, which we produce under difficult conditions day and night, at a higher price, but people don't have the purchasing power. These products are our only livelihood. I feed my family of eleven with these products. The money has no value anymore.”

### “Life in the highlands is hard, but beautiful”

Nazime Tunç has eleven children. She milks her cattle twice a day. “As beautiful as life is in the highlands, there are also very difficult aspects. The summer months are hot and dusty, there is little we can do. Life is hard, but this is our life and we have to endure it. Our grandfathers and grandmothers also lived this life, and we also live this life. This is our work.”

### “A beautiful life”

Asiye Özdemir is another woman who lives in the highlands. She talks about how the days in the highland are very similar: “Life in the highland is very nice. Because of the crisis, not as many people can come to the highlands as before, since everything is very expensive. Because the prices for fodder, hay, grass and the expenses for the shepherds are very high, people can no longer feed their animals. We send our animals to the mountains first. Then we make cheese from the milk from them. We also bake bread for ourselves and our children. That’s how our life goes on and on. There are not so many guests either. The work is not difficult for us, it is a very nice life for us.”

### “I recommend life in the highlands to everyone”

Zeynep Özer describes her life in the highland as follows: “We get up early in the morning and first do our prayers. Then we take care of our animals and milk them. We boil the milk and make yoghurt and cheese. I recommend life in the highland to everyone. It is both beautiful and difficult and dusty. In other words, it has both beautiful and difficult sides. There is a lot of peace and quiet here. More precisely, we don’t deal with people so much. There is no gossip here. You deal with your animals, with your children. I do what I love. People tell me, ‘Come back, stop nomadic animal husbandry,’ but I love this life. I have been doing this work for 24 years. I make yoghurt, cheese and oil here. Most people from Hakkari come and buy the products here. Because the products we make here are very natural. That’s why people come here and buy everything they need from us.”



## Women from İzkizköy defend Akbelen Forest

ZEYNEP KURAY | MUĞLA | 11 AUGUST 2023

The women of İzkizköy, who lead the resistance in the Akbelen Forest in Milas, in the province of Muğla, are determined not to let their living spaces to the plundering project of the Limak-İçtaş company, despite all the blockade and obstruction of the state. The women from İzkizköy, who have been waging both a legal and a de facto struggle against the forest massacre carried out to expand the mining area for 4 years, said: “If defending our living spaces is marginality, we are marginalized to the end.” The reaction was to the statement made by President Erdoğan in which he called the Akbelen resistance “marginal”.

The women of İzkizköy were interviewed by ANF.

Almost all of the women from İzkizköy, who resolutely defend their living space against eco-crime, are nomads. Aytaç Yakar, one of these *Yörük* women, has been fighting non-stop for 4 years not to leave her living space for Y Energy Company, a subsidiary of Limak and İçtaş. Yakar, who was born and raised in İzkizköy, regrets realizing the extent of the plunder too late. Yakar saw the Işıkdere District, where she went as a bride at the age of 13, destroyed for the sake of coal. She said: “They expropriated our village by force. They gave us 10 thousand TL and drove us away from there. At that time, we did not know the law. They

destroyed my house, my country, my entire existence. They cut 45 fruit trees before my eyes. Everything I had was buried there, my memories of 35 years disappeared there. If we had known that it would be like this, we would definitely not have given Işıkdere.”

After being exiled from Işıkdere, Aytaç Yakar settled on 500 square meter land in the Ova region and said: “At that time, people migrated everywhere like nomadic birds. I did not migrate. I did not go to the center of Milas. I looked at the concrete, the concrete looked at me. I couldn’t live like that. May my father’s place be in heaven, there was a 500 square meter place that he inherited. 5 of us settled there with my husband and children. But they did not leave us alone there either. The manager of the company named Abdullah came and tried to drive us out of there as well. That’s when I realized what kind of attack we were facing. I told him to go. We have been resisting since that day.”

‘We defend our land for the future of our children’

Yakar said that they have been continuing their legal and de facto struggle for 4 years to defend their living space. She said: “We have been on a vigil in morning and evening for 2 years. So much so that our house is now a vigil. I started this resistance for my children and grandchildren to breathe. They want to confiscate my land, which I want to leave to my 4 grandchildren. They have already destroyed the neighbourhood of Işıkdere, and now they have their eyes on our settlements and forests. They had the gendarmerie to attack us and slaughter our forest before our eyes. I was beaten and dragged on the ground by soldiers my child’s age. We raise our children in such a way that they would not hurt even an ant. Is that what their mothers taught them? Did he say go hit your elders, beat them? What’s my fault? To protect my environment? And now we’ve been declared marginal. If defending our habitats is marginal, then we are marginalized all the way.”

Workers suffering from breathing diseases

Yakar also reproached the villagers who work in thermal power plants and who are partners in crime in the slaughter of nature for fear of losing their jobs. She said: “Soon no one will be able to access water or breathe. Then will the money they receive save them? My husband suffered from breathing diseases because of his work in Yeniköy and Kemerköy thermal power plants. He can’t breathe properly, can’t walk properly. Tomorrow, those workers will all experience the same problems.”

Aytaç Yakar, who is determined to defend the Akbelen Forest, said: “We brought the massacre of our environment to the parliament. If necessary, we will bring it to the whole world, but we will not give up. I was born once with my mother. I will die once.”

Melahat Çulha, one of the villagers in the resistance, is also from Işıkdere District. Çulha, who is 63 years old, said that they resisted not to have another Işıkdere. She said that they had to evacuate the neighbourhood under pressure and threats and added: “They threatened us. If you don’t give up your lands, they’ll be expropriated, they’ll take your fields for free, they said. First, we did not give our places to the company, we cut our olive groves with our own hands. All the attempts we wanted to make were blocked by the headman again. There were lawyers, doctors and teachers in Işıkdere. But they scared them all. If we knew what was going to happen, we wouldn’t have allowed it. I had an olive tree in Işıkdere. Its trunk was so thick that four people could not hug it. I bought five sacks of olives at a time. All was gone because of the coal.”



Melahat Çulha pointed out that they had settled in the village of Çam but they were at risk of being expelled from there too, as this time the company set its sights on the Akbelen Forest.

Çulha said that a great natural massacre took place before their eyes in the last raid and added that even if the proposal in the parliament was rejected. She underlined how the company put people one against the other. “Families got into each other here because of Limak. We were shattered. That’s why I don’t talk to my son-in-law. He works at the thermal power plant and constantly threatens me to keep quiet. I lost my health. I had a vascular compression in my left arm due to stress. My arm is still not holding it properly. I don’t talk to my daughter either. She is a partner in the destruction of the land where she was born and raised because she is afraid of losing her job. This is how the company silences everyone by threatening them with losing their job. They told my son-in-law, telling him to shut up that mother-in-law of his. But I will not give my land, water, trees to anyone. My struggle will continue until Limak gets out of here. Earth first, then life. They destroyed the huge pine trees ahead for mining. We have nothing left. Our oil, our honey, our garden, everything is gone. Everywhere will be a pit of hell. Sometimes I despair. So many deputies are coming, but no one manages to stop the company. Then I got strength again and said that we will succeed for our children and grandchildren.”

### **‘Our lives will end if the forest is destroyed’**

Ilkay Demir, another villager, is the youngest resistance fighter among women. Demir, 39, a mother of two, lives in Akbelen and resists day and night against the destruction of the forest next to her for the sake of profit. Demir pointed out that when the company entered the forest for tree cutting on 24 July, they did not even allow her to go to her house and said: “I was even prevented from going to my own land by the gendarmerie. My two children, aged 9 and 12, had to wait for me at home for hours.”

Demir added: “My husband works in Bodrum. I live here. I have no job, no insurance. I grow wheat, barley, chickpeas. We sell more, the rest is up to us. If this forest is gone, our water, honey, livelihood and life will go away. I will not allow this.”

Demir said that 16 people live in Akbelen Mevkii, but most of the villagers had to leave their homes out of fear, and most of them went to work in other provinces or abroad. She said: “I am the youngest. We have decided to resist here in order not to give up our land, water and air, and we continue to resist. The company wanted to buy my land, I did not accept it. They tried everything to get us out of here. They detonated dynamite. We were shaken so much that we thought an earthquake was happening. The walls of my house always cracked. They detonate dynamite 7-8 times in a row, and my house feels like it will collapse. Children are very afraid. Their psychology is broken.”

Demir said: “When they cut down the trees, I was so upset that it was as if they cut my arm. We tried to prevent it, we got pepper sprayed. There was nothing we could do, we couldn’t save it. I cried a lot. I want my children to grow up not in concrete but in nature, on the soil, among birds and lambs, and I will do anything for that. They say we are marginal, but we are not. We will continue to fight because if Akbelen goes, all living things will go.”

Zehra Yıldırım, 78, is one of the oldest resistance fighters of Akbelen. She said that her house in Işıkdere was destroyed once and she would not allow the same thing to happen again. She called on everyone to increase solidarity and said: “I will die here, I will not give up this forest.”



## YJŞ: It is a must to enhance the resistance and self-defense against male hegemony

ANF | SHENGAL | 11 AUGUST 2023

The Kurdistan Women's Community (KJK) launched a campaign to draw attention to the struggles of women in Shengal and Afghanistan. Between 3 August, the anniversary of the Islamic State attack on the Yazidi area of Shengal in South Kurdistan in 2014, and 15 August, the day the Taliban took power in Afghanistan in 2021, the fate and struggles of women will be discussed. The campaign was launched under the motto “We Stand with Afghan and Shengal women against the attacks of male hegemony”.

A number of women's organizations have expressed their support for the campaign so far.

The Shengal Women's Units (YBŞ) released a statement endorsing the KJK campaign, which includes the following:

“As the women of Shengal and the YJŞ that undertook the mission of defending these lands, we express our support for the KJK campaign. We, Yazidi women, were subjected to heinous attacks on 3 August which sought to perpetrate a genocide against a community, a belief and women. Two years ago, at around the same time, the Afghan people and women in particular experienced an onslaught of mass killing, torture, harassment and rape. These attacks still continue today. Both of the attacks in Shengal and Afghanistan were carried out by ‘radical fanatics’. Women were murdered by ISIS in Shengal, and by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The Afghan women are believed to have been deprived of their liberty after the withdrawal of the US from Afghanistan. Afghan women would not end up like this if the US had promised them freedom. The US entered these lands for the sake of its own interests and just left when its interests were exhausted. The solution does not lie in the return of the US or in the intervention of other countries in Afghanistan, but in the organization of women and society. For instance, we Yazidi women woke up thanks to the comrades of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan), the guerrillas of HPG (People's Defense Forces) and YJA-Star (Free Women's Troops). With the experience we gained from them, we organized ourselves and developed our defense.

Just like sovereign states support each other, commit crimes in complicity and make secret plans, we, women in the first place, and societies should also support one another.

We should know that any attack directed against any circle today could be directed against us tomorrow. Resisting male hegemony is the most sacred truth.

Afghan women have been resisting since the Taliban's takeover of power. Yet, this is not enough. It is a must for resistance to be increased and self-defense to be enhanced.

The campaign launched by the KJK is of great importance to us. YJŞ follows the path of martyrs and increases its resistance with this legacy. As Yazidi women, we state once again that we will increase our struggle and strengthen our organization to the very end.”

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## YPJ announces the death of a fighter

ANF | 11 AUGUST 2023

The General Command of the Women’s Defence Units (YPJ) announced the death of Vejîn Jiyan (Hîcran Ecûz, who succumbed to her injuries in an accident which occurred during an operation in Heseke on 27 July. While four female fighters died on the spot, another injured fighter died a few days later.

According to the YPJ, Vejîn Jiyan was born in Cizre district of Şırnak in North Kurdistan and came to Rojava to join the Women’s Defence Units after the brutal suppression of the self-government resistance by the Turkish state in 2015/2016.

“Comrade Vejîn had clear goals and objectives and quickly learned about the revolutionary life in our ranks with her youthful dynamism and persistent determination for freedom. She attached great importance to her personal education and also felt responsible for the advancement of others. With this awareness, she contributed to the education of hundreds of young people in Rojava. She made great contributions to the revolution of Rojava and courageously took on important tasks and responsibilities in the struggle for freedom. Comrade Vejîn was determined to build the system of democratic modernity and, as a young woman, played a formative role in implementing the ideology of women’s liberation,” said the YPJ statement on Friday.

The YPJ Command expressed its condolences to Vejîn Jiyan’s family and the Kurdish people and stated: “Many of our valuable companions have sacrificed their lives without hesitation for the liberation of our country from the occupiers. Comrade Vejîn was one of them. We will follow her path and continue our struggle until liberation.”

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## YJA Star guerrilla: The first bullet fired on 15 August is still hitting the enemy today

ANF | 12 AUGUST 2023

39 years ago, the PKK’s armed struggle began in Kurdistan. Roza Tolhildan, a guerrilla of the YJA Star (Free Women’s Troops), spoke to ANF and stated that 15 August 1984 is of great significance for today’s

guerrillas. The offensive at that time under the command of Mahsum Korkmaz (Egîd) is the beginning of a resistance against oppression that has lasted for almost four decades.

“I would like to congratulate Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan], the Kurdish people and all comrades who are resisting in the battle positions on this day. I respectfully bow to the memory of Commander Egîd and all revolutionary martyrs,” the female guerrilla said.

Pointing out that a high price was paid in the struggle after the 15 August 1984 offensive, Roza Tolhildan stated: “This has created a spirit of resistance that we perceive every day. We are fighting in this spirit. The resistance that is being carried out in the spirit of Commander Egîd in the mountains of Kurdistan gives us morale and fills us with enthusiasm. Today, hundreds of comrades like Egîd are fighting in the war tunnels in Metîna, Avaşîn and Zap. They keep the spirit of Comrade Egîd alive. The first bullet that Commander Egîd fired on 15 August is still hitting the enemy today. For two years, the resistance in the war tunnels has prevented the enemy from occupying our territories. The enemy is being worn down by our actions. In the war tunnels, the necessary answer to the enemy’s claim that the guerrillas, the PKK and the Kurdish people are finished is given. This resistance gives us strength. As YJA Star guerrillas in the Medya Defence Zones, we are trying to match the spirit of resistance of 15 August and make the enemy attacks come to nothing. We continue our struggle.”

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## YJA Star guerrillas carry out action in Girê Cûdî

ANF | BEHDINAN | 12 AUGUST 2023

The actions of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas continue uninterrupted.

In an action carried out by YJA Star forces in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area, 4 Turkish soldiers were killed and 2 injured.

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## Ecocide

### IHD Peace Vigil protests eco-crimes

ANF | IZMIR | 5 AUGUST 2023

The Peace Vigil held by the Human Rights Association (IHD) Izmir Branch on the first Friday of every month, continues.

This week, activists drew attention to the plunder of nature and eco-crimes carried out by the Turkish state and private companies.

Various political parties, civil and women's organizations, as well as many citizens attended the vigil. A banner read "Peace for an ecological life from Cudi to Akbelen".

After the vigil, a press release was held in front of the Old Sümerbank.

IHD Director Fırat Canoğlu touched upon the eco-crimes in Akbelen and Cudi Mountain. He said that the absence of an environment of peace harms all living things, and added: "Not only war, of course, the environment created by war, the reality it covers, the justice it postpones, provide the most suitable environment for the exploitation of nature's plunder and labor. The destruction of the environment continues rapidly in all regions of the country. So is the destruction of forests. Trees are being cut under the excuse of security reasons."

## War policy

Canoğlu said: "For years, the violence and war policy, especially in Dersim, Bingöl, Muş, Hakkari, and other Kurdish provinces, have ruled. Forests are cut down and burned using the excuse of the 'fight against terrorism' and 'security'. These cuts are made completely under the supervision of law enforcement. The people who went to put out the forest fire on Cudi Mountain were taken into custody. The people's attempt to extinguish the fire was thwarted."

## 'Right to resist eco-crimes'

Canoğlu said: "The right to a safe environment includes the right to live in a healthy and balanced way as well as the right to demand and resist the creation of all kinds of environmental problems that threaten humane living conditions."

We, human rights defenders, want to remind that everyone has the right to live in a healthy and safe environment, and that it is the duty of the state to improve the environment, protect environmental health and prevent environmental pollution."

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## Citizens in Ulubey protest mining operation

ANF | 7 AUGUST 2023

The residents of the neighborhoods of Çatallı and Yeni Sayaca in Ulubey protested the project to open a bentonite mine in Ulubey, in Ordu. The residents of the neighborhood held a press conference on the subject in Ulubey Square. The executives of the Ordu Environment Association also participated in the press conference where banners saying "Keep your mine Andur", "We will not have the village of Yeni Sayaca plundered" and "We will not give our forests to you" were opened.

Ethem Çağlar, a member of the Sayaca Environment Platform, said: “Our aim is to protect our area and not to remain silent and leave to future generations an unhealthy environment. We aim to continue our struggle and take the necessary steps to ensure justice. The start of mining will cause serious damage to the environment. Natural disasters such as landslides and loss of water resources will increase, and the beauty of our village and our environment will be destroyed.”

### Public meeting

After the announcement, a public meeting was held in the garden of the New Counter Social Facilities. Ertuğrul Gazi Gönül, chair of the Ordu Environment Association, and the executives of the association also attended the meeting where information was given about the court process and the next steps to take.



## Tree felling begins in Kaz Mountain

ANF | 7 AUGUST 2023

Kaz Mountain (or Mount Ida) is located between the provinces of Çanakkale and Balıkesir in northwestern Turkey.

Tree felling has begun despite a legal proceeding going on to try and prevent it. The cutting of trees is part of the work carried out by the controversial Halilağa Copper mine, which is operated by Cengiz Holding. This is a company that has faced criticism in recent years due to numerous large-scale infrastructure projects it has undertaken.

The current project involves the expansion of the mine and the associated waste disposal facility.

Previously, environmental activists had won a lawsuit against the project, but a second lawsuit is still ongoing.

### Background

This is not the first project to stir controversial concerns in the Kaz Mountain. In 2019, a gold mining project led to months of protests.

Cengiz Holding carried out drilling activities for the capacity increase and waste facility project on February 21, which was found to be in violation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

An expert report favored the environmental organizations, while the local community reacted strongly to the project after learning that three separate water sources were planned for the project, expressing their disapproval. Furthermore, drilling was allowed in the EIA.

Activists from Çan Environmental Association said that the impact of the project on the region's water resources will be huge, as would the costs imposed on the local residents.

As a result of a lawsuit filed by the local community, the Çanakkale 1st Administrative Court annulled the decision on 6 December. However, the company reapplied for the project, and on 14 March, the Ministry granted a new “positive EIA” decision for the previously canceled project.

In May 2023, the Kaz Mountains Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation Association filed a lawsuit against the “Positive EIA Report” issued for the Halilağa Copper Mine Project of Cengiz Holding, in accordance with Directive No. 2009/7.



## Wildfire in Mariwan continues to rage

ANF | 7 AUGUST 2023

Devastating forest fires have been blazing for days in the Kurdish settlement areas of Iran, particularly affecting the nature reserves in Mariwan. In the area surrounding Lake Zrêbar (Zarivar) in the west of the city alone, around 500 hectares of vegetation were destroyed by the flames, according to the environmental organisation Chya Sabz. The fire had come close to the villages of Kani Miran, Saad Abad and Sif, and despite being extinguished several times, was fanned again and again due to heat and strong winds. The fire poses a serious threat to people and nature.

In Darevaran in the north of Mariwan, more than a thousand hectares of forest have been destroyed by flames. The Chya Sabz reported that the high temperatures and strong winds had massively promoted the forest fire in several places. In addition, the fire triggered explosions of landmines that had been on the ground since the First Gulf War (1980-1988). “In the 16 years that the Chya Sabz has been active in forest firefighting, we have never experienced such a large and intense fire,” the France-based Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) quoted an activist involved in firefighting as saying. “The forests adjacent to the village of Darevaran and neighbouring villages are some of the densest in Kurdistan. And that makes it much more difficult to bring the fire under control.”

Nestled in the Zagros Mountains, Mariwan lies on the heavily militarised border between Eastern Kurdistan (Iran) and Southern Kurdistan (Iraq). For years, there has been targeted arson there every summer by the Iranian army and especially by the so-called Revolutionary Guard. This is a common means of war in the arsenal of the anti-Kurdish counterinsurgency and expulsion policy. Like the Turkish state, the regime in Tehran uses targeted destruction of nature to bring the Kurdish population to its knees and to torch the terrain of opposition groups and guerrilla movements, which are demonised as “terrorist organisations”. The volunteers are sure that the Revolutionary Guard is also responsible for the fires currently blazing in Mariwan.

While state help in fighting the fire is non-existent and it is associations such as the Chya Sabz that are tackling the inferno of flames, these self-help initiatives are prevented from working by the regime and ad-

ditionally criminalised. According to information from KHRN, at least five environmental activists have been arrested by the Revolutionary Guard in recent days and taken to an unknown location. About twenty others were injured while trying to put out the flames in Mariwan. In two cases, the volunteers suffered injuries so severe that it was not possible to provide them with treatment on the spot. They had to be taken to hospital and are still receiving treatment. In mid-July, a firefighting operation in Rojhilat even resulted in one fatality: a 50-year-old man from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq was shot dead by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard while extinguishing a forest fire in Kermanshah province.

Meanwhile, crowds are growing at a camp set up by the Chya Sabz in the Mariwan Plain to coordinate firefighting efforts and supply volunteers. From all over Rojhilat and other areas of Iran, women and men, from young to old, are pouring into the camp to help. Always present are four names: Sharif Bajour, Omid Hohnepooshi, Rahmat Hakiminia and Mohammad Pajoohi. The four eco-activists died in August 2018 while extinguishing a forest fire in Mariwan.



## Turkish troops start fires in Şırnak countryside

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 11 AUGUST 2023

The Turkish army systematically sets fire to forest areas in the mountains of Kurdistan every summer. Amid reports and testimonies proving the fact that fires are started deliberately, attempts to confront the flames are constantly prevented.

The Turkish troops have started fires in the village of Dêrêsor in Şırnak's Silopi district and the village of Newala Îsaaxa in Cizre district.

According to reports from the ground, the fire in the village of Dêrêsor, in the foothills of Mount Cudi, was caused by fire opened by Turkish soldiers and intervention is prevented.

On the other hand, the fire in the village of Newala Îsaaxa broke out at the scene of fire practice by the Cizre district gendarmerie command and police directorate. The fire is reported to be spreading around as no intervention is taking place.

### Continuation of the annihilation policy of the 1990s

The destruction of Kurdistan's forests is a direct continuation of the village destruction policy of the 1990s. The fires in the region are often started by the Turkish army to make sure that the guerrillas are deprived of cover through a scorched earth policy and the rural population that supports the guerrillas is driven out. In many cases, forest fires have political-military causes, and even if they break out due to the drought, extinguishing them is prevented for military reasons. The fauna and flora of the region are exposed to destruction. While news of forest fires in western Turkey in general, and especially in holiday regions, reaches the European public, a systematic special warfare is being waged in Kurdistan with forest fires, against which, however, no reactions are raised.





# Human Rights Violations

## DFG: 60 journalists in prison in July

ANF | AMED | 5 AUGUST 2023

At least 60 journalists are currently in prison in Turkey. The Kurdish media organization Dicle Fırat (DFG) published its monthly report on repression and violations of the law in the area of freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

Although the association reported a significant drop from the peak of 170 in 2017, the association noted that numerous other media workers are subject to legal prosecution.

“The screws of oppression are being tightened more and more,” wrote the DFG, based in Amed. According to the association’s report, 54 media workers were victims of rights violations in the month of July. These included not only the usual methods of intimidation, such as groundless arrests and detentions, but also arbitrary charges, assaults and threats.

Under the AKP-MHP regime, critical journalists in particular would become the target of unprecedented reprisals and criminalization. The rulers are concerned with completely destroying the space for freedom of expression and independent reporting.

According to the DFG, at least thirteen media workers were arrested last month because of their journalistic work - four of them in raids on their apartments.

A court imposed pre-trial detention on one of these journalists. This is Fırat Can Arslan, correspondent for the Mezopotamya (MA) news agency. In addition to “propaganda for a terrorist organization” and “apology of criminals”, the Turkish judiciary accuses him of endangering “officials in the field of anti-terrorist fighting” by disseminating reports.

The DFG recorded eighteen other cases of rights violations when documenting police operations. Journalists were specifically prevented from doing their work and forcibly pushed out of the scene where they were doing their job. The number of reports of concrete threats by the police received in this context was put by the organization at two.

Police investigations have been launched against three press representatives, and two others are facing new court proceedings.

In the case of 55 journalists, the trial continued. In addition, the Broadcasting Authority (RTÜK) has fined and banned two broadcasters and seven media platforms, suspended five broadcasts, shut down a website, blocked access to 90 news reports and banned the content of 905 social media content.



## Kobanê Case, a political trial

ANF | ANKARA | 6 AUGUST 2023

The 27th hearing of the Kobanê Case was held in Ankara earlier this week.

The Kobanê Case was filed in 2020 against 108 people, including the HDP's former co-chairs, Mr Selahattin Demirtaş and Ms Figen Yüksekdağ, current co-chair Ms Pervin Buldan, several current and former HDP deputies and mayors, and all the members of the HDP's Central Executive Board of 2014.

This case was launched as a counter move by the Turkish government just two weeks after the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights made its final judgment demanding the immediate release of Selahattin Demirtaş. The indictment in the Kobanê Case is based on a Twitter message posted by the HDP on 6 October 2014. This called for democratic protests in solidarity with the people of Kobanê, the Kurdish town in Northern Syria that was fighting against the attacks of ISIS, and also against Turkey's embargo on the town. The prosecutor is calling for all the defendants to be given aggravated life sentences (without parole) 38 times for the crimes of "destroying the unity of the state and the integrity of the country" and "premeditated murder" of the people who lost their lives in the Kobanê protests. Seventeen politicians are currently being held in pre-trial detention for this case.

The Kobanê case is closely linked with the closure case filed against the HDP, for which it serves as a pretext. In the closure case, the prosecution is mainly based on the alleged role and responsibility of the HDP in the murders that occurred during the Kobanê protests in 2014. We should stress that the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR has already examined these allegations in the case of Selahattin Demirtaş and concluded that neither Demirtaş nor the HDP had any responsibility for the murders.

Green Left Party co-spokesperson Ibrahim Akin said about the Kobanê Case that it is a "political conspiracy case" and underlined the attacks against Kobanê and the resistance put forward at that time.

Akin said: "International law has actually said that the statements made at the time of the invasion of Kobane were democratic expressions of opinion. This trial is illegal and unlawful. It is the result of the hostile policy of the palace regime. Our friends are not those prosecuted. Thanks to their defense, they are in fact openly prosecuting this unlawful trial. In other words, they are judging the AKP regime, the AKP authoritarian fascist regime."

Akin said: "This case is a case made up for the closure of the HDP, as shown by the fact that it was opened 6 years after the alleged crime. Our friends have been in prison for almost 3 years. Keeping them in prison

will do nothing but expose Turkey for what it is, a brutal regime. We are trying to resist. We will continue to seek our rights, establish justice, and fight for justice for everyone.”

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## HDP/Green Left Party youth launches campaign against special war in Kurdistan

ANF | ANKARA | 7 AUGUST 2023

After the controversial election victory of the AKP/MHP regime in Turkey, the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and the Green Left Party have initiated a comprehensive, far-reaching and long-term renewal process.

District and provincial federations of both parties held internal meetings and nationwide public rallies as a vehicle for criticism and self-criticism. Based on the constructive exchange with the grassroots, suggestions were developed as to how the change process could achieve a good result and be structurally anchored. The focus now is on planning symposiums, conferences and party congresses, and developing a roadmap for the final transformation of the democratic opposition.

The youth organizations of the HDP and the Green Left Party are traditionally regarded as the driving force behind social and political innovation and their implementation. They have the will to act as the backbone of transformation and to discourage any structures and methods that impede the renewal process. The youth councils of the HDP and the Green Left Party have been meeting in Ankara since Saturday to set their own timetable for the coming period.

In a first important step, a campaign was launched with the slogan “Li dijî şerê taybet têkoşînek bi heybet” (“Great Resistance Against the Special War”). The aim of the campaign is to counteract all elements of the complex and multifaceted special war carried out by the Turkish state, from ethnocide, colonial policy and forced assimilation to military violence, ecocide and femicide. The youth in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey are thus faced with a great challenge, which will demand a lot from everyone involved and which they can only successfully shape together in a solution-oriented manner.

Green Left Party youth council activist Senem Eriş spoke to ANF about the specific content and background of the campaign.

### **The war in Kurdistan is at the root of our many crises**

He said: “The government’s policy has meant that we live in a time when nature is being plundered, the will of the people and youth is being usurped by receivers, attacks on women and their achievements are increasing day by day, the work of working people is being exploited, violations of rights are increasing and the war is deepening.

This government 'package of measures' is directed against the interests of the people. As the greatest element in opposition to the population, war has a special role to play. Since 2015, the AKP/MHP regime has waged an ongoing war against the Kurdish people inside and outside the country's borders. This war is at the root of the many crises of our time."

The young activist continued: "The basis of the war policy is the isolation on İmralı that has lasted to this day. The absolute isolation imposed on the Kurdish representative Abdullah Öcalan brings war, and war brings poverty and misery. In this respect, it is not Abdullah Öcalan who is isolated on İmralı - it is the people of Turkey. İmralı is trying to suffocate the entire society of Turkey.

We affirm that we do not accept this policy of isolation, which is being pursued in the person of the Kurdish people's representative against all peoples of the Middle East, and that we will expand our organization for the freedom of the peoples and to overcome isolation."

### **The youth are subjected to an ideological bombardment**

Eriş added: "While the AKP/MHP leadership on the one hand wants to intimidate society through repression, on the other hand it aims to detach the youth from their historical role through a special war policy. The special war against young people, especially the Kurdish ones, is being waged in a profound, multifaceted and systematic way.

Through soft methods such as sports and arts, TV series and news magazines, young people in this country are subjected to ideological bombardment.

In the last ten to fifteen years, the focus has been on television series that glorify structures such as the police, the military, the mafia and the nation-state. This is intended to impose false heroism, occupation, usurpation, plunder and exploitation on young people. They should be tied to false victories, power, nationalism and racism and become slaves of the system."

According to Eriş, "the most dangerous dimension of the special war is the spread of drugs and prostitution in society. Drug use in particular is promoted in order to manipulate young people and alienate them from politics. At the same time, cases of sexual harassment and rape of young women by uniformed perpetrators have increased. The cases of Gülistan Doku and İpek Er clearly show us the politics against young women in Kurdistan. As young people, we will not remain silent and oppose all those who try to push our people into prostitution and drug use."

Eriş said that "the claim and the power to shape history on a revolutionary-democratic basis is the only true reality that determines and reminds of the historical mission of young people. Therefore, we are the ones who will light up this darkness and bring a free future to society. We took over the fight for freedom from comrades like Haki, Kemal, Mazlum and İbrahim. By expanding our legacy of resistance, we will eliminate this system that hangs over the peoples like a dark cloud. We will change this system that youth in Kurdistan and Turkey are subjected to by taking responsibility."

## Resisting corruption

Eriş added that they “announced to the entire public that we have launched the campaign ‘Li dijî şerê taybet têkoşînek bi heybet’ against all methods of special warfare. As youth councils of the HDP and Green Left Party, we will conduct our renewal process in the light of this campaign - and intensify the struggle in the coming period together with our left-wing, socialist and revolutionary comrades.

We will continue our resistance until we break Abdullah Öcalan’s isolation. We will stand up against drugs, patriarchy, ecological depletion, cultural genocide and all kinds of ideological devices that corrupt youth and society. To this end, we call on all young people to organize and fight as part of our campaign against the special war.”



## A life in exile and poverty

ANF | AMED | 7 AUGUST 2023

In the 1990s, the Turkish state destroyed over 4000 Kurdish villages. Many of them were burnt down and the population was displaced. Many people fled to Turkish metropolises or to Europe. Some of them returned but had nothing left. Others tried to survive in the places they fled to.

One of these families is the Gültekin family. They come from the village of Markê (tr. Erginköy) in the Lice district in the province of Amed (Diyarbakir). Soldiers raided their village in the 1990s, burned their belongings and forced them into exile. The family went to Adana, but held on to their desire to return to their village and continue their lives where they had had to leave them. This time, however, the couple’s age was a major obstacle.

“They burned all our belongings,” Hasret Gültekin tells of her life, which was marked by poverty and suffering after the flight. She earned her living as an unskilled labourer. “We planted gardens, but our earnings were still low. As if that was not enough, our village was raided. They drove me and my husband out barefoot in the middle of the night and burnt down our house. They burned all our belongings. We all had to gather in front of the mosque. We had relatives near our village. They came and took us with them. From there we went to Adana, where we lived in rent and poverty. We realised that we could not earn a living there no matter what we did. So my husband and I came back. We set up a small room in the village. I think it was damaged by the earthquake in February, but no one even came to check it. Our hope now is in God. Let’s see what fate God will give us. We have just come to the village, we don’t know if we will starve, die or live.”

“Today, people are selfish and introverted,” says Hasret Gültekin’s husband Mehmet and continues: “For decades, we grew millet in the village and could live from selling the harvest, albeit with difficulty. Since there were no tractors or other motorised vehicles back then, we did everything with our hands. Therefore, we worked more in the fields, but we were in solidarity with each other. We used to collect tons of toma-

toes that we grew and take them to the city in trucks to sell them. But all that doesn't exist anymore. In my youth, people's attitudes were much better than today. Nowadays, everyone is selfish and introverted. In our time, there were landowners, but the villagers still did not let their rights be taken away.”

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## ISIG: 182 workers lost their lives in work-related accidents in July

ANF | ISTANBUL | 8 AUGUST 2023

The Health and Safety Labor Observatory (ISIG) said in its July report about work-related deaths that 182 workers lost their lives. The number of workers killed on the job in the first 7 months of 2023 has reached 1051.

116 workers were killed on the job in January, 195 in February, 130 in March, 123 in April, 146 in May, and 159 in June. Since the beginning of the year, there have been almost 5 work-related casualties per day.

Of the workers who lost their lives in July, 6 were children under the age of 14. In addition, four teenagers between the ages of 15-17, and 38 young people between 18-29 were also killed.

The report added that 63 workers were between 30-49, 47 between 50-64, and 15 over the age of 65. The ages of 9 workers could not be established.

According to ISIG, the distribution of work-related accidents by sector in July was as follows:

Agriculture and forestry: 56 (22 workers and 34 farmers);  
 Transportation: 28;  
 Construction and road works: 21;  
 Municipal services and general work: 16;  
 Accommodation and entertainment: 10;  
 Trade, office, education, cinema: 9;  
 Energy: 8;  
 Food, sugar: 7;  
 Metal: 6;  
 Mining: 5;  
 Ship, shipyard, sea, port: 3;  
 Textile, leather: 2;  
 Press, journalism: 2;  
 Cement, soil, glass: 2;  
 Health, social services: 2;  
 Defense, security: 2;  
 Petrochemical, rubber: 1;

Wood, paper: 1 worker;

It could not be established the sector in which one worker was killed.

In July, the distribution of causes of death in work-related accidents was as follows:

Traffic accidents: 52;

Crushing, collapse: 35;

Electric shock: 22;

Falling from heights: 17;

Heart attack, stroke: 16;

Violence: 11;

Poisoning, drowning: 9;

Suicide: 6;

Explosion, burning: 5;

Cutting, detachment: 3;

Other causes: 6 workers.

ISIG highlighted the deaths of agricultural workers and working in excessive heat in their July report.



## Bitter exploitation of seasonal workers in Turkey

ANF | VAN | 10 AUGUST 2023

Every year, the cycle of exploitation of seasonal workers begins in spring and ends in October. They are often displaced Kurds who have to move from place to place depending on the harvest season of certain fruits and vegetables. They are taken on trucks to places they have never seen before - places where they are not granted any rights, not even food.

### 95 per cent of the seasonal workers are Kurds

This practice does not affect a minority. About 3.6 million people in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan are affected by exploitation in seasonal work, of whom only 600,000 are officially registered. 95 per cent of them are Kurds. They come in particular from cities like Urfa, Antep, Van and Ağrı and work without any security or insurance. Without them, agriculture in Anatolia would not be possible. Despite this crucial contribution, in cities like Sakarya they are repeatedly the target of racist, and time and again deadly, attacks.

The seasonal work sector in particular is supported by child labour. According to initiatives, two million child workers are said to be employed in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan by 2022. The number rises to up to five million in the summer months, according to reports by the ISIG network, which campaigns for the health and safety of labourers. Hundreds of thousands of these children are between the ages of 6 and 14. Forty-five per cent of child labourers work seasonally in the fields of fruit, nuts and vegetables. Child

labour results from the disastrous conditions and extremely low wages paid to families for their seasonal work. Thus, every family member is forced to work while the big landowners and companies turn a blind eye. The state has even legalised child labour for those over 14. As a result, 18.7 per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 17 are registered at work. However, this figure does not reflect the real extent, as most child labour is irregular. According to official statistics, 62 child workers died at work in 2021.

### **“Seasonal workers demand respect for their guaranteed rights”**

Agricultural expert Asrın Keleş, who is currently preparing the “Report on the Assessment of Living Conditions of Seasonal Agricultural Workers”, spoke about the problems of seasonal workers. Keleş explained that seasonal agricultural workers usually arrive in Central Anatolia in April and stay in tents in the fields outside the cities until October/November. They make a crucial contribution to agricultural production. “We are currently preparing a report to assess the living conditions of seasonal agricultural workers. Together with the workers, we are discussing the problems they experience and proposed solutions. Seasonal agricultural workers, who are the subject of this report, are demanding a change in conditions and respect for their legal rights.”

### **“Seasonal workers do not even receive clean water”**

Regarding the living conditions of seasonal workers, Keleş said: “These people need access to clean water as soon as possible. The camps where seasonal agricultural workers live are far from providing decent living conditions. People are forced to live on the grounds, which turn into lakes every time it rains. The areas are littered with rubbish. The makeshift toilets are hazardous to health. Local and central governments should work to create better conditions for these citizens who are forced to live in these tents. Access to primary health care services, especially immunisation, family planning and health education, is difficult and severely limited for people living in these camps. I can clearly say that the health authorities do not visit the tents. Education of school-going children is also not taken care of.”

Keleş demanded that the workers be housed in container houses instead of tents, stressing that the provision of decent living conditions is a basic human right. “The attitude of trade unions as well as non-governmental organisations and political parties is insufficient. There is not enough attention being drawn to this problem. We will continue to work to ensure that our people live in healthier and more decent conditions and that child labour is prevented.”



## At least 11 people taken into custody in Mersin

ANF | MERSIN | 11 AUGUST 2023

At least 11 people were detained in Mersin in the early hours of the morning as the result of police raids involving various houses.

The raids were based on an investigation conducted by the Mersin Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office.



Turkish police detained 11 people for allegedly “making propaganda for a terrorist organization” and “preparing an action during the Newroz celebrations”.

Two of those taken into custody were Şiyar Oğuz and Muhammet Tutmaz.

The detainees were taken to Mersin Provincial Security Directorate.

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## Fifteen people arrested in Tatvan

ANF | TATVAN | 12 AUGUST 2023

Fifteen people have been arrested in the village of Peyindas after clashes between the Turkish army and Kurdish guerrillas in Tatvan district. Her whereabouts are unknown.

The Turkish army besieged the village of Peyindas (Söğütlü) after clashes with guerrilla fighters on Thursday morning and arrested 15 citizens.

Fighting near the village continued throughout the day.

Those arrested are Kerem Arvas, Mustafa Tedbirli, Necip Tedbirli, Heybet Çelik, Serkan İpek, Garip İpek, Ekrem Arvas and Ahmet Çelik. Kerem Arvas was reportedly arrested using force.

Relatives of those arrested said that there is no information about where they were taken and concern for their safety is growing. The authorities have not commented on the arrests.

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## Interview

### Kalkan: The Turkish Republic was founded on the basis of Kurdish genocide and hostility

ANF | BEHDINAN | 12 AUGUST 2023

In an interview with Medya Haber TV, Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the latest developments in Kurdistan, the Middle East and the world, also with a new elaboration on the current situation on İmralı, a contextualization of the activities related to the 9th anniversary of the

genocide of the Ezidis, the contemporary significance of August 15, 1984 and the breakthrough of the guerrilla struggle, as well as an assessment related to the recent targeted attacks of the Turkish state on nature and the recent youth conference.

We publish the first part of the in-depth detail below.

*Initially, we would like to focus on Abdullah Öcalan and the situation on Imralı. Is there any news? How is Kurdish society dealing with the ongoing isolation? And what is Abdullah Öcalan's role today in the context of the Kurdish Freedom Movement?*

First, I would like to send my greetings to Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] whose resistance against the ongoing isolation continues. The system of Imralı is a system of isolation, torture and genocide. The situation there has not changed, and we should not expect any changes there anytime soon. That is because of the current administrators of this system. They are spreading lies through public statements. For example, the [Turkish] Minister of Justice and the [Turkish] President both stated that there was no violation of law, which is simply untrue. They are not even following their own laws. The sole intention of them constantly talking about 'disciplinary punishments' being imposed is merely to prevent meetings with Rêber Apo from taking place. They are trying everything to prevent Rêber Apo from being granted his physical freedom, which he has been denied for 25 years now. His situation, therefore, must be re-evaluated based on the application of European law. This is what they want to prevent with these so-called disciplinary punishments. They claim that all their methods are legal, while they constitute clear violations of the law.

The other forces who bear responsibility for Rêber Apo's situation remain silent as well. They pretend to be blind and deaf. The CPT [European Committee for the Prevention of Torture], the Council of Europe and other institutions remain silent. This silence indicates an agreement. It reveals that these institutions support the practices of AKP-MHP fascism on Imralı.

At the same time, we can also see that the struggle for Rêber Apo's physical freedom, against the isolation on Imralı and against the system of torture and genocide is growing stronger on many different levels. Recently, there have been important activities in this framework, especially abroad. For example, there was the press conference on July 26 in Brussels. This was a call to action in the framework of the demand for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, which was organized jointly by trade unions, intellectuals and communities. There was also a conference on this issue in Colombia. And there were two protests by the Kurdish youth together with their internationalist friends in Europe. A concert for Rêber Apo also took place in Italy recently. In addition, there were also statements made by Italian and Scottish unions.

In short, all over the world there are calls and efforts for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. We have said before that humanity wants to hear the voice of Rêber Apo. All these activities clearly show that humanity, the democratic forces, intellectuals, politicians, even philosophers, women and young people all over the world need the ideas of Rêber Apo. Because his ideas offer a clear solution to all current problems, especially the solution to the Kurdish question. The line of the Democratic Nation, as well as the system of Democratic Confederalism, were developed on the basis of the idea of democratic self-administration. They are ways of finding solutions to all the problems created by the system of power and state, especially the nation-state of capitalist modernity. This is a paradigm for solving all social problems, as well as for organizing society.

In Kurdistan itself, protests for the freedom of Rêber Apo continue. Our people in Rojava [Western Kurdistan/Northern Syria] have been continuously rising up against the situation and are very sensitive regarding this topic. From time to time, they organize big mass protests. There are also various events being organized in North Kurdistan [South-Eastern Turkey] and South Kurdistan [Northern Iraq]. In Eastern Kurdistan [Western Iran], our people demonstrated a lot in the past, but now this has decreased a bit due to the pressure. But it is not unknown what the attitude of the absolute majority of the Kurdish people is there.

We can therefore see that there is a clear united stance. There is a unity of the Kurds, women, youth, intellectuals and artists and politicians in the four parts of Kurdistan and abroad. They reject the system of torture, isolation and genocide on İmralı. They want the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. On this basis, they demand the solution to the Kurdish question, the recognition of the freedom and the democratic rights of the Kurds, a democratic Middle East, a free humanity, the strengthening of the women's liberation revolution in all fields and the spread of a free life everywhere on the basis of women's freedom.

Everything is related to the Kurdish question. The First World War led to this situation. The agreements made after the First World War – the Armistice of Mudros and the Treaty of Sevres – could not be implemented, which in the end resulted in the Treaty of Lausanne. In 1926, the UK drew the Turkish-Iraqi border based on the Ankara Agreement. The current Turkish Republic was founded on the basis of the Kurdish genocide and of hostility towards the Kurds. This prevents the democratization of the Middle East and threatens humanity with fascist terror. We will continue to keep this issue on the agenda. Had it not been for the establishment of such a republic or the Treaty of Lausanne, perhaps there would have been no Hitler, no Mussolini, there would have been no Second World War in Europe, and humanity would not have suffered such massacres. In other words, everything has come to be related to the Kurdish question. And the Kurdish question itself is of course related to the genocidal regime in İmralı. Because the will of the Kurdish people is in İmralı. Rêber Apo is the leader. He is the solution power to the Kurdish question.

For 29 months we have not received any new information about Rêber Apo. We consider it as our duty to continue shouting out the truth and to improve our analysis. We have to strengthen and spread the struggle. There is no withdrawing from this. The youth in Europe said that they will not stop, not sit and not sleep until the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is ensured. This is the right attitude. On behalf of our party, I call on all our people, women, youth, international friends and everyone else to participate more in this sacred and fundamental struggle for democracy, and to strengthen it with the help of new creative methods.

*A few days ago was the anniversary of the genocide of the Yazidis carried out by IS, on the occasion of which various activities took place. What has changed over the last years and where does the self-administration of the Yazidis in Shengal [Sinjar] stand today?*

For 9 years, the Kurdish-Yazidi people in Shengal have experienced very serious changes with regards to freedom and democracy. In the beginning, they stood against the genocidal attack of the Islamic State [IS]. These gangs were defeated with the support of the guerrillas of the HPG [People's Defense Forces], and the fighters of the YPG and YPJ. After that, great political awareness, especially among the women and youth in Shengal, a resistant attitude and organization developed among the people. I would like to respectfully salute this resistance and remember all the heroic martyrs of this holy struggle, especially in the person of comrade Mam Zeki. They are true martyrs of freedom, democracy, humanity and solidarity.

On the 9th anniversary of this genocidal attack and the resistance against it, important events took place. The Kurdish-Yazidi people took a clear stance with their statements, marches, and demonstrations. Their institutions and democratic organizations also took an important and meaningful stance and stated that they will continue this struggle for liberation and democratization until the end.

Recently, there was also a conference in Baghdad which was attended not only by Kurdish-Yazidis, but also by other communities, including those who are considered minorities in Iraq. This important conference produced major results and important demands were made. Those who attended the conference expressed their desire for democratization based on self-administration and the full implementation of the Iraqi constitution. Iraq applies its constitution only in some places and not in others. This creates problems. We therefore think that the Iraqi administration will reconsider this situation.

During the conference, a clear stance against betrayal was also taken, including the demand to put the KDP on trial. Indeed, it is important that all those be put on trial who ran away from IS and thus left the Kurdish-Yazidi people to genocide. Without putting them on trial, the crime of genocide cannot be effectively condemned or brought to an end. Why did the [forces of the] KDP run away back then? They had made a deal with IS, that is why. We have stated before that there are reports about a meeting in April or May 2014 in the capital of a country neighboring Syria. Apparently, in this meeting the decision for the IS attacks was taken. At the time, there was a rumor saying that Mesut Barzani had also been present at this meeting. In fact, this is not a rumor, it is certain. How did this affect us? At the time, we were holding a conference in Northern Kurdistan in mid-May. During the conference, we received information about this meeting from our foreign relations committee. We were informed about a new force that had emerged and that this force was going to attack to divide Iraq and Syria. The IS then attacked Mosul on June 12. In August, it attacked Shengal and Maxmur. Then it headed towards Kirkuk and Rojava. This was an attack on the Kurds. In fact, there was an agreement between IS and the KDP made during the afore-mentioned meeting. The KDP had agreed to give some places to IS but later changed their decision. They said that IS attacked in order to put pressure on them. But it can easily be seen that the KDP never fought anywhere against IS and only pretended to fight in some places in order to deceive the people and to get some support.

Kurds supported and basically led the struggle against IS. Those who wanted to support the Kurds in this struggle regarded the KDP as the Kurdish administration. This was exactly the main goal of the KDP. They only pretended to be the opponent of IS. In this context, it is important that the demand of the latest conference to put the KDP on trial comes from the community of Shengal itself.

The KJK [Kurdistan Women's Communities] recently also announced a campaign from August 3 until 15. It is carried out with the aim of supporting and helping the women of Shengal and Afghanistan against the attacks of dominant men. This also led to a mobilization within Shengal and further encouraged women to continue being the vanguard of this change. In this context, a forum took place in Raqqa. In fact, Afghanistan, Shengal and Raqqa are extreme points where patriarchal attacks on women have taken place. Of course, they are not limited only to these places, you find them everywhere, but the attacks in these places are more cruel, sometimes more subtle and disguised. There is a women's liberation struggle against them in every field. It is the ideology of women's liberation, this struggle and revolution that represents liberation against all kinds of oppression and exploitation of the 5,000-year-old hegemonic and state system and that reveals the foundations of a free life. Rêber Apo has subjected this to a very broad evaluation and analysis. The main factor in the developments in Kurdistan, the struggle for the solution to the

Kurdish question and its inexorability, is the women's liberation struggle and the creation of women's leadership in the struggle at all levels.

Some states recognized the attack of IS on Shengal as genocide. Lately, the British state has done so on the anniversary. Actually, we need to look at the practices of those forces which recognize this as a genocide. The Yazidis were massacred by IS and since they have been defeated, the AKP-MHP and KDP are carrying out these attacks without a break. Now, if the attacks of IS have been labeled as genocide, what are the attacks of the AKP-MHP and KDP? Aren't these also genocide? On the other hand, do those who call it genocide support the development of the democratic self-administration of the people of Shengal, the provision of autonomy, and the formation of a self-defense system? Saying that they recognize the genocide without providing these does not mean anything, but a deception. I think our Yazidi society should be sensitive, especially when it is about Germany. They are constantly trying to have the Yazidis migrate from Kurdistan to Europe. Instead of strengthening the consciousness, organization and self-management of Yazidi society, they are trying to scatter the community even more, to scatter it all over the world and make it cease to be a community. Our Kurdish-Yazidi people must be sensitive to these policies and should develop their own consciousness and organization more and rely on their own power. They should also choose their allies correctly. It must trust in the free democratic life of the peoples and develop alliances with them. Its own strength and alliance with the peoples is in fact the fundamental attitude that will protect and save the Kurdish-Yazidi people from further genocide. For this reason, education, organization and awareness-raising are absolutely necessary to become an organized society with self-defense. In this sense, I would like to wish a lot of success to our Kurdish-Yazidi people.

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