

THE İMRALI POST

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

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Xanim Eyo: Abdullah Öcalan's freedom is our freedom

ERDOGAN ZAMUR | GENEVA | 13 AUGUST 2023

Lawyer Xanim Eyo came to Europe with a delegation from the autonomous region of North and East Syria to hand over two and a half million signatures collected to demand the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan to the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Eyo is a member of the Association of Lawyers in Northeast Syria and spokesperson for the Syrian Lawyers' Initiative for the Freedom of Öcalan. She said that the Rojava revolution is the practical implementation of the paradigm developed by the Kurdish peo-

ple's leader. She said: "What we have achieved to date is based on this paradigm. That is why we regard Abdullah Öcalan's freedom as our own freedom."

International legal standards should apply

The delegation from North and East came to Europe to talk to local organizations and institutions about the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan as well as Turkey's attacks on the autonomous region and human rights crimes in the Turkish occupation zones of Afrin, Serêkaniyê and Girê Spî. Xanim Eyo said: "We came to ask the institutions in Europe about Abdullah Öcalan. He is completely isolated and there has been no sign of life from him for almost two and a half years. His family and lawyers have no contact with him. That's why we started a signature campaign in Rojava. We first delivered the collected signatures and an information dossier to the CPT in Strasbourg and then to the OHCHR in Geneva. We have been well received in both institutions. Those responsible have promised to deal with this issue."

Occupation attacks by the Turkish state

Another topic discussed at the meetings was the attacks by the Turkish state on Rojava, the lawyer said, adding: "The Turkish state attacks Rojava every day. These attacks kill many people, including civilians. We talked about that too. We were promised that our request would be forwarded to the responsible authorities."

The attacks are aimed at Öcalan's thoughts

The isolation of Abdullah Öcalan as a representative of the Kurdish people is unique in the world, said Eyo, adding: "The Turkish state wants to create a distance between Rêber Öcalan and the people of the Middle East, especially the Kurdish people. Turkey wants to destroy the paradigm of a democratic nation that he has presented and prevent these ideas from reaching the people. The democratic nation model is a realistic solution. This is known all over the world. That's why the Turkish state is supported by other states. This fact is behind all attacks that take place."

Lawyers' initiative continues to fight against isolation

As Xanim Eyo underlined, all groups from the population of North and East Syria took part in the campaign, and signatures were also collected in Aleppo, Damascus, Lebanon and southern Kurdistan. The lawyers' initiative wants to continue its fight against Öcalan's isolation. Eyo pointed out that a new era has begun in the Middle East thanks to the paradigm developed by Öcalan: "Eleven years have passed since the Rojava revolution. The paradigm of a democratic nation is being put into practice thanks to this revolution. It is of great importance to us. What we have achieved to date we owe to this paradigm. Therefore, we consider Rêber Öcalan's freedom as our own freedom."

Human rights also apply to the Kurdish people

Referring to Europe's responsibility, Xanim Eyo said: "The Geneva Conventions are of great importance for human rights. Human rights have been spoken about since 1948 and violations of human rights and freedoms have been fought against. What is in this convention must be put into practice. That's why we

came to Europe. The responsible institutions must fulfil their task. Human rights also apply to the Kurdish people.”

We want news from Öcalan

Eyo called on the international human rights institutions and said: “The isolation of Abdullah Öcalan must be lifted immediately. He must have contact with his relatives and his lawyers. We are very worried about his life. Everyone is worried. We want to have news from him. Furthermore, the attacks carried out by the Turkish state on Rojava continue. International human rights institutions should send a delegation to Rojava to investigate the attacks. The silence of the international community should end. We invite all human rights institutions to act.”



Freedom for Öcalan vigil in Strasbourg taken over by a family

ANF | STRASBOURG | 16 AUGUST 2023

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 an end to the isolation imposed on him in İmralı.

The vigil continues in its 582nd week and has been taken over by a Kurdish family from Zurich, Switzerland.

The family saluted the 39th anniversary of the breakthrough of 15 August, when the Kurdish freedom movement fired the first bullet at the Turkish army in Eruh, Siirt in 1984. A 36-strong guerrilla force led by the legendary commander Mahsum Korkmaz - also known by his nom de Guerre Egîd (“the Brave”) - carried out the first attack against the Turkish occupying forces that day, which is considered the beginning of the armed struggle of the Kurdish liberation movement.

The family called on the Kurdish people and their friends to stand up for Öcalan, who has not been heard from for 29 months.



Prisons in Turkey

Prisoner Tekin released after 30 years

ANF | SIIRT | 14 AUGUST 2023

Şemsettin Tekin (50), held in Oltu T Type Closed Prison in Erzurum, was released after 30 years.

Tekin was arrested in Batman (Êlih) in 1993 and sentenced to life imprisonment for “separatism”. He came out of prison at the age of 50. He was 20 when he entered. Tekin was held in Batman, Amed, Bartın, Siirt, Bandırma, Sirnak, Bayburt, Samsun, Panos and Oltu prisons, before being transferred to Erzurum.

‘We stand up right’

Tekin was welcomed by his family in front of the prison, and went to Siirt. Speaking there, Tekin said: “I left behind me a long time, 30 years. I was far from our loved ones. But I came out with my head high. It's nice to be reunited with my loved ones, but a part of me is sad because I left dozens of friends behind me in jail.”

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Gültan Kışanak subjected to inhumane treatment after attending her sister's funeral

ANF | 16 AUGUST 2023

Kurdish politician Gültan Kışanak, who has been imprisoned in Turkey since 2016, attended the funeral of her deceased sister Zeynep Özer in Elazığ a week ago, accompanied by guards, and was then taken back to the Kandıra high-security prison in western Turkey. It came out that the female politician experienced torture and inhumane measures on her way back to prison.

EMEP deputy Sevda Karaca Demir visited Gültan Kışanak, former HDP leader Figen Yüksekdağ and the deposed mayor of Dersim, Nurhayat Altun, in Kandıra on Tuesday. The visit to the political prisoners was also a condolence visit. According to Demir, Kışanak was taken away directly after her sister's funeral and expected to be brought back to Kandıra from Elazığ airport via Istanbul. Instead, she was driven to the Elazığ Prison without being informed. When she asked why, she was told that she had only been given four hours' leave for the funeral.

“Gltan Kışanak did not have her medication or other necessities with her and was taken to Elazığ Prison in the condition in which she had attended the funeral. At Elazığ Prison, she requested to be accommodated together with her friends, but instead she was forced to spend the night in a dirty room reminiscent of a camp. Neither her relatives nor her lawyers were informed of this. Only the next day was she able to make a phone call to her family, and the prison management declared itself not responsible. When her lawyers, who had been notified, were finally able to speak to her after hours of waiting, she was told that the gendarmerie (military police) had arrived for her onward transport. She was handed a food parcel and told to acknowledge that she had received dinner. This made it clear that her journey was going to take even longer. Because there was allegedly no flight to Istanbul, she was taken to Sivas in a prisoner transport van,” Demir said.

“This journey, the costs of which were transferred to the administration in advance, almost turned into torture. After a grueling seven-hour journey in a prisoner transport van to Sivas, Gltan Kışanak arrived at Kandıra prison at 3 in the morning. Such terrible treatment cannot be expected of any prisoner. It is both inhumane and unlawful to torture an elected politician in such a way, especially one who has just come from her sister’s funeral and has experienced great pain. This treatment, which has disrespected her grief, endangered her health and put her family in deep anguish, needs an explanation. Those responsible must be named. We expect an explanation from the Ministry of Justice on this matter,” said Sevda Karaca Demir.



Three prisoners released after 30 years: Put an end to repression

ANF | ISTANBUL | 17 AUGUST 2023

Mehmet İnal, Musa Şanak and Adnan Karakaş were released from Bolu F Type Closed Prison after serving a 30-year sentence.

Musa Şanak, Mehmet İnal, and Adnan Karakaş, were released after having their release date postponed twice and, in the case of Karakaş, four times by the Administration and Observation Board (İGK), which said that the prisoners did not show remorse.

In addition to their relatives, the Marmara Association for Solidarity with Detainees and Convicted Families (MATUHAY-DER), Anatolian Association for Assistance and Solidarity with the Families Who Have Lost Their Relatives (ANYAKAY-DER), Co-Chairs, Democratic Party of Rights (HDP), People’s Democratic Congress (HDK) to welcome the prisoners. administrators and Tevgera Jinên Azad (TJA) gathered in front of the prison with flowers.

Musa Şanak said that being freed created a bittersweet joy for him and added that this situation did not make him happy. Şanak drew attention to the isolation imposed on Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah and said that this isolation should be lifted as soon as possible. Şanak said: “When I think about all this, I feel a little sad.”

Adnan Karakaş underlined the heavy isolation imposed on all prisoners and said that most of the political prisoners had their release dates postponed. Karakaş continued: “Even though our friends’ sentences are over, they are not freed. Their freedom must be ensured. They have been trying to make us kneel for 30 years. They look at our entire nation and people as criminals. This repression must end. We want all our friends to be released.”

What happened?

Musa Şanak was taken prisoner in Istanbul in 1993. He was given a life sentence by the Bayrampaşa State Security Court (DGM) on charges of “separatism”. Şanak, who went to prison at the age of 29, came out at the age of 59.

Adnan Karakaş was arrested in Nusaybin in 1993 and given a life sentence by the State Security Court (DGM) on charges of “separatism”. Karakaş went to prison at the age of 30, and came out at the age of 63.

Karakaş suffered from health problems such as skin cancer and rheumatism during his time in prison.

Mehmet İnal was arrested in Istanbul in 1992. He was sentenced to life imprisonment by the State Security Court (DGM) on charges of “separatism”.

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Military aggression and occupation

KCK calls for action against Turkish massacre of civilians in Iraq

ANF | 13 AUGUST 2023

The KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement calling on the Kurdish people and their international friends to express their reactions everywhere and protest against the silence of states and international institutions in the face of the attacks and massacres of the Turkish state and show that this is unacceptable.

The statement released on Sunday includes the following:

“With the regaining of power by the AKP-MHP, the attacks of the genocidal colonialist Turkish state against the Kurdish people and the forces of the Kurdish Freedom Movement have increased. In the last weeks, many of our people have fallen martyrs both in Rojava [West Kurdistan] and Southern Kurdistan. We strongly condemn these attacks and massacres carried out by the genocidal colonialist Turkish state.

We would like to express our condolences to the families of the martyrs who have lost their lives in these attacks and our condolences to the people of Kurdistan.

Some patriots and democratic organizations are reacting to these attacks and massacres carried out by the Turkish state. But the states and international organizations, especially who are responsible, remain silent. This attitude of the states and their responsible institutions is unacceptable. The genocidal colonialist Turkish state has been carrying out attacks and massacres everywhere without knowing any borders, without respecting the law and with the motive of enmity against the Kurds. Only in the last week, some people have been massacred again in South Kurdistan in drone attacks. However, neither the government of Southern Kurdistan nor the Iraqi state has shown any reaction against this. Both have to react to these attacks and prevent them in the future. The lack of any reaction to the circumstances means being a partner of the attacks and massacres of the Turkish state. This is especially true for the government and politics of Kurdistan. How can those who do not react to the massacre and killing of Kurds claim to be Kurds and represent the Kurdish people? This is an unacceptable attitude. Kurdish organizations and parties as well as the government of South Kurdistan are responsible for this situation. They have to act and take a stand.

As previously pointed out, foreign states and international organizations do not show any reaction against these attacks of the Turkish occupation state. While the genocidal colonialist Turkish state is attacking everywhere, especially in Rojava and Southern Kurdistan, and massacring Kurds every day, these states are ruthlessly entering into all kinds of political and economic relations of interest with the Turkish state. It is not possible to subject the Kurdish people to such treatment and hope that they will accept it in silence. We once again call upon the states and international organizations to abandon this attitude that denies the existence and values of the Kurdish people. Do not be further a partner in the attacks and massacres of the Turkish state. Take a stand against this.

Some tend to imply that the attacks of the genocidal colonialist Turkish state are attacks against the PKK. This is a deliberate attempt to distort the facts. The recent attacks in South Kurdistan have shown once again that the Turkish state is targeting all Kurds and its aim is to eliminate their existence. Against this, patriots, democratic institutions, intellectuals and artists have to take a strong stand and put political pressure on those responsible and hold them accountable. The Kurdish people and their international friends should also express their reactions everywhere and protest against the silence of states and international institutions in the face of the attacks and massacres of the Turkish state and show that this is unacceptable.”

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Turkish fighter jets bomb a town in South Kurdistan

ANF | DUHOK | 13 AUGUST 2023

According to the South Kurdistan-based RojNews agency, Turkish fighter jets shelled the village of Derelok in Duhok province early Sunday morning.

The attack caused panic among the local population and started a fire in the orchards of the residents.

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5 more Turkish soldiers killed in actions by guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 13 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 HPG statement on Sunday, the guerrillas are responding to the Turkish army's occupation attacks with various forms of defensive tactics. While the war in the region continues to focus on the Girê Cûdî resistance area on the western wing of the Zap front, at least five members of the invading forces have been killed in the guerrilla actions carried out in the region yesterday and today.

Details of the latest guerrilla actions in the Girê Cûdî resistance area in the Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region are as follows:

On 12 and 13 August, guerrillas of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) struck the occupation forces three times with heavy weaponry and destroyed two enemy positions.

On 12 August, three soldiers were killed by YJA Star snipers.

On 12 August, YJA Star guerrillas struck the occupation forces with semi-automatic weapons and killed a soldier.

On 12 August, a surveillance camera system was destroyed using sniper tactics.

On 12 August, YJA Star guerrillas hit the occupation forces with heavy weapons and damaged an emplacement.

On 12 August, strikes by YJA Star guerrillas left a soldier dead.

On 13 August, strikes with semi-automatic weapons left two enemy positions damaged.

On 13 August, YJA Star guerrillas hit the occupation forces with heavy weapons and killed a soldier.

HPG also reported continued attacks by the Turkish army. Accordingly, artillery attacks by Turkish troops were directed against Zap and Şehîd Delîl Western Zap front.

Seven years ago Manbij was liberated by the SDF

ANF | 14 AUGUST 2023

On 15 August 2016, the northern Syrian city of Manbij was completely liberated by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) - thus ending the more than two and a half years of rule of the Islamic State.

For ISIS, the loss was a heavy defeat, as Manbij was considered the “secret capital”, located on the strategically important supply route from the Turkish border to Raqqa, where suicide bombers were trained and sent to Europe, among other places.

Shortly before the SDF launched the liberation offensive at Tishrin Dam on June 1, 2016, the Manbij Military Council had been established by the SDF led by the People’s and Women’s Defense Units (YPG/YPJ). One of its co-founders was Abu Leyla (Faisal Abdi Bilal Saadoun), who was hit in the head by shrapnel during an artillery attack on the third day of the operation. When Abu Leyla died on August 5, the offensive on Manbij was named after him.

75-day liberation struggle

The battle for Manbij, which had been under IS terror since 2014, lasted a total of 75 days. It was a complete success, in which YPJ fighters played a major role. Unforgotten are the images of women who burned their veils and lit cigarettes after liberation, of men who had their beards shaved in public, and the relieved and beaming faces of children. But the fight for a free Manbij was also very costly. Large parts of the city were destroyed. About 300 fighters were killed, among them some internationalists.

Manbij: Ethnic and linguistic mosaic

After the liberation of Manbij, the SDF faced the challenge of bringing the population together around the political project of the “Democratic Federation of Northern Syria”. Manbij is an ethnic and linguistic mosaic, whose inhabitants consist of about 70 percent Arabs, 20 percent Kurds, five percent Turkmen and a small number of Circassians and Armenians, who for decades were divided by tribal conservative policies promoted by the Syrian regime. During the years under the control of ISIS, this policy of division intensified.

Social model with high democratic standards

In autumn 2016, the Military Council handed over the administration of the region to the Civil Council of Manbij. In the following March, the Civil Council was renamed as the “Legislature of the Democratic Administration of Manbij” in order to broaden its scope and increase its democratic legitimacy. Right at the beginning, a gender-equal dual leadership of one woman and one man was introduced in all offices, so that the proportion of women in the administration is 50 percent. The management of the Autonomous Administration consists of 132 people. All social groups are represented according to their population shares. The importance of Manbij is thus not only explained by its geostrategic position in the overall Syrian context, but also by the political system established there since August 2016, which has a very high democratic claim and is considered a model for a new democratic Syria. This model of society has enabled

a trusting and secure environment to be established, in which women have fought for their rights and now play a role in all areas of administration and life.



30 years ago, the Digor massacre

ANF | 14 AUGUST 2023

On August 14, 1993, thousands of people gathered in the village of Nexşan (Kocaköy), in the Digor district of Kars province, to protest against the imposition of the 'village guard' system, house raids and torture. The crowd was cut off by special operations police units 2 kilometers away from Digor and subjected to fire without warning. The crossfire killed 17 people, including 5 children, and injured over 200 others.

The victims, for whom justice has yet to be served, are Gülcan Çağdavul (8), Selvi Çağdavul (14), Yeter Kerenciler (13), Necla Geçener (14), Zarife Boylu (15), Erdal Buğan (17), Zeynep Çağdavul (19), Hacer Hacıoğlu (20), Suna Çidemal (21), Fatma Parlak (22), Faruk Aydın (27), Cemil Özvarış (39), Gıyasettin Çalışıcı (41), Hasan Çağdavul (43), Süleyman Taş (47), Nurettin Orun (80) and Tütiye Talan (66).

The casings of weapons used by the special operations units were found but their RPGs and rifles were never found. In a verdict issued in 2006, the police officers were acquitted on grounds of "justifiable self defense".

The women and children who took part in the protest march were wearing red-green-yellow dresses and scarves and were therefore the first to be targeted by the Turkish soldiers that confronted them. Most of the victims were women and children.

Some of those killed in the deadly aggression were tied behind military vehicles and dragged on the ground up to the district center.

After the massacre, the state forced the people of Digor to leave their hometown, which they, however, firmly rejected in spite of all the repression, torture, detentions and arrests they experienced.

While the hearing about the incident continued for 11 years with no ruling for justice, the late human rights lawyer, Tahir Elçi, took the case to the European Court of Human Rights in 2004, citing "excessively long judicial proceedings", "lack of effective investigation" and "violation of the right to life".

In 2006, Turkey concluded the case and eight police officers were acquitted after they argued in their written defence to the court that the crowd had opened fire on them with RPGs despite the fact that no evidence of an RPG attack by the civilians was found during the examination conducted at the scene after the massacre.

Announcing its verdict after Turkey's acquittal of the accused, the ECHR convicted Turkey to pay pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages.



HPG: Four Turkish soldiers were killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 14 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 HPG statement on Monday, guerrillas struck the Turkish occupation forces in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region.

Of the total of eight actions carried out on 13 August, three were carried out by the guerrillas of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops), who stopped an advance of the Turkish troops twice by using heavy weapons. Strikes by the YJA Star guerrillas left three soldiers dead and one other injured.

Further attacks against the Turkish invading forces were concentrated on the military positions in the field. Four strikes by the guerrillas left a soldier dead. In addition, the guerrillas targeted a transport helicopter. Due to heavy shelling, the aircraft had to turn around without completing a mission to airdrop troops.

HPG also reported continued attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla areas. Accordingly, Turkish fighter jets carried out five strikes on the areas of Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region, the resistance areas of Girê Bahar and Girê Amediyê, and Girê Ortê in Metîna.

On the other hand, various areas in the Zap region were targeted by artillery attacks on 13 August.



15 August 1984, the day the Kurds lit a fire of hope

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

15 August 1984 is an important date for the Turkish-Kurdish conflict as it marks the first PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) attack, led by Mahsum Korkmaz, known as Egîd, the Brave.

15 August will be celebrated throughout Kurdistan and Europe by thousands of Kurds today.

In the PKK's second party Congress, which was held from 20 to 25 August 1982 in Daraa (Syria), it was decided that the PKK would start preparing for an insurgency inside Turkey. Training camps were opened in Syria and in Lebanon's Beqaa Valley and propaganda teams were sent across the border to make contact with the local population.

After years of preparation, the PKK launched its first major attack on 15 August 1984. The attack was led by Mahsum Korkmaz.

PKK forces attacked the gendarmerie station in Eruh in Siirt, killing one gendarmerie soldier and injuring six soldiers. Simultaneously, PKK forces attacked a gendarmerie open air facility, officer housing and a gendarmerie station in Şemdinli, Hakkari and killed two police officers and injured one police officer and a soldier.

The first attack was followed up by a raid on a police station in Siirt on 17 August which was soon followed by an attack that killed three of General Kenan Evren's Presidential Guards in Yüksekova and an ambush which killed 8 Turkish soldiers in Çukurca, in Hakkari province.

In the circumstances, there was no option for the PKK but to resort to armed struggle if any manifestation of the Kurdish desire for identity and recognition was to be maintained and fulfilled. On 12 September 1980, the Turkish armed forces, led by General Kenan Evren, seized power in Turkey in a military coup. One of the chief aims of the coup was to crush the Kurdish movement. The constitution was suspended, parliament was abolished, all political parties and trade unions were banned and martial law was imposed throughout Turkey. Hundreds of thousands of people were tortured, thousands disappeared, up to 650,000 people were arrested, films were banned, journalists imprisoned and killed and newspapers prevented from publishing. Many death sentences were passed; the PKK had 122 death sentences passed against its members. The PKK withdrew some of its members from Turkey to Lebanon and Syria and began political and military preparations, which culminated in the 15 August actions. Kurdish resistance has gathered and spread since.

Mahsum Korkmaz

On 28 March 1986, the legendary guerrilla commander Mahsum Korkmaz fell a martyr with a group of comrades in clashes with the Turkish troops in Gabar on 28 March 1986. Since that day, Commander Egîd has taken his place in the heart of the people of Kurdistan and his legendary stance is remembered on every occasion.

It was under his command that the Kurdish guerrillas carried out the first attack against the Turkish occupation forces on 15 August 1984 in Eruh, thus initiating the armed liberation struggle.

To commemorate Commander Egîd, a blacksmith in Kobanê made a special sculpture. The statue is made of iron and reproduces Commander Egîd in his uniform. He is holding a Kalashnikov and his face is looking up. The statue represents victory and prevision.

Mahsum Korkmaz is said to have been buried in the mass grave in Newala Kesaba, near Siirt. Every year, thousands go to pay tribute to the great commander.

KCK: The Freedom Guerrilla became the architect of a new life in Kurdistan

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement marking the 39th anniversary of the 15 August 1984 Breakthrough, when the Kurdish guerrillas fired the first bullet at the Turkish army.

The KCK statement includes the following:

“We have reached the 39th anniversary of the resistance of August 15. It marks a turning point in the history of our struggle and is a milestone for the people of Kurdistan. We would like to congratulate all the people of Kurdistan, especially Rêber Apo [Abullah Öcalan] and the great commander of the resistance, Comrade Agit, to all comrades of the party, to the prison resistance, to the peoples of the Middle East, to the oppressed peoples of the world, to the women, to all those who struggle for freedom and democracy, on the occasion of this great historical step. We would like to express our gratitude, greetings and respect to all those who contributed to the realization of this historical resistance, both intellectually and in action.

The resistance of August 15 has a very special significance and meaning for the guerrilla. It was developed as a strategy in which the guerrilla took historical responsibility by leading such a milestone of resistance and by becoming the architect of the new life being developed in Kurdistan. Undoubtedly, this leadership was achieved with great heroism, sacrifice, dedication, and cost. We would like to congratulate the guerrilla on this resistance of August 15. They have paid dearly for this historic responsibility, and they have continued to act according to this responsibility to this day. We would like to respectfully salute the historical resistance and respectfully commemorate all the martyrs of the revolution and democracy in the person of the great guerrilla commander Agit, and we pay tribute to their memories. We bow with respect. Once again, we reiterate our oath to the martyrs that we will honor their memory by taking their struggle to victory.

The resistance of August 15 is the result of deep historical meditation, consciousness and willpower. It was a revolutionary intervention in history which changed its course and paved the way for a new historical development in Kurdistan. This means that the Kurdish people gained national and social consciousness, and started to resurrect. While genocidal colonialism was imposing extinction on the Kurdish people, with the historic resistance of August 15, a revolutionary intervention was made in the fateful history that went upside down and the Kurdish people re-created themselves from their ashes.

It is very important for the Kurdish people to comprehend the resistance of August 15, which signifies the existence of the Kurds and their struggle against genocide. It has not lost anything of its significance for the people of Kurdistan. On the contrary, compared to the past, comprehending and deepening this historical process has gained even more importance.

The colonialism in Kurdistan and the genocide of the Kurds is different from its historical quintessences. This difference is based on two dimensions, the first of which is the anti-Kurdish character of the Turkish

state. As is known, after the First World War, Kurdistan was divided between four nation-states for the sake of the interests of the forces of capitalist modernity in the Middle East. These nation-states, which established sovereignty in Kurdistan, subjected the Kurdish people to the process of extinction by depriving them of national, social and historical identity. The main force that developed and maintained this genocidal colonialist mentality was the Turkish state. The anti-Kurdish mentality in the Turkish state is so deep that it has premised its existence on the extinction of the Kurdish people and it has left no stone unturned to achieve this aim. The hundred-year legacy of massacres and genocide of the Turkish state has proven this fact. The second is the support given by the hegemonic states to the genocidal policies of the Turkish state. As it is known, the Treaty of Lausanne, which envisaged the Kurdish genocide, was signed between the Turkish state and the hegemonic states of the period. Although the anti-Kurdish, fascist character of the Turkish state was known by the hegemonic powers of the time, especially Britain and France, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed with the Turkish state. Thus, the division of Kurdistan and the genocide of the Kurdish people were approved by these powers. Not only did they give their approval, but the forces of capitalist modernity also supported the Kurdish genocide policies of the Turkish state uninterruptedly. The USA, the European states and NATO in particular follow this policy. The order created in the Middle East was also developed on the basis of the Kurdish genocide. All this has made it extremely difficult to break the Kurdish genocide. Changing this means changing the course of history. This reveals the historical significance attributed to the resistance of August 15.

The emergence of the PKK on the stage of history was a very important step in breaking the genocide imposed on the Kurdish people. From the very beginning, Rêber Apo started this historical process by correctly analyzing the character of the Turkish state and the foundations on which the Kurdish genocide is based. With the military fascist coup of September 12, 1980, the Turkish state aimed to stop this historical process that had just begun. However, the Kurdish freedom movement prevented this and managed to take the resistance and struggle to a higher level on two fronts. The first of these is the struggle that developed in the prisons and reached its peak with the resistance of [hunger strike] July 14. With this historic resistance, the chains of surrender and betrayal were broken and the enemy's policy of liquidating the Kurdish revolution through the prisons was defeated. The second is the resistance of August 15. By carrying out this resistance, the guerrilla took the prison resistance of July 14 to a higher level and changed the history of the Kurdish people. All subsequent developments in Kurdistan have been the results of this historical step.

The resistance of August 15 has been evaluated in many respects since its inception and its results have been tried to be understood. Since that means existence for the Kurdish people, it is appropriate to talk, discuss and try to understand its meaning and results. One of these results is that the patriotic way of thinking was revealed in Kurdistan and the collaborator treacherous mindset was exposed. The collaborationist treacherous practice was consciously developed in Kurdistan as part of the genocide. The enemies of the Kurds have always developed the Kurdish genocide based on certain classes and families who have betrayed their people and country for the sake of personal interests and wealth. When the resistance of August 15 revealed the consciousness of freedom, struggle and Kurdish patriotism, the most collaborative betrayer groups tried to prevent this historical development. Today, they still support the concept of liquidation and genocide of the guerrilla and the Kurdish people. In this respect, it is very important to expose the true face of these collaborators and betrayers who sometimes try to portray themselves as part of the Kurdish people and its struggle.

Considering the present state of affairs we are going through, it is necessary to correctly and competently comprehend two important features of this historical process. First, the resistance of August 15 is not a step that has happened and ended, but is an ongoing process. The Kurdish people are still under the claws of genocide, and as long as the genocidal attacks continue, the deepening and continuation of the resistance is the only way to protect Kurdish existence and ensure Kurdish freedom. Secondly, all developments in Kurdistan are a result of the resistance. Not only previous developments, but also possible developments in the future. Because August 15 means a struggle for the Kurdish people. As has often been emphasized, the resistance is not just a military action, but the Kurdish people's struggle for existence and freedom against genocidal colonialism. Therefore, today, as it was yesterday, it is not possible to create any development in Kurdistan without waging a struggle. In this respect, it is very important that all comrades, patriots, intellectuals and international friends highlight this truth and raise the awareness of society on the right basis against the attacks of AKP-MHP fascism and their special warfare.

We once again would like to celebrate the historic resistance of August 15. The people of Kurdistan and the freedom guerrilla have demonstrated that they will create greater results in the 40th year of this struggle by developing an uninterrupted resistance against the occupation and genocide attacks wherever they are. The effective actions of guerrilla in every area, including the Medya Defence Zones, prove this fact. On this occasion, we would like to congratulate all on the occasion of the successful attacks carried out on the Western Zap and salute all comrades who resist and struggle everywhere in the person of the fighters and commanders who carried out these actions.”

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PKK: Resistance continues to grow

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 AUGUST 2023

The Executive Committee of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) addressed the Kurdish people and the democratic public in a message marking the 39th anniversary of the 15 August Initiative.

The message said: “We are entering the 40th year of our glorious 15 August Revolutionary Breakthrough, which brought the Apoist line into organization and action, and carried the 1982 Great Prison Resistance to the mountains and the guerrillas everywhere.

The HPG and YJA Star guerrillas inflicted heavy blows on the AKP-MHP fascist gangs on 9 and 10 August, greeting the 39th anniversary of the 15 August Initiative, especially in Zap, the historical resistance area.”

The statement added: “The performance of our heroic guerrilla forces as we enter the 40th anniversary of the historic 15 August Initiative makes our people and our friends more hopeful and determined. On this basis, our struggle for freedom, led by youth and women, is developing and growing in all four parts of Kurdistan and abroad. It is clear that this historical struggle, which is based on the physical freedom of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan), will gain strength and will advance on the path of victory.

We commemorate all the martyrs of the historical heroic breakthrough in the person of our immortal commanders, comrades Egîd and Zîlan, with deep respect, love and gratitude. We wish success to all those who are fighting for freedom and democracy.

As it is known, on the basis of the 15 August Initiative, our Movement and people have been resisting uninterruptedly against Turkish colonialism and genocide mentality for 39 years. This great resistance, which is the most meaningful resistance in history, is taking place along the Apoist freedom line and under the leadership of the guerrillas.”

The statement continued: “Leader Apo defined the Revolutionary Breakthrough of 15 August 1984 as 'a breakthrough of hope, persistence and persistence'. Every moment of this 39-year great struggle was spent paying heavy prices, experiencing difficulties and pain. Each year faced greater challenges and obstacles than the previous year. But all this did not intimidate or hinder our party and our people in developing this historical struggle. In an environment where opportunities are almost non-existent, this 39-year-old struggle was carried out successfully on the basis of the enlightening and remedial thoughts of Leader Apo and the courage and self-sacrifice of the Kurdish people.

Our 39th year struggle showed a resistance, persistence, endurance and success that exceeded previous years, especially under the leadership of the Zap, Avaşîn and Metina resistances developed against all kinds of illegal weapons.”

The statement said: “Undoubtedly, the Movement, the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey, as well as revolutionary and democratic friends, resisted valiantly against all these attacks of AKP-MHP fascism.

We will resist even more strongly in the 40th year of the 15 August Initiative, based on the lessons we have learned from the past. The freedom resistance in İmralı, which is unique in history, will continue to illuminate our path and lead us. No matter what force and type of attack, the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, which constantly renews itself in the Apoist line, will heroically resist all enemy attacks with a self-sacrificing line.

Our people, led by youths and women, and our Turkish friends, fighting against all kinds of special war attacks, will make their struggle on the basis of the goal of overthrowing fascism more widespread and creative.”

The statement said that “no matter how much the fascist-genocidal enemy intensifies their fierce attacks, we will definitely be the winners by renewing ourselves on the basis of the 15 August Initiative, and by developing the struggle.

It is on this basis that we celebrate the 39th anniversary of our historic August 15 Revolutionary Breakthrough, and we enter the 40th year with this conviction and determination.

We salute the 15 August celebrations in all areas and the actions demanding the physical freedom of Leader Apo.

We call on our patriotic people and friends to renew themselves with the spirit of breakthrough and victory on August 15, and to develop our great resistance on the basis of destroying the AKP-MHP fascism and ensuring the physical freedom of Leader Apo in every field in the 40th year.”

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YPG-YPJ military parade in Aleppo salutes the anniversary of 15 August initiative

ANF | ALEPPO | 15 AUGUST 2023

On 15 August 1984, the PKK fired “the first shot” in Eruh (Dih) in North Kurdistan. A 36-strong guerrilla force led by the legendary commander Mahsum Korkmaz - also known by his nom de Guerre Egîd (“the Brave”) - carried out the first attack against the Turkish occupying forces that day. A military police barracks was selected for the action, which is considered the beginning of the armed struggle of the Kurdish liberation movement. One guard and one officer were killed, and the guerrillas did not suffer any casualties.

The People’s Defense Units (YPG) and Women’s Defense Units (YPJ) in North-East Syria conducted a military parade to mark the 39th anniversary of the 15 August initiative.

The YPG-YPJ military parade took place in the Sheikh Maqsoud (Şêxmeqsûd) and Ashrafiyah Eşrefiyê neighborhoods Cemetery of Martyrs of Resistance in the Şiqeyêf region of Aleppo with the participation of members of Military Councils, political parties and civil society organizations.

Speaking here, YPJ Commander Rojda Efrîn congratulated the Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan, mothers of martyrs and all peoples on the “Day of Resurrection”, as 15 August is called by the Kurdish people and the freedom movement.

Rojda Efrîn said, “On this date, commander and martyr Mahsûm Korkmaz fired the first bullet at the enemy front, starting the armed struggle. 15 August became the day of vengeance for the Kurdish people and the oppressed peoples and a move towards liberation from slavery.”

Remarking that the gains of revolution were made thanks to the labour and self-sacrifices of martyrs, Rojda Efrîn added: “We will continue to struggle on the path of 15 August, Day of Resurrection for the Kurdish people, and achieve further gains.”

The ceremony concluded with the slogans “Bê Serok jiyana nabe” (No Life Without the Leader) and “Jin, Jiyana, Azadî” (Woman, Life, Freedom).

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PYD: 15 August is the path to resurrection for the Kurds and the people of Mesopotamia

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

The Democratic Union Party (PYD) released a statement marking the 39th anniversary of the breakthrough of 15 August, when the Kurdish freedom movement fired the first bullet at the Turkish army in Eruh, Siirt in 1984. A 36-strong guerrilla force led by the legendary commander Mahsum Korkmaz - also known by his nom de Guerre Egîd (“the Brave”) - carried out the first attack against the Turkish occupying forces that day, which is considered the beginning of the armed struggle of the Kurdish liberation movement.

The PYD congratulated the Kurds and the people of Mesopotamia on the Day of Resurrection, as 15 August is called by the Kurdish people and freedom movement, and paid tribute to Mahsum Korkmaz and all the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in this struggle.

“The 15 August Breakthrough is not only the declaration of an armed struggle, but also an ideological struggle and a step for cultural and humanitarian values and democracy, and the path to resurrection for the Kurds and the people of Mesopotamia,” said the statement on Tuesday.

Remarking that the consciousness and organization, as well as the political, diplomatic and cultural gains made in the four parts of Kurdistan and beyond were a result of the 15 August Breakthrough, PYD stated: “We reiterate our promise to remain loyal to our martyrs, to Leader Abdullah Öcalan, and to their path and struggle until we realize the peoples’ dreams for freedom and co-existence and build the ‘Democratic Nation’ project.”

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Guerrillas celebrate 15 August at graduation ceremony

DILARA EMEL | BEHDINAN | 17 AUGUST 2023

In the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), a training for fedai guerrillas ended on 15 August. In the Kurdish liberation movement, the term Fedai stands for people who are willing to sacrifice their lives for their goals.

A military ceremony was held at the end of the training and the beginning of the armed struggle of the Kurdish freedom movement 39 years ago was celebrated.

In a speech at the graduation ceremony of the training, 15 August 19984 was called the day of resurrection of the Kurdish people. The commander congratulated Abdullah Öcalan, the people of Kurdistan and all those fighting for freedom on this day and said: “On behalf of all the Fedai of Rêber Apo [Leader Öcalan], we also congratulate the freedom guerrilla of Kurdistan who are fighting a war of to be or not to

be in the Kurdish mountains against the fascism of the occupiers. As we know, the road to the present time has not been easy. As a movement, we have paid a high price. On this occasion, we respectfully remember our great commander Egîd [Mahsum Korkmaz], Fazil Botan, Leyla Sorxwîn, Norşîn Efrîn and Delîl Zagros, and all the commanders who made our freedom struggle grow with their blood.”

The speech continued: “In the history of our party, the PKK, hope has always played a big role in the resistance and for a dignified life. The enemy has been attacking the guerrilla areas for eight years with NATO’s war technology. It wants to occupy all the areas from Botan to Serhed and Xakurke to Zap and complete the genocide of the Kurds that started with the Treaty of Lausanne a hundred years ago. As Rêber Apo’s professional guerrillas, we have made the enemy attacks come to nothing with our current tactics of small units in the field and tunnel warfare. Concrete examples of this struggle are the resistance in the Şehîd Doğan and Şehîd Munzur war tunnels. The successful actions carried out every day against the fascist army at Girê Cûdî also show the defeat of the enemy. Rêber Apo has been waging a worldwide unparalleled struggle against the system of torture and isolation on Imrali for over 24 years. This struggle is the source of strength of the guerrillas. The fascist government of Erdoğan and Bahçeli should know that we, as sacrificial guerrillas, will fight for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo at any cost.”

After the ceremony, the guerrillas left for their new areas of operation.

You can watch the video of ceremony from this link: <https://anfenglishmobile.com/kurdistan/guerrillas-celebrate-15-august-at-graduation-ceremony-68857>

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HPG: 5 more Turkish soldiers were killed in guerrilla actions

ANF | BEHDINAN | 17 AUGUST 2023

The resistance of the HPG (People’s Defence Forces) and YJA Star (Free Women’s Troops) against the Turkish invasion in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) continues unabated.

According to the HPG Press Office, which publishes daily reports on the war in Kurdistan, five soldiers of the Turkish army were killed in guerrilla actions on Wednesday. Several positions established by the invading forces in the region were damaged by heavy weapons fire.

According to the HPG statement on Thursday, a soldier was shot dead in the resistance area of Sîda on 16 August. In the Girê Cûdî resistance area in the western Zap region, Turkish troops were struck fifteen times with heavy and semi-automatic weapons from five o’clock on Wednesday morning until 3.30 last night. On 16 August at 5 pm, an advance by a Turkish unit was stopped by the YJA Star guerrillas. An hour later, the guerrillas struck soldiers who were scouting the area. At night, the guerrillas intervened six times with heavy weapons against helicopters flying over the region.

HPG also reported eight airstrikes by Turkish fighter jets on Wednesday, which bombed Girê Bahar in the western Zap region and the areas of Gundê Şêlazê and Golka in Metîna. The Zap and Metîna regions were also shelled by the Turkish army with artillery.

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Footage of guerrilla action which left 11 soldiers dead at Girê Cûdi

ANF | BEHDINAN | 18 AUGUST 2023

The online portal Gerîla TV published new footage of a guerrilla action in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). The footage shows an action by the guerrillas against a Turkish military unit in the Girê Cûdî resistance area in Zap.

According to HPG information, the action at 10:00 on 9 August was directed against an advance by the Turkish occupation forces. Guerrillas attacked the Turkish forces with hand grenades and light weapons, killing nine soldiers and injuring seven others. The soldiers were struck once again while attempting to retreat after the action and two more were killed.

The Girê Cûdî massif is located on the Şehîd Delîl front in the western section of the Zap region, from which the Turkish army had to withdraw last winter after suffering heavy losses. Since 20 July, the area has once again been the focus of warfare in Zap as part of a renewed occupation operation.

Turkey has been trying to capture the Zap, Metîna and Avaşîn regions within the Medya Defence Zones since 2020. The guerrilla areas are attacked daily by the Turkish air force and ground forces of the Turkish army, facing resistance from the HPG and YJA Star guerrillas.

You can watch the footage from here: https://gerilla.tv/uploads/videos/8a060e70b_1080.mp4

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YXK protests KDP official Ewnî's call for murder of leading PKK members

ANF | 19 AUGUST 2023

While the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) are calling for Kurdish unity to stop the genocide of the Kurdish people, to make their voices heard at the international level and to prevent an inner-Kurdish war, the Barzani-dominated KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) in

South Kurdistan is working with the Turkish state and its secret service MIT and is doing the exact opposite.

The KDP official Elî Ewnî openly called for the murder of leading PKK members during a TV appearance on a Barzani family channel. Ewnî explained that the Turkish army and MIT are capable of targeting people with drones and questioned why the PKK leadership is not being eliminated with drones.

This call for murder was not an individual initiative by a KDP official, it characterizes the politics of the Barzani family. The Association of Students from Kurdistan (YXK) has issued a statement protesting such declarations.

Elî Ewnî, member of the Central Committee of the KDP said: “I say it to the leaders of the Turkish state. You can use drones, the airway and by means of the Internet to locate the members of the PKK in the tens of thousands of cars going to Ahmedawa and bomb them. Don’t you know the leaders and vanguards of the PKK who come and go to Turkey through Ranya, Derbindaxan, Qeladizê and Bradost?”

The statement by the Association of Students from Kurdistan reads as follows:

“It was with great dismay and deep anger that we learned of the statements of Elî Ewnî, member of the Central Committee of the KDP, on 16th August 2023. These words have a great impact and should not be ignored. Therefore, as a representation of Kurdish students in Europe, we do not want to leave these statements unanswered.

For almost three years now, the members and leaders of the PKK have been defending our Kurdistan from the Turkish occupiers. These young and brave daughters and sons of the Kurdish people defend Kurdish soil with their own lives. They are fighting against a cruel enemy that uses high-tech and prohibited means of combat, such as drones, fighter planes, poisonous gases and tactical nuclear weapons. In the centenary year of the Lausanne Treaty, the AKP/MHP regime wants to renew the genocide against the Kurdish people. There exists an international conspiracy against the Kurdish people. All the achievements of the Kurdish people are at stake. Our resistant people, the unstoppable youth and the fighting women are opposed to this extermination plan.

With what conscience does Elî Ewnî, as a Kurd and as an official of a Kurdish party, wish for the death of these Kurdish resistance fighters? Does Elî Ewnî not have even a little respect for himself and our people when he calls on the Turkish state to murder the daughters and sons of the Kurdish people?

We are not surprised that a member of the KDP would make such statements. Not only is the KDP committing treason against Kurdistan and the Kurdish people by helping the Turkish occupation army, instead they are now calling on the enemy to commit massacres against our people.

As Kurdish students, we reject this! We accept neither the Turkish occupation nor the reality of the KDP. No money, no promise is acceptable to tolerate a Turkish colonial occupation. But the KDP not only accepts it, no, they actively support the Turkish occupation in South Kurdistan and even Efrin. While our people are resisting IS in Rojava, fighting fascism in Bakur, revolting in Rojhilat and the guerrillas in Zap, Avaşin and Metina are fighting against the Turkish occupation, the Barzanis are enriching themselves in

trade with Turkish colonialism, earning billions by cooperating with European and American companies and ruling South Kurdistan like a mafia.

The Kurdish public must no longer accept this. In the centenary year of the Lausanne Treaty, the question of national unity in Kurdistan arises with the utmost urgency. Only the day before yesterday, Murat Karayilan, commander of the People's Defense Units (NPG) headquarters, declared in his August 15 address: "Preserve your unity. National unity is undoubtedly important for all four parts of Kurdistan. But each part of Kurdistan must ensure its unity internally and build its organization, and must not remain silent in the face of hostile practices, but defend itself." This stance does justice to the thousands of martyrs of Kurdistan. The KDP and the Barzanis should be ashamed that they are working for the Turkish state, that they are stealing from and lying to the Kurdish people.

We also appeal to all Kurds who believe the lies of the KDP and the Barzanis: The KDP does not want national unity, it wants autocracy over Kurdistan! With what force does it want to achieve this? The peshmerga of the KDP have not even fought one day against the Islamic State (IS) and left at the first difficulty. They have abandoned our Yezidi people. Do you expect these people to defend Kurdistan? They are not even now defending Kurdistan against the enemy. They are supporting the Turkish occupation in Southern Kurdistan and Efrin.

The KDP is not only incompetent, but it is unworthy of determining the future of Kurdistan. The autonomy of South Kurdistan is a first step. But why was this status granted by international forces? And why is the KDP content with this small step? Because the KDP puts itself at the service of NATO and betrays its own people for money and trade. What has the KDP made of this autonomous status in the last decades? Our country is exploited by European and Turkish companies, the nature of South Kurdistan is destroyed every day, our people in South Kurdistan live in poverty, our youth has no prospects and the situation of women is one of the worst in the region.

Do you define this as Kurdish national pride? Not us! We are proud of the never-ending and fearless resistance of the guerrillas! We are proud of the Kurdish women's and youth's uprising, which is scaring away the colonialists and occupiers in all four parts. We are proud of the attitude and philosophy of Rêber APO, who understands the deep history of our country and its societies and proposes ways for true liberation!

In this sense, we as Kurdish students in Europe declare that Elî Ewnî, member of the Central Committee of the KDP, has attacked and hurt the revolutionary feelings of our people by calling on the Turkish state to assassinate Kurdish freedom fighters. We call on the entire public to put pressure on the KDP to end its cooperation with Turkish colonialism.

Let us remember: Surrender leads to betrayal, resistance leads to victory!"

SDF welcomes US sanctions targeting Al-Amshat and Al-Hamzat terrorist militias

ANF | 19 AUGUST 2023

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) issued a statement to welcome the “decisive measures undertaken by the United States against the Al-Hamzat (The Hamza Division) and Al-Amshat (The Suleiman Shah Brigade) terrorist militias and their leadership.”

The SDF said in the statement: “We believe that American institutions have the capability to improve methods of holding these groups accountable and tracking them. The recent report by the US Department of the Treasury has again brought to light the grave terrorist practices perpetuated by terrorist organizations closely associated with the Turkish occupation within the Turkish-occupied areas in northern Syria, particularly the occupied Afrin.”

The statement added: “We want to draw attention to the fact that these terrorist acts against the indigenous populace are not sporadic incidents but rather systematic and strategic crimes committed under the directives of the Turkish occupying State, so the primary perpetrator of these practices is Turkey itself, which transformed the occupied areas into a safe haven for terrorist and criminal organizations, including ISIS. Turkey has spared no effort in providing these terrorist organizations with the necessary means and support to execute demographic change, enforced displacement, abduction, sexual abuse, and theft of property, attempting to establish an international legal environment to conceal these terrorist acts.”

The statement continued: “Once again, we urgently call upon all relevant international organizations to robustly address the main factors that underlie the propagation of terrorism within the Turkish-occupied areas by addressing the occupation itself and ensuring the accountability of the perpetrators.”

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HPG guerrilla killed in an ambush by MIT and Parastin

ANF - BEHDINAN | 19 AUGUST 2023

The Press Office of the HPG (People’s Defence Forces) announced that one of their guerrillas, Çiya Agirî, was martyred in an ambush in the Heftanin region of the Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the HPG statement released on Saturday, the Turkish intelligence service MIT and the Parastin, the intelligence organisation of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, are responsible for the death of the guerrilla fighter from Makû in Rojhilat (East Kurdistan, Iran).

“On the evening of 5 August, a group of our comrades met with a militiaman in the Banikê area, which belongs to Heftanîn, at around 9 pm in order to supply themselves with their needs. The short meeting took place at a point named by this person. Immediately after the militiaman moved away from the place, our comrades came under fire from two sides. Our comrade Çiya Agirî was shot in the head and died at the scene, while our comrade Dilgeş was hit in the head by a bullet and was seriously injured,” said the HPG statement.

The HPG statement pointed out that: “This incident took place in relative proximity to the Asayîş (Public Security Forces) in Banikê. The fact that the scene of this ambush was deliberately located in the vicinity of a KDP checkpoint, that it was named as a meeting place, that our comrades were lured here and finally shot in the head from two sides shows that it was a planned ambush. It goes without saying that the main purpose of carrying out this plot, which was planned by MIT with the help of the Parastin, at such a place, was to structure a conflict between us and the KDP. The intention was to create a perception among our forces based in the region that this attack was carried out by KDP security forces. In this way, a part of the KDP was also involved in this ambush.”

The statement continued: “The People’s Defence Center Headquarters Command considered it likely early on that it could be an enemy plot and ordered a thorough investigation of the incident instead of making it public immediately. Our investigation revealed that it was a provocation involving the Parastin, aimed at creating an environment of conflict between us and the KDP. The KDP is responsible for this. It must fully investigate why the perpetrators chose an area under its control for an ambush against our members. It is obvious that the perpetrators have a dirty goal, such as creating conflict between organisations. It is also clear that a part of the KDP is working intensively with the MIT to bring about an intra-Kurdish war and serve the Turkish state in this way.”



Inhabitants of besieged village in Şırnak subjected to state terror

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 19 AUGUST 2023

The military siege in the village of Bilbês in Beytüşşebap district of Şırnak has been going on for 22 days. Political and civil society actors have so far pressed in vain for an end to the siege and bombing of civilian settlements.

There have been several skirmishes with Turkish soldiers and guerrillas in the region in the past days and weeks. The Turkish army responded to the guerrilla presence with heavy waves of aerial attacks and tank fire. At the same time, the pressure on the village population increased.

A resident of the village, İzzettin Cin, had been detained on August 1 and imprisoned on August 4 for allegedly “aiding and abetting the PKK”. In the scope of the same investigation, Levent Cin was also taken into custody on Saturday after he had been summoned to a gendarmerie station in the Silopi district on the grounds that he had to sign a registration form. The man was taken to Şırnak Division Command.



HPG: Three Turkish soldiers were killed in guerrilla actions at Girê Cûdî

ANF | BEHDINAN | 19 AUGUST 2023

The resistance of the HPG (People's Defence Forces) and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) against Turkish invasion in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) continues unabated.

According to the HPG Press Office, which publishes daily reports on the war in Kurdistan, three soldiers of the Turkish army were killed in guerrilla actions in the past 48 hours at Girê Cûdî on the western front of the Zap region, which continues to be the focus of attacks by Turkish occupation forces.

Regarding the details of actions by the guerrillas on 17-18 August, HPG said that a total of ten positions of the Turkish forces were shelled and damaged by the guerrillas using heavy weapons.

On the other hand, strikes by YJA Star guerrillas left three soldiers of the invading Turkish army dead and one other wounded.

Regarding the latest attacks by the Turkish army on Girê Cûdî, HPG stated that the area was bombed twice by Turkish warplanes and other areas of the Zap region were targeted by massive shelling on 18 August.



Femincide

Çewlik: The spirit of 15 August will lead us to victory

ANF | BEHDINAN | 14 AUGUST 2023

The 15 August offensive played a major role in enabling the Kurdish people to survive. The guerrilla struggle that developed along the line of Heval Egîd created a first in Kurdish history. The Kurds have been exposed to exploitation, war, massacres and genocide for centuries. For this reason, many betrayals have often occurred. Society was fragmented and divided. On the other hand, the Kurds have always fought against the occupiers and never gave up resistance. Many uprisings took place before the PKK, but they

never lasted long. They were crushed by massacres and expulsion. The Kurds fell into a state of hopelessness in the face of the enemy.

Zozan Çewlik, commander of the Central Headquarters of YJA Star (Free Women's Associations), spoke to ANF about the start of the PKK's armed struggle in Kurdistan on 15 August 1994. Here are some excerpts of her interview.

Çewlik said: "The 15 August initiative was different. It was organized and had a strategy and a goal. The classic Kurdish way of fighting was overcome. For this reason, the Turkish state has not been able to defeat the guerrillas in Kurdistan to this day. 15 August brought about fundamental changes for the Kurdish people, and the same goes for Kurdish women. The offensive gave rise to great hope among the population. In the revolutionary struggle, the Kurdish people have become strong-willed, organized and hopeful people."

The reality of women in Kurdistan

Çewlik added: "If we look at the reality of Kurdish women, we see enslavement within the male system of domination that has lasted for 5000 years. They were enslaved both as Kurds and as women. Violence against women was legitimized in the patriarchal system of rule. Women were not seen as human beings, they were made into commodities with no will and the basis of a patriarchal concept of honour. That was the prevailing idea. Women played an important role in society. However, they were excluded from many areas. That was also reality in Kurdistan.

If we look at history from a different perspective, we see Kurdish women who fought for freedom at every opportunity and never surrendered to the enemy. In order not to surrender and to defend their honor and dignity, they blew themselves up or through themselves from cliffs, leading the resistance. There are many heroines in Kurdish history. Despite the massacres they experienced, Kurds took part in the freedom struggle. Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] was a great leader for the Kurdish people and Kurdish women as well. His attitude to the women's liberation struggle is clear. The women's struggle and the women guerrillas were built up together with Rêber Apo. Theory and practice took place simultaneously."

Women have been involved in the struggle from the beginning

Çewlik continued: "Women have been involved in revolutionary work since the emergence of our movement. The will and color of women were brought to the fore. This has always been the attitude of Rêber Apo and our movement. And since Rêber Apo started this fight, Kurdish women say: We are with this resistance, whatever the cost. An example of this is the resistance of Heval Sara [Sakine Cansız] in the dungeon of Amed. Women have been attacked at every level, both by the enemy and by society. Heval Sara recognized the reality of Rêber Apo and the party very early on and joined the fight.

The 15 August offensive marked a turning point in our history and led to strategic changes in both our movement and our society. It showed the ways and methods of the battle line. The Kurdish women did not hesitate either and took part. 15 August had a positive effect on women's guerrilla warfare. An autonomous army was not formed until 1993, but women were already fighting armed. Today, women are fighting the enemy all over Kurdistan. They perform great feats and there are many valuable casualties. The August 15 offensive was a basis for women's struggle for freedom."

Çewlik said: “At this point I would like to once again pay tribute to our female pioneers who were the first to join the guerrilla struggle. The YJA Star is a concrete expression of the resistance line created by women like Hanım Yaverkaya, Besê Anuş, Azime, Çiçek Selcan, Rahime, Ozan Mizgîn, Adife Sakık, Heval Sara, Bêrîvan, Zîlan and Bêrîtan.

These women not only fought against the enemy, but also against a society that only saw men as strong. That is why they did not lag behind in the armed struggle. Today, Kurdish women are organized in all areas. We have asserted ourselves and gained experience.”

The women fought free

Çewlik continued: “Anyone who doesn't know us will be amazed when they first meet us. They wonder how there can be two revolutions within one revolution and two armies within one guerrilla army. It's difficult to understand if you don't know Rêber Apo's philosophy. As YJA Star and HPG, we have the same origin, namely the 15 August 1984 initiative. Many movements worldwide have resorted to the method of guerrilla warfare to defend their freedom. Women too took part in these revolutionary struggles and paid a great price for it. But the PKK has proved to be different. The guerrillas in Kurdistan are also a way of life. The way of life determines the way of fighting. Women have become an organized force with a will of their own. That makes the difference of the guerrillas in Kurdistan. The August 15 offensive produced courageous pioneers who fought against the enemy as well as anything reactionary. The Kurdish women have proven themselves with their army in life and in war. They fought free.”

The women's guerrilla has changed the way men think about domination

Çewlik added: “Women used to be unable to defend themselves. Rêber Apo, the PKK and the emergence of a women's army brought about change and transformation. We don't just look at the guerrilla from a military perspective. The women guerrillas play a crucial role in bringing about change. It changed thinking based on male domination. And that's one of the differences that defines the guerrillas in Kurdistan. 15 August was the basis for Kurdish women to show how they want to fight and live. For this reason, despite the support of many ruling powers and the line of collaboration in Kurdistan, the Turkish military, as one of the largest armies in NATO, has not had any success against the guerrillas for 39 years.

A major reason for this is the strength that the PKK has gained through the emergence of the women's army. The influence, will and courage of women have fundamentally transformed both women and men. Rêber Apo's paradigm creates a free personality in both. Commander Egîd's line has become a way of life and a way of fighting for the freedom guerrillas of Kurdistan. The struggle of the Kurds is seen worldwide as a role model. Our guerrilla warfare has shown everyone that there is no freedom without defense. The women and society fighting for freedom in all parts of Kurdistan are oriented towards the guerrillas. She is a model for all women and peoples who want freedom.”

Young women from four parts of Kurdistan join the guerrilla ranks

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

More young people are joining the guerrillas following the call of the youth movements of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and PAJK (Party of Free Women in Kurdistan), Komalên Ciwan and Komalên Jinên Ciwan.

On the anniversary of the 15 August Breakthrough, when the Kurdish guerrillas fired the first bullet at the Turkish army in North Kurdistan in 1984, 20 young women joined the guerrilla ranks.

The young women coming from four parts of Kurdistan made a press statement in the guerrilla areas announcing their participation in the armed struggle, stating the following:

“While the hegemonic powers have attacked the Kurdish people ceaselessly up until today, Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) has been fighting a relentless struggle against these attacks for 50 years in order for the Kurdish people to have an identity, a country and a language. The sovereign powers took Leader Apo captive through an international conspiracy in an attempt to annihilate the struggle of the Kurdish people and to prevent his ideas and philosophy from spreading in the Middle East. With the captivity of Leader Apo, the Turkish state believed it would be able to eliminate the PKK and annihilate the Kurdish people. The resistance of Leader Apo on the İmralı Island for 25 years has, however, frustrated the dreams of the enemy and proved the fact that the ideas and philosophy of Leader Apo could never be wiped out, as they spread not only in the Middle East but in the entire world.

As is known, no news has been received from Leader Apo for over two years and our leader is subjected to strict isolation. The attempts made by his lawyers and family members for a meeting with him all failed. Leader Apo is exposed to disciplinary penalties and given threatening letters. In the face of the isolation and torture suffered by Leader Apo, so-called democratic institutions cooperate with the invading fascist Turkish state.

The Rojava Revolution led by women is based on Leader Apo's ideas and philosophy of Leader Apo, which also deeply inspires us, young women, as well as women all over the world. The 'Jin Jiyan Azadi' (Woman, Life, Freedom) revolution that echoes all over the world today gathers thousands of women around it. This is why the occupying states attack the voice of women's freedom, and their identity and existence. In this way, they seek revenge on Leader Apo. In response, we will continue rejecting the corrupt system and deliver the heaviest blow to the enemy. As young women, we embrace the revolution of women under the slogan 'Jin Jiyan Azadi', which is the legacy of thousands of women who sacrificed their lives for this cause. This is the mission entrusted to us by Leader Apo and we pledge to fulfil it with the decision we have made.

As young people, we do not accept a life without the leader. Uniting around the slogan 'You cannot darken our sun', we will move step by step towards a free and honorable life. We want to live in a free Kurdistan, together with the leader. A country under occupation is not acceptable to us. On this basis, we,

young women, have decided to take a major step and taken to the mountains for a free and honorable life. As long as our country is occupied, our leader is not physically free, young women and men have no choice but to take the freedom path.

We salute the call of our party PKK and PAJK to the youth in four parts of Kurdistan and we answer it as a group of young women. We have made our decision to lead a free life and take revenge. Other young women should also take to the free mountains. We promise to avenge our people who are faced with massacres every day. We promise to take revenge for every part of Kurdistan occupied by the enemy, for the guerrillas brutally killed in chemical attacks. We promise to follow in the footsteps of the martyrs. The fact that we can speak these words, experience such a revolution and speak our language today is thanks to the guerrillas who have inflicted major blows on the invading enemy.

As young people, we are devotees of Leader Apo and act with the spirit of his saying ‘We started young and we will triumph young’. We call upon young women in all parts of Kurdistan and all the youngsters whose hearts beat for freedom to follow in the footsteps of the martyrs and the likes of Zilan, Sara, Ruken, Vejin and Viyan.

We celebrate the 39th anniversary of 15 August, the Day of Resurrection. We promise to avenge all the martyrs in the person of those who fell in Zap, Avashin and Metina, and to embrace their legacy. We promise to secure the physical freedom of Leader Apo. It is time for his freedom and vengeance.”

— ★ —

Over a thousand women kidnapped, 99 others murdered in Afrin since 2018

ANF | SHEHBA | 16 AUGUST 2023

The Human Rights Organization Afrin-Syria made a statement denouncing the systematic crimes committed against women in the northern Syrian canton of Afrin, which has been occupied by the Turkish state since 2018.

Members of the organization made a statement to the press in the Serdem Camp in Shehba Canton, which houses IDPs from Afrin. They were accompanied by representatives of civil society organizations.

The statement read out by Heyhan Elî, a member of the organization, pointed out that the invading Turkish state and allied armed mercenary groups have committed various crimes against women from Afrin, such as kidnapping, torture, murder and sexual assaults.

The statement pointed out that one of the main objectives of the crimes committed by the Turkish occupation state and allied armed factions was to drive women into a corner and ignore them. “The crimes committed against women in Afrin have not been witnessed in any period of history, including in the wars of the Mongols and the Tatars. According to Articles 6-7-8 of the Rome Statute, these acts fall into the

category of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Yet, in spite of international laws, women and children are subjected to all forms of torture and crimes,” the statement said.

The Human Rights Organization listed the violations and crimes committed by the Turkish state since its invasion of Afrin in 2018 as follows:

Over a thousand women have been kidnapped and the aftermath of many of them is unknown.

99 women have been murdered. 9 committed suicide under suspicious conditions.

74 women have been subjected to sexual assault and rape.

On the other hand, the organization denounced cases of forced marriage and underage marriage under pressure and coercion.

“As women’s rights activists, we call on all international human rights, humanitarian and feminist organizations to fulfill their moral and legal duty in the face of the crimes committed against the entire population in the occupied territories of North-East Syria. The perpetrators of these crimes, especially those committed against women and children, must be brought to justice. Pressure should be put on the Turkish state to withdraw its troops from all the territories it has occupied. The displaced people should be secured a safe return to their land and the victims should be provided with moral and material support.”



Children’s theater days in Qamishlo

ANF | QAMISHLO | 17 AUGUST 2023

Qamishlo and the village of Maşûq in Tirbespiyê hosted the Children’s Theatre days between 12 and 14 August.

The children took the stage to show their new plays in Qamişlo and Tirbêspiyê. Previously

The theatre project is promoted by TEV-ÇAND Cultural Movement, Hilala Zerîn Women’s Cultural Movement and Şilêr Children’s Committee.

The project benefits from the collaboration of international organizations that ‘adopt’ the children’s groups, financing their training and work.

The first groups have already been adopted: the two groups in Kobane have been adopted by the Basque municipality of Durango (twinned with Kobane), the group in Derik has been adopted by the Italian NGO Fonti di Pace, the group in Heseke has been adopted by the Italian Società InFormazione, the group in Remelan has been adopted by Teatro degli Incontri e Teatro Ura and the group in Qamishlo has been adopted by the Comunità Brasiliana in Rome.



Zenûbiya Women's association launches awareness campaign in Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 17 AUGUST 2023

Zenûbiya Women's Community Office Manbij Branch launched an awareness campaign on the damage and danger of child marriage and femicides. As part of the initiative, women distributed brochures in the squares and streets of the city.

Community member Sara Hibaq told ANHA: "The aim of this initiative is saying no to child marriages and femicides. We aim to carry the initiative out in the rural areas of the city as well."

Hibaq added that with this initiative, they aimed to prevent child marriages, which are very common and cause an increase in divorce rates.

Asye Mihemed, a member of the Community's Education Committee, said that the initiative will continue for two months.

Four women committed suicide in the last month

Bushra Mistefa, a member of the Internal Security Forces, said: "With this initiative, we want to prevent the damage of child marriages as well as femicides."

Mistefa said that four women killed themselves in the past month and added that there were 25 divorces. "We will fulfil our role and raise awareness of society against these events."



Village guard rapes 16 year-old girl in Van

ANF | VAN | 18 AUGUST 2023

A village guard in the Kirbali neighborhood in Van's Başkale district raped a 16-year-old girl living in the same neighborhood.

The village guard, married and father of two children, was taken into custody and taken to Köprüağzı Gendarmerie Station.

While the village guard remains in custody, the girl's family is reportedly forced not to file a criminal complaint about the incident.

Village guards

Village guards are paramilitary units used in Kurdistan against guerrillas and unwelcome opposition members. They consist to a considerable extent of tribal leaders, large landowners, families, and individuals who have often worked with the state for decades in an attempt to advocate for the state's interests in Kurdistan. Some of the village guards join this system voluntarily, while others are threatened with murder, arrest, and expulsion and must become village guardians under pressure. The Hamidiye regiments in the Ottoman Empire are considered the historical model of the village guards. Today's village guard system came into being in 1985, a year after the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) launched its armed struggle. At that time, the Turkish government under Turgut Özal began recruiting and arming Kurdish tribes and clans in the war against the PKK. Thousands of Kurdish villages that rejected the village guard system were burned and razed to the ground by the state in the 1990s.



International conference of women kicks off in Beirut

ANF | BEIRUT | 18 AUGUST 2023

The international women's conference on the experiences of women's movements kicked off in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on Friday.

Organized by the Jin Women's Association, the Newroz Cultural Association and the Noun Initiative for Abdullah Öcalan's Freedom under the motto "In the Footsteps of Jin, Jiyan, Azadi" (Woman, Life, Freedom), the conference is attended by 80 delegates representing women's institutions in Tunisia, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan, Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Iran, and a delegation from North-East Syria and Shengal.

The two-day conference is divided into four sessions. The first session will discuss the interventions of foreign and especially Western states in Arab countries and their impact on women. The second session will look at how Kurdish women are affected by the crisis and the division of their country. The third session will focus on the situation of women in Iran and Eastern Kurdistan. On the second day of the conference, participants will discuss the role of Abdullah Öcalan in the struggle of women and the connection with his strict isolation in Turkish custody.

Aida Nasrallah, President of the Lebanese Committee for Women's Rights, addressed the discussion topics of the conference in her opening speech and said: "Women are exposed to great injustices and restricted in their freedom in many areas such as politics, society, economy and law.

Hanan Osman, chairperson of the Newroz Cultural Association, welcomed the participants and said: "Your participation underlines the irrepressible will of women. We want to emphasise the importance of women's unity as a basis for peace and freedom. At this conference, we want to respond to femicide with our common struggle. We will fight all forces that aim to deprive women of their freedom."

During the first session moderated by Sena Xenîme from the Women and Leadership Association, Dr. Marî Dibis, President of the Wardat Boutros - Equality in Women's Work Association, spoke about the uprising of Arab people and its causes, the impact of foreign interventions on Arab women and the Arab Spring.

"The progressive democratic forces could not confront the counter-revolution, because they lived most of their time in prisons, in addition to the fragmentation among them," Dibis said.

She added, "After 12 years, the conditions of women in the Arab world differ from one country to another, but the strategic solution remains to abolish personal statuses that are based on sectarianism, and to put civil laws in their place."

The vice president of the Jin Women's Association, Buşra Elî, spoke about the impact of war and crisis on Kurdish women in a homeland divided by colonial policies. She noted that women are the primary victims in these conflicts and the repercussions of the regime's policies.

Kerîme El Hefnawî from the National Front for Egyptian Women and Their Rights spoke about the situation of African women in a continent that is the major victim of all the crises in the region.

Karima stated that women in Africa have been subjected to violations, including discrimination and physical and sexual violence, noting that 125 million girls under the age of 18 are married.

She added that one out of 3 girls are subjected to physical and sexual violence, and that six African countries do not have a law to protect women against domestic violence.

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Short film tells the story of the 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' rebellion

ANF - 19 AUGUST 2023

A short film was made about the 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' rebellion that started in Iran and Rojhilat after a young Kurdish girl, Jîna Amini, was murdered while in custody of the "morality police" in Tehran, after being arrested on 16 September 2022.

The short film is called "Sound Rise" and is expected to be screened on the anniversary of the rebellion in Iran and Rojhilat. The short film is directed by Fiya Yunus and Hewar Farisewi and tells the story of those tortured in custody.

Actors such as Nickwan Qadiri, Delniya Waisi and Delniya Lotfi took part in the short film.

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21 people detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 19 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 960th 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, is considered a symbolic place for the struggle for human rights in Turkey.

This week's action by Saturday Mothers was supported by the HDK (Peoples' Democratic Congress) Co-Spokesperson and Green Left Party MP Cengiz Çiçek and former HDP Peoples' Democratic Party) MP Musa Piroğlu.

Citing the "ban" imposed by Beyoğlu District Governor's Office, the police cordoned off the rally site and the side streets with barriers hours before. The Saturday Mothers and their supporters nevertheless walked towards the square and were stopped and surrounded by the police with shields. Journalists who wanted to document the action were pushed back. Many passers-by protested against the police action. People who wanted to film the event and distribute it on social media were also obstructed by the police.

21 people were taken into custody in the crackdown, handcuffed behind their backs and taken to a police station. Those trying to prevent the detentions were insulted by the police.

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Ecocide

Fire in Lice countryside continues

ANF | AMED | 14 AUGUST 2023

The wildfire that erupted in the vicinity of the Entax, Gom and Bamitnî villages in the Lice district of Amed (Diyarbakır) province a few days ago could be extinguished thanks to the efforts of the local population. The region in question has been shaken by wildfires three times in the past month.

The Mesopotamia Ecology Movement and other delegations went to the scene on Sunday and conducted an examination.

The delegations talked to the villagers who criticized the authorities over their failure to act on time against the fires raging in the region. They noted that the fire brigade trucks deployed to the scene ran out of water immediately.

The villagers criticized the lack of efficient response to the fire which caused damage to houses in Entax and the cemetery in Gom.

The local people managed to take the fire under control yesterday evening but the fire continued in the morning and flames are spreading to a larger area at the moment.

Residents of the affected villages called for early and efficient intervention in the fire.



Euphrates Dam could stop if water level is not restored

ANF | TABQA | 17 AUGUST 2023

Imad Ubêd, operation manager of the Euphrates Dam, said that the amount of water in the Euphrates Dam has decreased significantly and this has damaged the operation of the dam itself. He added that if the Turkish state continues to reduce the amount of water, disasters will occur in the region.

The total water of the Euphrates dam is approximately 14 billion cubic meters, but due to the decrease in the amount of water entering Syrian territory, some 4 billion cubic meters has been lost.

“This decline affects the operation of drinking water and irrigation pipes in rural Tabqa and Raqqa,” Ubed told ANHA.

Ubed said that electricity used to be provided for 11 hours a day, 4 during the day and 7 in the evening, but now the provision has dropped to 6 hours a day. And the hours could be further dropped.

Ubed said that “if the water level drops another 2 meters, the operation of the dam will stop completely.” He underlined the need for international forces and humanitarian aid organizations to intervene and called on the international community to put pressure on the Turkish state to release water, according to the signed agreement.

The operation manager of the Rojava dam (Tişrin) told ANHA that they lost 85 percent of the natural volume of the dam, which increased the risk of the Tişrin dam stopping, as it did last year.



Fire on Gabar Mountain continues to spread

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 18 AUGUST 2023

A fire broke out on Thursday morning, 17 August, in the area overlooking the slopes of Basa (Güçlükonak) on the Gabar Mountain, in the province of Şirnak.

No intervention was made to extinguish the fire, with the result that it quickly spread over a wide area because of the wind.

The fire was advancing towards the cemetery of the village of Bûnisra, which was evacuated in the 1990s.

No explanation was given as to the cause of the fire, but the Turkish army remains the main responsible for the fires in the region. Most of the fires are deliberately started by the military and intervention to extinguish them is not allowed.

In the past years, forest fires broke out due to artillery fire from the Akdizgin gendarmerie station in the village of Zêwê, and a large area was turned into ashes.

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HEPP, dam and sand quarry on Pasûr Stream badly affect life of 50 villages

ANF | AMED | 18 AUGUST 2023

The construction of dams and Hydroelectric Power Plants (HEPP) by the Turkish government continues in Kurdistan. These HEPPs alter the ecological balance of the environment and all living things are negatively affected. The Farqîn Dam, which has been under construction for years and covers the triangle of Licê, Pasûr (Kulp) and Farqîn (Silvan), is creating many problems for the villagers of approximately 50 villages and hamlets.

The HEPP and sand quarries built on Pasûr Stream also affect the ordinary flow of life as it affects primarily the need for clean water. People living in the village of Kanîkan in Pasûr said that 50 settlements around Pasûr Stream cannot use clean water and that not even a treatment plant has been set up.

Nizam Ateş, one of the villagers from Kanîkan, said that Pasûr was not defended and for this reason there has been no solution to this problem for years. Ateş stated that the polluted waters caused by the sand quarry construction sites flow into Pasûr Stream.

HEPP, dam and sand quarry

Ateş continued: “The sewage water of the Kulp district is not treated. The HEPPs on Çay also cut off the water for 3 months during the summer months. When the water is cut off, the fish die. We are also unable to draw clean water to our fields and homes. It is not only water that people benefit from, because it is used by thousands of large and small cattle. For years, they have not built a treatment plant on this stream which meets the water needs of Badika, Hevêdan and Kulpiya. We have been suffering from this problem for years because of dams, HEPP, sand quarry and sewerage.”

Stop cutting our water

Another villager, Abdullah Kılıç, said that they had already lost many things. He underlined that no matter what they said, a solution was not found. “You see the state of water. All the animals living in the water died. This is something conscience, mercy or humanity could not allow. I am 66 years old, and for the first time in the last 4 years I have seen water so dirty. This HEPP was built 10 years ago, and in the first years it was not too bad. But the flow of water gradually decreased. They take our water away from us. They hold the water, store it so that they can generate electricity. Eventually, we will die of thirst here. We demand that the water is not cut off. We want MPs to deal with this issue.”



Village guards cut down trees in the village of Xelîkan

ANF | SIIRT | 19 AUGUST 2023

According to Jinnews, the fire that started around the village of Xelîkan (Ardıçdalı) in the province of Hawêl (Baykan) in Sêrt (Siirt) on 14 August and lasted for two days died off by itself.

According to the information received from the villagers, the firefighters who went to the area on the first day of the fire did not intervene saying that there was no “road” to reach the fire, which continued to grow throughout the day. Apparently the fire died out on its own. However, villagers said that the fire started again and spread to an area of 10 kilometers.

The area in flames had been declared a “forbidden area” by the Turkish state. The cause of the fire could not be determined.

It was learned that the village guards cut down the trees around the village of Xelîkan, after obtaining permission from the Gendarmerie Station.



Human Rights Violations

Police take many into custody in Adana

ANF | ADANA | 14 AUGUST 2023

Simultaneous raids were carried out by police on many houses in Adana's central and Ceyhan districts.

The Turkish police went down heavily during the searches, scattering things around and threatening people.

Among those taken into custody were Mehmet Öztemel, Caner Abo, Fırat Bahadır, Ozan Mamuk, Ladin Mamuk and Dilan Erbek. The number of detainees could not be established, but all were taken to the Adana Security Directorate.

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10 people detained in Amed

ANF | AMED | 14 AUGUST 2023

At least ten people were taken into custody early on Monday morning during raids in the Amed (tr. Diyarbakır) province.

The operation was carried out in line with an investigation by the Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, which imposed a confidentiality order on the file.

It is expected that the number of detentions could increase further in the course of the day.

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Police in Hakkari take at least 30 people into custody

ANF | HAKKARI | 15 AUGUST 2023

Simultaneous raids were carried out by police on many houses in the center of Hakkari (Colemêrg) and in the districts of Yüksekova (Gever) and Çukurca (Çelê).

At least 30 people, including Peace Mothers, were taken into custody and taken to the Hakkari Provincial Security Directorate.

The names of those taken into custody are as follows: “Faysal Açar, Saadettin Değirmenci, Basra Gör, Mehmet Sait Kaya, Ayhan Dayan, Suriye Bor, Emine Özdel, Fatma Bulut, Hasret Ağralı, Hasfet Fendik, Hamail Vural, Hünaş Safalı, Mahsuna Akın, Münire Bayram, Sabriye Ürek, Seher Karagöz, Süheyla Saygı, Zahferan Çağala, Zeynep Tokçu, İsmail Ertunç, Halime Yılmaz ve Senia Geylan.”

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New police operation in Adana

ANF | ADANA | 15 AUGUST 2023

A simultaneous police operation was carried out at many addresses in the morning in Adana. Police searched the houses and detained many people.

All detainees were taken to Adana Provincial Security Directorate.

In addition, 4 children, who were among the 10 people taken into custody on Monday, were transferred to the prosecutor's office and released after their statements were taken.

The proceedings of the other 6 people are continuing at the police station.

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German Federation of Journalists calls on media workers to stay away from Turkey

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

The German Federation of Journalists (DJV) national President Frank Überall said that the short-term arrest of Die Linke MP, Gökay Akbulut, when she went to Turkey in early August “shows once again that the Erdogan autocracy sees its critics as militant enemies of the state and persecutes them whenever it has the opportunity.”

Überall added: “If even an MP's immunity does not protect against arrest, the danger for journalists is much greater.”

Überall said that “any journalist who makes critical comments about Turkey, the President or the ruling AKP party in his/her own articles or on social networks, should stay away from this country, because Turkey is a dangerous country.”

The Deutscher Journalisten-Verband (German Federation of Journalists) is a professional association, trade union and service center for journalists.



Dozens detained in political extermination operations in several cities

ANF | 15 AUGUST 2023

In Turkey, the anti-democratic repressive apparatus continues to run at full speed. After around thirty detentions in the Kurdish province of Hakkari on Tuesday morning, the repression machine of the Erdoğan regime also targeted people in Mardin, Adana, Mersin and Izmir. In all cases, the crackdown is based on suspicions of “terrorism”, according to lawyers. Most of those affected are Kurds.

Twelve people were taken into custody in the Aegean province of Izmir in the west of the country. However, the specific charges against the detainees are not yet known, as a 24-hour ban on lawyers has been ordered against them. They will thus be denied access to legal counsel for one day. In addition, the investigation file was placed under secrecy. The reason given for the measure is that “personal contact between the suspect and lawyers, as well as the authorisation to examine the contents of the file or make copies of the documents” could jeopardise the purpose of the investigation. Until they are transferred to the competent public prosecutor’s office, the detainees remain in police custody at the Izmir police station.

At least seven people have been taken into custody in early morning raids in the southern Turkish city of Mersin. The number of detentions in the neighbouring province of Adana is still unclear. However, the incident is said to be connected to a preliminary investigation in the course of which ten people had been detained in Adana on Monday. Four of them are minors, who have since been released after interrogation.

On the other hand, nineteen people were reportedly taken into custody in the province of Mardin and the districts of Kızıltepe, Derik and Nusaybin, where the Turkish anti-terror police stormed numerous flats. The accusation is financial support for political prisoners. Those involved in the detention operation are suspected of having “financed terrorism” by providing material assistance to imprisoned relatives. Among those detained is 74-year-old Methiye O.



Two locals from villages under military siege sent to prison

ANF | BITLIS | 15 AUGUST 2023

The Turkish army has been besieging villages and hamlets in the Hizan district in the province of Bitlis in northern Kurdistan since the beginning of July. After the declaration of a curfew and the launch of a mili-

tary operation on 2 July, the region was declared a “special security zone” on 14 July. The measure remained in place until 28 July, but the military siege in the region continued.

The threatened villages and hamlets are Harat (Bilgili), Akunus (Yaylacık), Govan (Sarıbal), Nanılan (Yeniçay), Xalepûr (Yolbilen), Kekulan (Çalışkanlar), Sureh (Gedik), Pertavan (Akyazı), Kûran (Erencik) and Ureh (Otluk) and the surrounding hamlets.

Locals Ahmet Aktay and Abdul Alim Aktay were taken into custody during house raids in the village of Xalepûr (Yolbilen) on August 10. Both men were remanded in custody and sent to Bitlis Prison, accused of “aiding and abetting the PKK”.

A large number of troops and so-called village guards conducted an operation in the mentioned area, mainly focusing on the surroundings of the villages of Hûzeran, Best, Sûreh, Xûlepûr and Kekulan. The affected region in the Hizan district includes a hazel forest, which is known to keep the adjacent village economy alive, as well as ten densely populated villages and hamlets, on which a curfew had already been imposed at the beginning of July in the course of an air-supported military operation. For days, the inhabitants of the affected villages were forbidden to leave their homes and people were cut off from the outside world. During the operation, fighting took place and the army carried out bombardments in the immediate vicinity of villages.

During the operation, the hazelnut trees in the village of Xûlepûr were uprooted by scoops dispatched to the area. According to local sources, Turkish troops destroyed trees to make way for military movement and activities.



The Şenyaşar family not allowed inside Ministry of Justice

ANF | ANKARA | 16 AUGUST 2023

On the 22nd day of their Justice Vigil, the Şenyaşar family walked from Parliament to the Ministry of Justice in Ankara, but was not allowed in.

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

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

Emine Şenyaşar and her son Ferit have been holding a Justice Vigil in front of the Courthouse of Urfa since 9 March 2021, demanding those responsible to be brought to account.

On the 846th day of the vigil in front of the Courthouse in Urfa, the Şenyaşar family ended their protest for the time being, announcing that they would move to Ankara if there was not “a hint of justice” in the hearing to be held in Malatya on Tuesday, July 18.

“On 18 July, my mother will either go home and spend her time in her own home differently from the past five years. Or she will take her resistance to the heart of this state,” said Ferit Şenyaşar, who was elected a deputy from the Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party) in the May 14 election.

The family then announced they would move the vigil to Ankara, something they did 23 days ago.

Emine Şenyaşar, who came to the Parliament in a wheelchair due to the health problems she is experiencing, walked from the Dikmen gate of the Parliament to the Ministry of Justice with her son Ferit Şenyaşar and members of the Lawyers’ Association for Freedom (ÖHD) Ankara Branch members. They asked to be allowed in, but were denied entrance.



Bianet editor: My family’s safety is at risk

ZEYNEP KURAY | ISTANBUL | 16 AUGUST 2023

The AKP/MHP regime is stirring up racism and hatred in society with its agitation and war policy. Critical journalists and their families are particularly affected by this. The family of Ruken Tuncel, editor of the news platform Bianet, was physically attacked by neighbours in front of her flat in the Beylikdüzü district of Istanbul on the evening of 10 August. The neighbours attacked her sister, insulted her and threatened the family with death.

“I am the state, I am the police”

Speaking to ANF, Tuncel said: “Our neighbour from downstairs incited the neighbours above us with false accusations against us, and this served as a pretext for the attack. The latest attack happened when my sister Sinem and my mother were returning from the market. As they were carrying their groceries home, the upstairs neighbour, M.Y., suddenly started swearing and insulting my sister. When Sinem said, ‘Don’t shout like that, auntie, you are 70 years old, I won’t answer’, M.Y.’s daughter A.Y. replied, ‘Who are you to dare contradict my mother?’ Then she went down the stairs and attacked my sister directly. She grabbed Sinem by the hair and hit her on the chin. She also attacked my aunt when she intervened. When the 70-year-old neighbour who had triggered the incident tried to hit my aunt on the head with a thick truncheon, my sister tried to prevent this and the truncheon hit her wrists. She was injured and the wound needed stitches. When the police were called, the neighbour said, ‘The police will not come to you. I will call them, then you will see how they come. I am the state, I am the police. We are from Trabzon, we will burn you. You Alevis are full of tricks. I have a gun. You can look at my gun. I will unload the magazine on you.’”

Police did not take the death threat seriously

The police did not take the death threat seriously, Tuncel said and continued: “The police did not even bother to check whether there was actually a gun at the neighbours’ house. Instead, they tried to dismiss the death threat by telling my relatives, ‘She said she had a gun when she was angry.’ We have no way of knowing whether that is a death threat or not. People say such things out of anger.’ However, at the intervention of the family’s lawyer, the statement was recorded in a limited manner. Thus, only some of the swear words and insults were recorded and an attempt was made to downplay the incident to a simple insult. In fact, only a warning was issued against the assailants not to approach us. How this will be done is unclear. After all they live above us.”

“This is a racist hate crime”

Tuncel stressed that this attack cannot be treated as a neighbourhood dispute and emphasised that her family is not safe. She pointed out that people from the province of Dersim who live in the neighbourhood are worried because of this attack and said: “Nobody can present what happened as a simple incident. This is a racist hate crime. What does it mean to say ‘these are terrorists’ when the police come? If we lived in a country where politicians didn’t target people on the basis of their identity, such phrases would not be uttered. This comes from the very top. Politicians who spread hate speech about people’s identities create this climate.”

Tuncel filed a criminal complaint and stressed that she would pursue the legal process to the end. She reiterated that there was danger for her family and concluded by saying, “I want justice. As I said before, I don’t want this to be seen as a simple neighbour dispute and I demand that the legal process be expedited.”

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Three people from Bitlis countryside sent to prison

ANF | BITLIS | 16 AUGUST 2023

Three residents of the village of Peyindas (tr. Söğütlü) in Tatvan district of Bitlis province have been imprisoned for supporting the PKK after five days in custody.

Mustafa Tedbirli, shepherd Garip Ipek and Kerem Avras had been detained last week along with other people after a clash between the Turkish army and the guerrillas near the village. Five other detainees were released on condition of judicial supervision.

Peyindas was burnt down by the Turkish state in 1993. The Avras family returned to the village after eleven years and tried to build a new life there. According to his sister Kiyemet Avras, Kerem Avras was arrested while working in the fields and severely tortured.

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HDP Adana Youth Council member remanded in custody

ANF | ADANA | 17 AUGUST 2023

A number of people were taken into custody on Tuesday, following house raids in Adana.

The detainees were transferred to Adana Courthouse after their procedures at the police station.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Adana Youth Assembly member Veysel İleri was remanded in custody on charges of "being a member of a terrorist organization".

Others were released on condition of judicial control.

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Family receives remains of their guerrilla son after a 4 months wait

ANF | MARDIN | 17 AUGUST 2023

The remains of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, HPG member Bahoz Çiya (Erdal Maran), who fell as a martyr in the Turkish state's war of destruction against Bagok, were given to his family 4 months later.

The body of Çiya, who was buried in Kamor City Cemetery in Artuklu district, was given to his family after the DNA result came out.

Although the family, who came to Mardin (Mêrdîn) from Van to collect the body in the morning, had already completed all the procedures, they were forced to wait for hours and only on Wednesday night were they able to leave for Van where the young guerrilla would be buried.

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Journalist Akkaya faces up to 15 years in prison

ANF | AMED | 17 AUGUST 2023

Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office filed an indictment against journalist Remzi Akkaya, who was detained within the scope of the investigation carried out in 21 provinces based in Diyarbakır, upon the statements of public witness Ümit Akbıyık. The prosecutor is demanding a sentence of between 7 years, 6 months and 15 years in prison for the journalist.

The indictment claimed that the car wash shop that Akkaya opened before working as a cameraman was the “meeting place of the members of an illegal organization,” taking the testimony of some witnesses for true.

The indictment demanded a sentence of up to 15 years in prison for Akkaya.

Diyarbakır 5th High Criminal Court, which accepted the indictment prepared by Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office, set the first hearing for 18 September.



AKP’s assimilating policy in Bitlis continues

ANF | BITLIS | 18 AUGUST 2023

The history of Bitlis (Bedlîs) goes back to the Neolithic. The name Bedlîs is said to come from a commander of Alexander the Great of Macedonia.

Alexander had a fortress built in the city. Always at the center of various conflicts, the Kurdish-Armenian province in the Ottoman Empire was autonomous for a long time.

Because of its self-confident nature, the region with its mountains, some of which are more than 4,000 meters high, has been at the center of the policy of assimilation since the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923.

In 1925, as part of what was euphemistically known as the “Reform Plan for the East” (Şark Islahat Planı), to Turkishize the region, thousands of people were murdered in Bitlis and many more were driven into exile. Turkic-speaking people from Central Asia were then settled in the districts of Xelat (Ahlât), Elcewaz (Adilcevaz), Tetwan (Tatvan) and in the city of Bitlis.

Nevertheless, a Kurdish majority remained in the city. With the start of the freedom struggle, the region was therefore the focus of repression. In the 1990s, dozens of villages and hamlets were razed to the ground by the Turkish army, hundreds of villagers and townspeople were murdered and thousands more were displaced. But even that did little to change the Kurdish identity of the region. Plans to Turkishize the region and destroy its Kurdish identity continue.

Destruction under the guise of modernization

In 2021, hundreds of craft workshops were demolished in the center of Bedlîs under the name of “urban modernization”. Thousands of year-old historical sites have been destroyed under the pretense of restoration. While Bedlîs town center was de facto annihilated, waves of attacks on villages and hamlets in Xîzan (Hizan) and Tatvan regions began in July and August 2023. The regions were bombed for days, the environment was severely damaged, vineyards and gardens were destroyed, shops and houses were demolished and people were forced to flee.

On 2 June, a curfew was imposed in a number of villages and hamlets in the Xîzan district. Among the localities were Harat (Bilgili), Akunus (Yaylacık), Govan (Saribal), Lanîlan, Xalepûr (Yolbilen), Kekulan (Çalışkanlar), Sureh (Gedik), Pertavan (Akyazı), Kûran (Erencik) and Ureh (Otluk).). After the curfew was imposed, on the morning of June 3, numerous houses in the village of Xalepûr were stormed by the military. Many villagers were arrested in the raids.

Environmental destruction

On the fourth day of the curfew, thousands of people in ten villages in Xîzan County were locked in their homes, crops were spoiling in the fields because they were not allowed to be harvested, and animals could not be fed for days. The areas surrounding the villages of Hûzeran, Akûnis, Govan, Lanîlan, Xalepûr, Kekulan, Sûreh, Pertawan, Kuran and Mezra Pisyan, where the curfew had been imposed, were under non-stop shelling. Ill villagers were not even allowed to go to the hospital. Large construction machines were brought into the villagers' vineyards and gardens to build roads for the military, thousands of hectares of gardens and fields were shelled and destroyed by helicopters and howitzers for days.

On 15 July, large areas were declared “special security zones” and bombed until 28 July 2023. Villagers who wanted to go to their fields to irrigate their land were arrested by Turkish soldiers. The population was forbidden to go to their fields. Drones and helicopters continued to shell the villages and their surroundings. Large areas of forest were destroyed in these attacks.

New military bases being built

The aim of the military operations is to destroy the forests, vineyards and gardens in the valley and turn the entire region into a restricted military area. Many of the villages and forests that were shelled or destroyed had already been burned down by the military in the 1990s. The people had returned later and had built a new life for themselves. Now the people are obviously going to be expelled again.

The Turkish army has uprooted hazelnut trees in the village of Xalepûr with excavators in order to build a road. After days of air and ground attacks around Xalepûr and Kekulan, surveillance cameras and camera traps were set up all over and around the villages.

Harassment of villagers

After the clashes that broke out near the village of Peyindas (Sögütlü) in Tatvan County on the morning of 10 August, the Turkish army launched an operation against the village the next day and arrested eight villagers. Mustafa Tedbirli, Kerem Avras and Garip Ipek were arrested and ill-treated and subsequently imprisoned.

People evicted from Bitlis

While this was happening in Tatvan and Xîzan, the destruction of the city of Bitlis continued. Hundreds of shops were destroyed under the pretext of “urban transformation”. Around 700 houses and workplaces were demolished in five districts of Bedlîs. Instead of the houses and shops, the Turkish state is building a park for “the nation”.

According to United Nations reports, at least 500,000 people were forcibly displaced from Kurdistan between 2015 and 2017.



GfbV expresses concern for Yazidi villages threatened by “village guards” in North Kurdistan

ANF - 19 AUGUST 2023

The Society for Threatened Peoples (GfbV) expressed concern at the Yazidi villages in North Kurdistan that are threatened by “village guards”. The paramilitary units of the Turkish state attempted to “down-right rob or plunder” the villages inhabited by the Yazidis, including farmland and pasture land, reported the GfbV’s Middle East expert Kamal Sido in Göttingen on Friday. Rightful owners would be threatened if they insisted on their property, and would also be turned away by authorities. Sido urged the German government to support the Yazidi community.

Village guards

Village guards are paramilitary units that are deployed in Kurdistan against the guerrillas and members of the opposition. Today they are called “security guards”. They consist to a considerable extent of tribal leaders, landowners, families and individuals who have often been working with the state for decades and who defend the interests of the state in Kurdistan. Some of the village guards join this system voluntarily, others are threatened with murder, arrest and expulsion and are forced to become village guards under pressure.

Today’s village guard system came into being in 1985, a year after the start of the armed struggle by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). At that time, the Turkish government under Turgut Özal began recruiting and arming Kurdish tribes and clans in the war against the PKK. At the time, tens of thousands of members of the Yazidi faith community left their villages and fled abroad because they did not want to be-

come village guards and fight against the Kurdish PKK. The largest Yazidi exile community lives in Germany. According to an estimate by the GfbV, only around 600 Yazidis remain in North Kurdistan. They are currently reclaiming their property in 30 to 40 villages in the provinces of Urfa (Riha), Mardin (Mêrdîn), Batman (Êlih), Şirnak (Şirnex) and Diyarbakır (Amed).

Sido said: “Federal Foreign Minister Baerbock, who recently spoke out in favor of ‘new talks about relations with Turkey’, must work to ensure that the few Yazidis who remain in Turkey can live in peace and that their own country is returned to them.”

There is a risk that the last members of this community will leave the country forever. After the recognition by the German Bundestag of the genocide committed by the terrorist organization Islamic State (ISIS) in 2014 against the Yazidis in Shengal, northwest Iraq, the federal government is obliged to condemn their persecution in Turkey as well. Sido said: “The government must do everything to ensure that Yazidi life in Turkey is not wiped out.”

Yazidis are severely discriminated against there. Yezidism is not recognized as an independent religion in the Turkish constitution.

Many Yazidis in Germany and abroad are demanding the abolition of the village guard system. It already existed in the Ottoman Empire - the Hamidiye regiments, which played a key role in the Young Turk genocides of Christian peoples and the Alevi and Yazidi religious communities at the beginning of the 20th century, are regarded as the historical model for village guards. Sido underlined that “under the current Erdogan government, the village guards are increasingly exploiting Islam and agitating against minorities such as the Kurdish Alevis and Yezidis as well as the Christian Assyrians, Arameans and Chaldeans.”

The village guards have been accused of thousands of serious crimes since the 1990s, such as murders, drug offenses, bride kidnapping, illegal arms trafficking and kidnappings. There are at least 60,000 village guards in Turkey. They are paid by the state like civil servants and are entitled to state benefits such as health care.

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Interview

Kalkan: The Kurds are resisting against all of NATO, which has been waging the war since 1985

ANF | BEHDINAN | 13 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.

Below we publish the second part of the in-depth interview:

In a few days, August 15 will mark the beginning of the 40th year of the armed struggle of the Kurdish Freedom Movement. How has the armed struggle developed since then? What would have happened if the August 15 breakthrough had not taken place?

Before I answer your question, I would like to salute the heroic resistance of the Kurdish people, led by Rêber Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) and the PKK for 39 consecutive years. They dealt heavy blows to the fascist genocidal regime on the basis of guerrilla warfare. But that this war is going on against a single state should not take us to the conclusion that it is just against the fascist genocidal colonialism of the Turkish Republic. The Kurds are resisting against all of NATO. It is NATO that has been waging the war since 1985. Last month, they created a command-control center to coordinate the war against the PKK, against the Kurds. Actually, it has existed de facto for more than 38 years, but now they have made it public. The Kurdish people are resisting against fascist, genocidal, colonialist mentality, and politics. This resistance always deserves to be saluted. So, on the 39th anniversary of August 15, this day of resurrection and the guerrilla, I would like to congratulate all party comrades, especially the Leader, our patriotic people, and our international friends. I especially congratulate the HPG and YJA Star forces, all our guerrilla forces, everyone who fights for freedom. I respectfully remember all those martyrs who fell as a result of the August 15 breakthrough in the person of comrades Egîd and Zilan.

The number of martyrs of our movement has now reached 50.000. This 39-year struggle did not just happen by itself. It demanded a high price, and the Kurdish people paid it. It demanded courage and sacrifice, which all the Kurdish society, especially Kurdish women and youth showed. They resisted heroically against the fascist genocidal attack, which was supported by all kinds of foreign powers and Kurdish collaborators and betrayers. The Kurdish people heeded and understood Rêber Apo, they trusted, hoped and supported the guerrilla. In fact, August 15 was a milestone in Kurdish history.

The great prison resistance of 1982 turned its determination into organization and action, but the practical gains and developments came mainly through August 15 and guerrilla warfare. The breakthrough of August 15 and the resulting guerrilla resistance underlies all the libertarian democratic developments in Kurdistan during these 39 years.

What would have happened if the August 15, 1984, offensive had not happened? What would have happened in Kurdistan, what would have happened in Turkey, what would have happened in the world? This world came face to face with fascism because the anti-Kurdish politics was accepted in Ankara. Now, without such a heroic struggle against this fascist regime, it is not clear what would have happened in Europe, to what extent racism would have gone, what fascism would have done, what the world would be like? It should not only be seen in terms of Kurds. It is well known that Turkey is a country of lies. "Everyone is a Turk. Everyone within the borders of this country, everyone who is a Turkish citizen is a Turk. There are no Kurds. Kurds are a Turkish tribe, the word 'Kurd' is a sound emerging while walking in the snow, and those who make this sound are called Kurds". They put forward such very fabricated, very despicable sayings. They propagandized, they wrote tens, hundreds of books. A lot of people with graying hair, who consider themselves professors or artists did so. A great lie was imposed on the people of Turkey. The breakthrough of August 15 and Rêber Apo's thoughts formed an enlightening response to this tactic. It is necessary to understand the guerrilla in this way and to stay away from the fabricated words like "it is also war" and "we are against all kinds of war". What do you mean you are against all kinds of war? There is a colonialist war, a genocidal war, an unjust war and there is also resistance against these. Well then, look at the attack of IS on Shengal and the fight against it. This was a war of resistance against genocide, and it was a guerrilla war. You may be opposing the guerrilla war. But imagine what would have happened with guerrilla resistance? Will you have any humanity left in you then? Indeed, Kurdistan was a stronghold of reactionism. 39 years ago, the September 12 fascist military regime attacked everywhere and said, "we will destroy it [the Kurdish Freedom Movement] so that it will never be resurrected again". They were saying, "We have already destroyed them [the Kurdish Freedom Movement], but some of them are rising from the grave, let's crush them with our boots before they even take their heads out". Such a bastion of reactionism has now become a land of freedom. It has become a place of freedom, a place of democracy. It is the stronghold of the world struggle for freedom and democracy.

What is the role of Abdullah Öcalan in this struggle and what role is he playing at the international level?

Everyone wants to come here, because they are inspired by this struggle of the people, women and youth. The leadership of Rêber Apo created this great struggle. It is leadership that shows the way to liberation for all the oppressed. By changing the paradigm of the freedom struggle, he gave answers to such questions as 'why the struggle of the oppressed did not lead to victory? Why didn't their victorious struggles last long? He related these problems to the fact that the oppressed waged their struggles with the wrong means. In this way, Rêber Apo changed a lot of wrong perceptions about the causes of such failures. The paradigm shift now appeals to everyone. Everyone finds what they are looking for in Rêber Apo's philosophy, paradigm and thought. That is why they want to hear his voice and are discussing his thoughts all over the world. The Turkish state and the fascist genocide perpetrators wrongly hoped that they had stopped Rêber Apo's impact by closing the walls of İmralı. Rêber Apo is being discussed in Colombia. He is in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, everywhere. He has achieved this, and has broken the walls of İmralı. This happened with the power of August 15, with the strength of the struggle. Kurdish society, youth, women, Turkish-Kurdish laborers have become a great force of consciousness, organization and will. So much so that no one can look at the Kurds as they used to. Everyone is now saying that Kurds are not as they used to be before. How did this change come about? Who brought it about? What was the old? What is the new? Many don't see what has changed. They don't analyze the changes. They do not want to see the changes; they don't want to see the gains. Even they oppose them. On the other hand, they happen to put claim to those gains and achievements. Simply, this is theft. The people continue their struggle with the spirit of August 15, and will not give way to this theft.

How is the situation with the war right now? In what condition is the Kurdish guerrilla in its soon-to-be 40th year of existence?

Our Central Headquarters Command recently published its balance sheet for July. It is actually not very appropriate for people aiming for democracy and freedom, to deal with such numbers, to say that they did so many things in the war, but you have to force those who do not want to understand. The guerrilla carried out 130 attacks within one month, which is almost five attacks every day. In these, 70-80 invaders were killed. Even if only two are killed, this must be called a war. This cannot be measured in numbers. At the same time, 7 guerrilla fighters were martyred this month. This indicates that this war is not so easy. On the other hand, the use of tactical nuclear bombs against the guerrilla forces has been observed 6 times. Also, chemical weapons, as well as other banned weapons, were used several times. The Turkish army carried out a thousand attacks with airplanes, tanks and artillery against the resisting guerrilla. As we used to say, it's about taking the battle to the ground and fighting it there. That is what is seen right now and through this the war got locked up. The Turkish army tries to occupy some places, but the more steps they make, the more they get hit. Our Central Headquarters Command gave out statements about this and more than what is stated there is really not needed to be said. But because there are so many that do not want to see this situation, which is why we are forced to repeat these facts about the war again and again.

The fighters of the HPG and YJA Star guerrilla represent the spirit of the August 15 breakthrough and its victory and continue to develop it. The guerrillas took self-sacrifice to a high level, breaking all attacks and thwarting all acts of annihilation. There were a lot of offensives by the Turkish state in Northern Kurdistan and Southern Kurdistan, maybe hundreds, thousands or even tens of thousands of times, but the guerrilla always broke those and proved the invincibility of this struggle.

It is not very realistic that those who could not destroy the 200-250 guerrillas starting the August 15 breakthrough to say that they will destroy the guerrilla that have developed so much and spread all over our homeland after 39 years. The Turkish state is not convincing when they say this. On this basis, I would like to salute the guerrillas' resistance all over the region. I once again, would like to congratulate all the commanders and fighters of the HPG and YJA Star. They are carrying out the most difficult task and form the basis of freedom and democratic developments that affects humanity and spreads throughout the world. Today, the martyrdom of the three comrades, Rojhat, Rojda and Şoreş, has been declared. I respectfully commemorate these comrades and all the comrades who fought and heroically fell martyr in Zap, Avaşîn, Metîna, Xakurkê, Garzan, Licê and Bagok.

The number 40 is a significant number in our social ethics, because it also means maturation in human life, gaining consciousness and strength. Our party, the Kurdish people, our guerrilla forces, our women and youth movements are entering the 40th year with such strength and consciousness. Whether or not this conflict will continue is not really up to us but depends more on the fascist genocidal administration of Tayyip Erdoğan and the People's Alliance. They are increasing the attacks. Süleyman Soylu [former Turkish Minister of the Interior] is gone, but there are new Süleyman Soylu's that have emerged. They are trying to continue the same policy, the same rhetoric, but also the resistance against it continues. It is developing and spreading. The 40th year will be a year of greater struggle and we may also witness great developments at a military and political level. We should always be hopeful in this regard. Everyone should join the struggle with hope and faith. On this basis, I would once again like to wish success to all those who struggle for freedom and democracy.



Kalkan: In Turkey, there is no opposition to war, no demand for peace

ANF | BEHDINAN | 14 AUGUST 2023

In an interview with Medya Haber TV, Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) 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 Yazidis, 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.

Below we publish the third and last part of the in-depth interview:

What has increased in recent decades in general, but especially now in recent years, are the many reports of attacks on nature by the Turkish state. How are these related to the struggle of your movement?

Regarding the attacks on nature, I would like to point out some facts especially to the women, youth, intellectuals, politicians, socialists and revolutionaries of Turkey. The Turkish state is engaged in a war. The fascist AKP-MHP is fighting in Northern Kurdistan, carrying out invasion attacks on Southern Kurdistan and Rojava. Again yesterday, some YPG fighters who were involved in the defeat of IS were martyred by the Turkish state. It is clear that Turkey is trying to protect the legacy of IS and is waging war on this basis.

The Turkish government has allocated everything to this war. Tayyip Erdoğan brags that they have developed the war industry and asks everywhere for support. He even turned Sweden's NATO-membership talks into a bargain to buy weapons. "Do you know how much a bullet costs?" With this saying, he wants to intimidate the people. He wants to imply that the people of Turkey should listen to what this government says and should accept it. Right now, there is no opposition to war, no demand for peace, no one who opposes the colonialist genocidal war, no one who speaks about the fraternity of the people in Turkey. At least there are very few. After so many years, the war has entered its 40th year. This war is at the root of everything. How will there be brotherhood? How will we get rid of AKP and MHP fascism? How will the economic crisis, depression, oppression and terrorism in Turkey be prevented? ...if the reality of war is not seen.

Let us also look at the intellectuals. Economic crisis analysts, social analysts, government analysts analyze Turkey detached from the war in Kurdistan, which shows a big blindness to reality. For example, the CHP could not win the election because they did not oppose the war. Because they did not defend and openly speak for peace, democracy, the solution of the Kurdish problem, the rights of Kurds, and fraternity with Kurds. It is no different from the AKP-MHP.

The forests of Kurdistan are burning. But this is not anything new, they have been burning for years. They have been nefariously cutting down all the forests of [the North Kurdish regions] Botan, Garzan and Der-

sim for years. They cut down the forests and burn down all the trees that they cannot cut down. This is a form of warfare.

Now they are cutting down the forest of Akbelen. They said that in one week, ninety football fields' worth of land was deforested. The deforestation in Kurdistan is because of war. But in the case of deforestation in Turkey, people claim that it is only about making profit. Yes, it is about profit, but what is this profit used for? Some robbers are getting rich and use their money for the war against the Kurds. It is used as bullets against them. Turkish society, socialists, intellectuals, women and the youth should not be fooled by the images. They should look at the cause that brought about the result. The main reason is war. And the basis of this war is the anti-Kurdish mentality and politics. Before the witness of the world, the Kurds are being subjected to genocide, physical and cultural genocide. Demographics are being changed and people are being driven out of their homeland. How is this different from what IS has done?

There is a great resistance in Akbelen which I would like to salute. Our nature is being protected there. They wanted to build dams in the Black Sea area. The villagers stood up and resisted. Gezi, one of the most important resistances of the country, started with protecting the forest and trees.

The ecological question in Turkey is important. This government loots, plunders and sells everything. It has already sold the Bosphorus and it is also said that they have sold the Black Sea. It is destroying all of nature to find capital for war. After that, it negotiates with the world, goes to Astana, to Europe and now around the Middle East, begging from Arab sheiks. It is said that Erdogan will go to Baghdad in a few days to ask for money. The Prime Minister's advisor announced that they are coming to ask for support against the PKK. He will bring Iraq into the war against the PKK in order to destroy it. What is he bargaining for? The rivers of the Tigris and Euphrates, whose rivers are the Tigris and Euphrates? This is Kurdish water. He is selling the waters of Kurdistan, trying to turn it into a bargaining chip in order to kill the Kurds. We neither think, nor believe that the Iraqi administration will be a tool for this, because Iraq does not have a Kurdish question like Turkey does. Yes, there are many problems in Iraq and Kurdistan. Problems of implementing democratization, freedom and women's freedom. Not that Iraq has no problems, but it is not denying the Kurdish existence like the AKP-MHP and the Turkish state do. There is a federal Kurdish administration within Iraq. Maybe it does not run well, but at least there is no policy of denial and annihilation. Therefore, it cannot fall into the line of the Turkish Republic, but if it does, it would be in the most dangerous position.

What role does the KDP play in this?

On the other hand, there is the situation of the KDP. The KDP is playing a very critical role. What they are doing is collaboration and a betrayal that has never been seen before in the world. Without the KDP's betrayal and support, it would be difficult to find others who are willing to support the AKP-MHP's fascism. Without the KDP, it would not be able to do even half of what it is doing now. Therefore, the KDP bears as much responsibility for its actions as the AKP-MHP.

On the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne, where the decision of the Kurdish genocide had been taken back then, Kurdish intellectuals and patriots from all four parts of Kurdistan and from abroad went to Lausanne, came together to show the unity of the Kurds, to take decisions on the solution of the Kurdish problem, to manifest the will of the Kurdish people to the world. And where was the KDP? It was not there, they were guiding Turkish soldiers in [South Kurdish areas of] Xakurkê and Metîna at the same

time. Now there are reports that show that the KDP is trying to help encircle the guerrillas. The AKP-MHP fascism uses the KDP in all its military attacks.

The ecocide you described before is part of a comprehensive concept of war. What kind of repercussions does this in turn have for Turkey itself?

All of Turkey's problems stem from the unsolved Kurdish question. For understanding Turkey, this fact is important. Turkey deals with the Kurdish question by waging war on the Kurds. And everything has been set up according to the necessities of this war. They cut down trees because they need the money for war. They market the tourism sector to get money for the war. All these things are used for war. Of course, there is also a bourgeois society that capitalizes on this. But the basis of all this is the pressure and terror in the prisons and on society. There is war. This must be seen and the war must be opposed. The struggle against all these crises, forest burning, profiteering and exploitation must be combined with Kurdish freedom and fraternity. How can Turkey be democratic while the Kurds are being deprived of their right to freedom? How will AKP and MHP fascism be stopped? If not so, the forest cannot be protected and the hikes cannot be prevented. Everything has already been sold out. That is why we say that the war must be opposed. Everyone should concentrate on the solution to the Kurdish question as the underlying cause of the war. Therefore, there is more need for a unified struggle.

I would like to call on all our international friends. In this period right now, we have to develop the struggle with all methods and, particularly, the ecological struggle is very important. There are two areas that the hegemonic state system of capitalism attacks. It attacks society, particularly women; and it attacks nature. It wants to destroy them. In order to achieve freedom, to find a space to live freely, we need to wage a multi-faceted struggle against this system, against the system of capitalist modernity. In Turkey, the ecological struggle is essential because there has been too much destruction. Women have taken the lead in the Black Sea region. They cling to their homeland and are committed to a free life. They are doing the same as in Akbelen. Once again, I would like to salute those resisting and wish them success.

If you were able to follow the recent youth conference, what is your opinion about it and what can you say in general about the current situation of Kurdish youth?

Important decisions were made during the Youth Conference. It was an important step taken at the right time. I would like to take this opportunity to salute the youth movement and wish success for the participants of the conference. I would like to call on the Kurdish youth in the four parts of Kurdistan and abroad to study and examine the results of the conference and to implement them in a planned and organized manner.

The young people are very active and there are important steps being made. The stance they have shown in the struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is important and it seems that it spreads. The PKK was born as an intellectual youth party, and it is still such a movement today. We have guerrillas fighting in the mountains and in the cities. Also, the women's organization and movement has developed to a large extent. But it is the Kurdish youth, the youth movement, that spearheads all of these developments. The PKK continues to be a youth movement and a youth party. That is how the youth should appreciate their role and the responsibility it should shoulder.

There is a special warfare in Northern Kurdistan. Prostitution and the use of narcotics are deliberately being developed. A former minister of Erdoğan's government once said: 'It is better for the youth to become prostitutes than to go to the mountains'. Patriotism means opposing this and fighting against all of this. In Northern Kurdistan, some young people have gathered and are developing a campaign to resist against special warfare. I wish them success. But they organized such campaigns many times in the past, and were always left unfinished and therefore did not lead to any results. That is why I would like to caution them to be careful, so that this time their campaign will not be left halfway. The only way to fight against the special war is through revolutionary war, through the fight for freedom. In the absence of a revolutionary war, there is no point in making public statements and announcing campaigns. Let's not fool ourselves, but adopt a more accurate and realistic approach.

'Fighting leads to freedom, freedom brings about beauty, and it is this beauty that deserves love.' In other words, if they want to be loved, they will have to wage a struggle as youth so that all our love will be with them. That is something that Rêber Apo said, and it should be the guiding spirit for the Kurdish youth.

Of course, as the Kurdish Freedom Movement, we have a responsibility towards the youth. These criticisms are at the same time our self-critique. We regard them as our own shortcomings that we have to overcome. On this basis, once again, I would like to salute the youth and call on them to develop a more Apoist stance in their struggle for freedom. I am convinced that they will succeed in this.



Opinion

Karayılan: True freedom comes through the power of people and revolutionary people's war

ANF | BEHDINAN | 17 AUGUST 2023

On the occasion of the anniversary of the beginning of the PKK's armed struggle on 15 August 1984, the Sterk TV channel published a speech by the commander of the People's Defence Forces (HSM) Headquarters, Murat Karayılan.

Karayılan called for turning the attacks of Turkish fascism into the opposite by expanding the revolutionary people's war and trusting in one's own potential: "The strongest force is the people; it is we ourselves! Every patriot must believe in this. Kurdistan will not be liberated through elections alone. Of course, elections are one of many tactics, but true freedom comes through the power of the people, the mobilisation of the people, the revolutionary people's war and the political-social struggle at all levels and for a democratic nation. Everyone must put this into practice. If this is achieved, we are convinced that the 40th year of struggle will be a significant year."

Karayılan's full speech is as follows:

“First of all, we congratulate you all on the Day of Resurrection. On behalf of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, we congratulate Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] on the 39th anniversary of the August 15 Awakening; we convey our greetings, our respect and express our attachment. We congratulate the entire people of Kurdistan, the peoples of the region, progressive humanity, all workers, cadres, fighters and the freedom guerrillas on the day of resurrection. In the person of the immortal commander Egîd [Mahsum Korkmaz] and Zilan [Zeynep Kınacı], we remember all our martyrs of the revolution and bow reverently to their memory. At the same time, we reaffirm our pledge to our martyrs. We will hold fast to the line of the martyrs, by strengthening the struggle for freedom, we will keep their memory alive.

The 15 August breakthrough was an uprising for life and freedom against a policy of massacres and genocide. It led to a renaissance in Kurdistan and brought about a revolution of ideas. On its basis, a social revolution, a women's revolution, a political revolution developed, and a new society was created in Kurdistan. We, the Freedom Guerrilla of Kurdistan, have been fighting for 39 years to protect the Kurdish people and the values of democracy. In these 39 years, true epics of courage have been created. Especially in the last eight years, the Turkish state has led an all-out attack against our people and our movement, with the aim of destroying the achievements of our people and implementing the policy of genocide.

The İmralı system was the starting point for the genocidal politics in the whole of Kurdistan. Against this, besides the historic resistance of Rêber Apo, the resistance of Kurdish politics, the democratic-socialist movements of Turkey, our comrades in the prisons and our people in the streets developed. However, it is also known that the Turkish state has carried out its most massive attacks on the guerrillas. Very comprehensive attacks against the forces of North Kurdistan, West Kurdistan, Shengal and East Kurdistan started with the most modern technology. In the past eight years, there have been resistance struggles of historic proportions against these attacks of the enemy. Those who followed the path of our comrade and commander Egîd and the comrades of commander Fazıl Botan have led the resistance. We commemorate all those who died in this epic resistance in the person of comrades Azad Siser, Delal Amed, Atakan Mahir, Zeki Şengalî, Doğan Sîpan, Çetin Siverek, Çiçek Botan, Yılmaz Dersim and the esteemed commander Leyla Sorxwîn. They created a truly historic epic of resistance.

Dear people, dear comrades; in the last three years, the enemy has carried out particularly intensive attacks first on Gare and then on Zap, Metîna and Avaşîn in order to completely destroy the Medya Defence Zones and, on this basis, to destroy the achievements of the Kurdish people. In fact, an attack began on the whole area of Southern Kurdistan. The resistance that developed here, especially in the heart of the Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna regions, marks a new era in the history of our people and our movement. For the first time, Kurdish forces, Kurdish resistance fighters have been facing the Turkish state in the same positions for three years and resisting permanently. This is a source of honour and pride for the entire Kurdish people. They are not only resisting tens of thousands of soldiers. In this war, all state-of-the-art technologies are being used, especially in air strikes. At the same time, the insidious and cowardly enemy is using prohibited means of warfare such as tactical nuclear weapons and chemical weapons against our forces. Nevertheless, the current resistance has also ushered in a new era in the art of war. That is, it has become a great example of how a small, conscious, tactically smart and strong-willed force can resist and achieve success against a large army that has all the resources at its disposal.

Undoubtedly, we have made many sacrifices in this resistance. It was achieved with the dedication of the esteemed commanders and the sacrificial fighters, the sons and daughters of this people. It was not easy! We remember all our martyrs in the person of Şoreş, Cumali, Çavrê, Bager, Avzem, Delîl, Nalîn, Nûrî and Mizgîn. We will continue on their path. They have paved the way for us. They have made a tactical breakthrough. They have made the determination of this resistance clear with their resistance and their commitment. On this basis, the Turkish state could not win despite the support of foreign powers and the help of Kurdish collaborators. The results of the last three years are open before our eyes. The war continues. The enemy is stuck in its attacks, that is clear. The Turkish state is helpless in the face of the resistance of the Apoist fighters. Actually, the Turkish state wanted to declare its victory on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Republic, to enforce the policy of genocide in Kurdistan and, above all, to put Syria and Iraq under its patronage. However, this plan of the Turkish state could not be implemented.

The 100th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Turkey is approaching. The Turkish state is already making plans and defining its strategy for its second century. It is very revealing that in this new plan, the genocide in Kurdistan is again at the top of the list. This makes it clear that this AKP/MHP/Ergenekon state wants to continue to base itself on shedding the blood of the Kurdish people and destroying them. This nationalist, chauvinist policy on the line of 'Unity and Progress' (İttihat ve Terakki) is not only a danger for the Kurdish people but also for the people in the region. The Turkish state wants to occupy the borders of the Ottoman National Pact (Misak-ı Milli), put Syria and Iraq under its protectorate, and thus destroy the will of the Arab people, the peoples in the region. This is a great danger for our people and all the peoples in the region. In the face of this danger, we must organise ourselves as a people and establish national unity. Analogous to the Kurdish-Arab alliance, all peoples of the region and all socialist-democratic movements must raise their voices against fascism and unite in the struggle for democracy and freedom. This is a revolutionary task that cannot be postponed and is indispensable at this time.

Dear people, the isolation of Rêber Apo is reflected in Kurdistan as genocide, while in Turkey it testifies to the policy of suppressing freedom and democracy. If we do not act decisively against this policy of isolation and break it, there will be no space for democracy and freedom either in Turkey or in the whole region. We must be aware of this reality.

Currently, various democratic institutions, human rights organisations and trade unions in Europe have launched a campaign for Rêber Apo's freedom. This is an extremely important cause. Our greetings go to the workers in Britain and their trade unions. We send greetings to the trade unions and democratic forces in various countries in Europe who are supporting this campaign. We also pay tribute to the progressive and democratic movements in Latin America and South Africa. A warm greeting to our compatriots in Europe and abroad who are actively participating in the struggle. Cheers to the Kurdish-Turkish alliance rising on the foundations of Aziz Ereb and Dilşêr Reqa!

Dear friends, dear people, as the Freedom Guerrilla of Kurdistan, we promise on every anniversary to defend our people, our land and the rights of our people everywhere. We are committed to this promise, and we reaffirm it. So far, we have kept our promise and laid down our lives to do so. As fighters of Rêber Apo, we do not break our word - we fulfil our promise. This is how we have learned, and now the 40th year begins for us. In 39 years of struggle and based on the philosophy of Apoism, the Freedom Guerrilla of Kurdistan has reached this level today. Especially with the restructuring project, the guerrilla is stronger today in developing innovation, tactical deepening and mastering technique. This is also clearly visible in practice. The guerrillas have proved that they are an invincible force. But the enemy is relentless. At the level

reached, the guerrillas will defend the people on the ground and underground and, if possible, also from the air, and resist the enemy. The enemy must also know that he cannot achieve his goal - even if he has some Kurdish collaborators on his side. He will not be able to destroy us as a people or a movement. The Turkish state should give up this policy of genocide. It should not send its soldiers to attack the positions of the comrades. We do not bear the responsibility for the death of the soldiers who attack our positions. The commanders of these soldiers bear the responsibility. All people in Turkey should know this. We fight in defence. We have not attacked anyone. The Turkish state should understand that it cannot achieve results with its policy of genocide and death. In the 40th year of its existence, the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla will once again prove its invincibility and become the guerrilla of victory. This is our goal.

Dear people, the guerrilla will play its role in the new period, in the 40th year. With the efforts of Rêber Apo and the sacrifices of our martyrs, a foundation has been laid on which the guerrilla will act. But we are in a momentous phase. The line we have to follow is that of the people's revolutionary war. During this decisive period, our people must also take up their duties. All patriots, especially women and youth, must take their responsibilities, fulfil their roles and organise themselves. As at the beginning of the revolution, they should ignite waves of popular uprisings. Our call to our people in this context is as follows: Keep your unity. National unity is undoubtedly important for all four parts of Kurdistan. However, each part of Kurdistan must ensure its unity internally and build its organisation and must not remain silent in the face of the enemy's practices, but must defend itself. The enemy is attacking the Kurdish women and the Kurdish youth in different ways. Against this, we must strengthen the revolutionary people's war, repel the enemy's attacks and pave the way for the freedom of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan. We have to believe in this. On this basis, we must realise that we have strength and willpower. The greatest strength is in the people themselves - in ourselves! Every patriot must hold on to this. The liberation of Kurdistan will not be achieved through elections alone. Elections may be one tactic among many, but true freedom comes through the power of the people, the mobilisation of the people, the revolutionary people's war and all forms of political-social struggles for a democratic nation. All must take up this task. We are convinced that the 40th year will be a year in which the Kurdish freedom struggle will rise. This is our hope and our firm conviction.

In this hope and conviction, we wish all the workers, the entire patriotic people and all our friends the greatest success in the spirit of 15 August in the struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan. In the 40th year of the struggle, the spirit of people like Egîd and Zilan will be felt much more clearly. In this spirit, we once again congratulate you on the Day of Resurrection and send you all our revolutionary greetings and respect. And we shout: 'Long live the spirit of August 15!', 'Long live the revolutionary people's war!', 'Jin Jiyan Azadî!', 'Bijî Serok Apo!' "

Kalkan: The guerrilla ready to play its role more effectively in the 40th year of struggle

ANF | 18 AUGUST 2023

We are celebrating the 39th anniversary of the revolutionary resistance of the guerrilla that was carried out on August 15, 1984, which symbolizes the historical starting point of the path to freedom. Thus, the Kurds have entered their 40th year of freedom and resistance and, via various events, they celebrate it in their homeland and abroad. The guerrillas are celebrating this resistance by conducting successful actions all over Kurdistan, particularly in [the South Kurdish areas of] Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna.

On this occasion, I would like to first of all congratulate all comrades of the party, our people and international friends, especially Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. I would like to particularly salute the heroic stand and resistance of the HPG and YJA-Star guerrillas who resist the occupation and genocide and do not let fascism pass. By this I also want to respectfully commemorate all the martyrs of the Kurdish heroic resistance in the person of the comrades Agit and Zilan. In the 40th year, I wish success to all those waging the struggle for freedom and democracy.

Undoubtedly, it will be useful to briefly summarize the political conditions under which the revolutionary resistance of August 15 took place in order to be able to evaluate the results and effects of it.

It is well known that in the late 1970s and early 1980s the world was in a state of complete deadlock, with the contradiction and conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each side was developing all kinds of military activities, including nuclear armaments, in order to defeat its opponent. While the US administration of the time was trying to gain the upper hand with its “Star Wars” plan, the Soviet Union, which called itself “socialist” and had failed in its Afghanistan venture, was going through a series of changes and searches, which finally materialized under the leadership of M. Gorbachev.

The most influential event in the Middle East was undoubtedly the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian resistance. Iran and Iraq had temporarily partially suspended the tensions and conflicts between them with the Algiers Treaty of 1975. Turkey, on the other hand, was experiencing a crisis in all areas, especially the economic and political crisis, and the state system established on October 29, 1923 was no longer functioning. The 1975 Algerian Treaty also had a heavy impact on the Kurds, and the defeated KDP and its leader Barzani accepted this situation by declaring ‘Ashbetal’ [capitulation], disbanded and left Kurdistan.

It was under these conditions that two important events took place that affected Kurdistan and the Middle East. First, the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan, who had been trying to establish a party and start a new Kurdish resistance since 1973, founded the PKK at the end of 1978 and developed a process of struggle that deeply affected Turkey with the resistance in [the North Kurdish cities] Hilvan and Siverek. Secondly, the predominantly Islamic Iranian alliance succeeded in overthrowing the Shah in February 1979. The Iranian Revolution, gradually grappling with self-contradiction, began to blow its wind throughout the Middle East.

NATO and the regional reactionary powers did not delay in developing a new offensive against these two new developments and the effectiveness of the Palestinian Resistance. The Turkish General Staff, which is affiliated to NATO, formed a fascist junta under the leadership of Kenan Evren by staging a military coup on September 12, 1980 and seized the entire state. On September 20, 1980, the Iraqi government, under the secret guidance of the US, declared war on Iran in order to regain what it had lost in the 1975 Treaty. Thus, the Iraq-Iran-war was an effort to interrupt the winds of revolution blowing from Iran, and the September 12 fascist-military coup and resulting regime were attempts to crush the new freedom resistance rising from Kurdistan.

In this framework, the Kenan Evren junta carried out an intense fascist-genocidal attack in order to neutralize the democratic forces of Turkey and mainly to crush the newly developing Kurdish resistance by the Apoist group. By banning all things Kurdish, it moved towards a virtual reoccupation of Kurdistan and the total annihilation of the patriotic Kurdish existence. Hundreds of PKK militants and tens of thousands of Kurdish patriots were arrested and imprisoned. By imposing an inhumane torture system on those captured, it aimed at destroying, in the person of the prisoners, the existence of the Kurds and their awareness of freedom.

The PKK cadres and sympathizers, who were under the most severe oppression and torture in history, started to resist. This resistance was spearheaded by Mazlum Dogan on March 21, 1982 and was continued by Ferhat Kurtay, Kemal Pir and Hayri Durmuş. The last two comrades, along with many others who joined them, started hunger strike on July 14, the same year, and managed to ideologically defeat the fascist system of the Turkish state. Thus, they revealed the new decisive power of resistance for freedom and clearly demonstrated that it is possible to resist under all the given circumstances. This situation created a very strong ideological and psychological superiority for the Kurdish Freedom Movement led by Rêber Apo and became a call for resistance for the militants outside.

The guerrilla resistance began with the actions in [the Turkish occupied North Kurdish cities of] Eruh and Şemdinli on August 15, 1984. It was led by the immortal Commander Mahsum Korkmaz. This guerrilla action was a successful response to the call coming from the prisons. The PKK guerrillas, who trained and prepared themselves ideologically and militarily in the Lebanese-Palestinian field, took advantage of the political and practical environment created by the Iranian revolution that overthrew the Shah and the Iraq-Iran war that began on September 20, and succeeded in launching new Kurdish resistance from August 15, 1984 on.

Undoubtedly, the PKK guerrilla started and carried out the difficult struggle against the Turkish army, which was affiliated to NATO, mainly on the basis of its own strength, awareness and belief. It also benefited from the fact that the Iran-Iraq war rendered the Turkish Republic's borders with Iraq and Iran partially uncontrolled, and that this war rendered the joint system of hegemony over the Kurds established by the Treaty of Lausanne inoperable. Rêber Apo was the main force that created and developed these developments. He correctly and adequately evaluated the political and military developments ceaselessly and showed the ability to regroup the party cadres and train and prepare them abroad with great effort. Thus, the September 12 fascist-military regime wanted to defeat Rêber Apo and the PKK. They tried to do this in the person of the prisoners by imposing torture on them, but the regime suffered a historic ideological defeat in its own prison, and could not prevent the development of the revolutionary resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 and entered the process of historical collapse.

The revolutionary resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 showed and gradually proved that the fascist-genocidal Turkish army could be fought against. This resistance proved that the Kurds can sustain a guerrilla warfare against the fascist-genocidal Turkish army, even though it is NATO's second biggest army. In 1984, the administration of Evren-Özal, which was helpless facing the new guerrilla warfare, took this situation to NATO conferences. This changed the character of the war in a way that NATO assumed the burden of waging war against the Kurds from 1985 on. Still, they never achieved their goal of crushing and destroying the guerrilla. The changes made in the Turkish State by both the Kenan Evren junta and the subsequent administrations, especially the AKP-MHP fascist alliance, have always followed the same route.

The revolutionary resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 successfully transformed the PKK into a strategic and tactical force of action. It reasserted the historical strength of the Kurdish people and the heroic combativeness of the Kurdish people. It showed everyone what can be achieved when the courage, sacrifice, and the strength of Kurdish youth and women are equipped with the philosophical and mental power of Rêber Apo and the sense of awareness and freedom he has created. In many areas of North Kurdistan, especially in Botan, but also in Rojava and abroad, Kurdish youth and women, the entire people welcomed the revolutionary resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 with enthusiasm. Everybody began to strengthen their own resistance fronts in support of the guerrilla, laying the foundations of a new national understanding; in the concept of a democratic nation. Then, as of now, only the leadership of the KDP opposed this development, allied with the Turkish army and launched military attacks against the PKK guerrilla.

The new Kurdish liberation resistance, which developed on the basis of the August 15 resistance, profoundly affected the whole region of the Middle East and created rapid changes in political and military relations and alliances. First of all, by imposing the solution of the Kurdish question on the entire region, it led the existing states to develop new political attitudes. In addition to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which until then had been almost the only really big problem and conflict in the region, the Kurdish question was imposed on the politics of the entire region as the new and most comprehensive problem. Gradually, other contradictions and conflicts began to take a back seat. The Kurdish question has become the problem that determines all political and military relations in the region. So much that even the Iraq-Iran war, in which the parties could not and did not come to an agreement, was ended in the spring of 1988 so that "the PKK would not take advantage of the political-practical environment created by that war".

The resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 had worldwide effects which are actually more obvious and meaningful. Those circles who were assessing the possibility of a Kurdish resistance against the September 12 coup were actually a bit surprised when such a step was delayed. As a matter of fact, they reacted to the August 15, 1984 Eruh and Şemdinli actions by saying, "The expected Kurdish resistance has begun". Some European states, which until then had supposedly opposed the September 12 coup and complained to the Council of Europe against the Kenan Evren junta in order to gain economic and political benefits from Turkey, immediately withdrew their demands and protests after August 15 and began to support the Turkish state's genocidal attacks against the Kurd. Their fake democracy was actually exposed even then.

Undoubtedly, the support of NATO states to the Turkish Republic went beyond this. For example, the murder of Olof Palme on February 28, 1986 was in fact a conspiracy against the PKK and the Kurdish freedom resistance. Then the Düsseldorf Trial, the longest running trial in Europe, was organized and conducted in Germany. As a result of these plots, the Kurdish people's struggle for existence and freedom

was criminalized, thus blocking the peoples' support for the Kurds, while the support of the states for the fascist-genocidal Turkish Republic was tried to be covered up.

Of course, it was not possible to get the support of the peoples of Europe and the world, the oppressed women and youth by relying on only one step. Such a situation of continuous support could only emerge through a process of developing resistance. The following can be said here: The Kurds introduced themselves to the peoples, women and youth of the world on a revolutionary and democratic basis thanks to the revolutionary resistance of August 15 and the ongoing guerrilla war, and they achieved the most meaningful relations and support on this basis.

In conclusion, it is also necessary and useful to underline the following points. The correct libertarian awareness, organization, self-confidence, willpower, and everything similar in Kurdish society has been achieved thanks to the revolutionary resistance of August 15 and the uninterrupted guerrilla war. This is why it is called the "Kurdish Resurrection Day". In every respect, it expresses the rebirth and re-existence of the Kurds. For 39 years, all libertarian developments in Kurdistan have been based on the August 15 guerrilla resistance. In particular, Kurdish women's gaining awareness of freedom, organizing themselves and developing the women's liberation revolution with great courage has been the most important and effective result and invincible power of the guerrilla resistance.

We should ask a question like this: What would the situation of the Kurds be like if there had not been such guerrilla resistance and struggle? What other form of struggle could have brought about such a Kurdish awakening and impact on humanity? One can discuss these questions as much as one likes. In the end, the only unified answer can be 'guerrilla resistance'. Because no other method of struggle can strike and weaken Turkish colonialism and genocide against the Kurds, and awaken and educate the Kurdish people, who have been subjected to all kinds of inhumane attacks for a hundred years, and make them organized and strong-willed. Only guerrilla warfare can achieve these things. As a matter of fact, this is what has happened.

At this point, even though its name is 'guerrilla', the Kurdish freedom guerrilla should not be confused with guerrilla practices in other countries. The Kurdish freedom guerrilla is based on the leadership of Rêbertî [Abdullah Öcalan] and the party. It is highly conscious and faithful, with the highest level of courage and sacrifice. In other words, it acts with a complete stance of sacrifice. It has been proved that it is not possible to fight and win against the colonialist-genocidal mentality and politics in Kurdistan with the measures of the guerrilla movements in other countries. For this reason, the principles and measures of the Kurdish freedom guerrilla are unique and in many respects unlike those of guerrillas elsewhere. This is so because the so-called Kurdish question is unique in the world.

39 years of uninterrupted guerrilla resistance, which has played a decisive role in all libertarian developments in Kurdistan and democratization in Turkey, is entering its fortieth year of resistance and victory as of August 15. It is obvious that the historical role it has played for 39 years will continue to play in the fortieth year and will continue to be the cause of emancipatory developments. Because the new AKP-MHP fascist administration is making its attacks more comprehensive and fiercer, only the guerrilla can stand against such an attack and only the guerrilla can open the way for all kinds of democratic developments by holding the fascist-genocidal mentality and politics to account.

In its fortieth year, the Kurdish freedom guerrilla is ready to play such a role much more effectively and successfully. Today, in the mountains of Kurdistan, especially in Zap, Avaşın, Metîna and Xakurkê, the guerrilla is striking deadly blows against the fascist AKP-MHP. Yesterday, it was this guerrilla that showed the strength to stand against the Islamic State [IS] attacks, especially in Şengal, Maxmur and Kobanê, and to defeat it. Now it is resisting victorious to break the attacks of the IS partner AKP-MHP and to collapse fascism. The resistance of the guerrilla on August 15 revealed that the guerrilla is invincible.

Once again, I would like to congratulate all libertarian and democratic forces on the occasion of August 15, and wish them great success in their struggle. I would also like to salute the heroic resistance of all HPG and YJA-Star guerrillas fighting in the Apoist self-sacrificing line.

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