

Communique

Stop war against humanity in North and East Syria: Stop Turkey's war and occupation policies

The undersigned express our solidarity with the Kurdish movement made up of children, young people, women, diverse identities and the Kurdish people in struggle for their rights to autonomy and self-determination. And through our personal and collective voice we want to let the world know what is happening in Kurdish territory right now.

Current Situation

Since the 4th of October 2023, Turkish army forces have systematically been bombarding villages, towns and general infrastructure in the districts of Derik, Rimelan, Tirbesipi, Qamishlo, Amude, Hasake, Til Temir, Darbesi, Manbij, Ain Issa, Kobane, Tal Rifat, Shehba, Shera and Sherawa, covering a geographical area of approximately 900 kms by 52 kms of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES).

Turkish warplanes, armed drones (UAVs), artillery and mortars have been targeting civilian settlements and vehicles, electric power stations, gas stations, water resources and energy supplies, oil fields, health centres and hospitals (including two hospitals specialising in Covid-19 patients), cement factories, crop fields, granaries and food companies, as well as the M4 highway and the surroundings of refugee camps in the regions of Hasake, Derik, Sheba and Sherawa that are inhabited by ten thousands of internally displaced persons. These attacks have been carried out from Turkish army bases inside Turkey, as well as from areas within North Syria that are under Turkish occupation since 2016, such as Jerablus, Afrin, Gire Sipi and Serekaniye.

During the first three days of the current attacks at least 16 people lost their lives, and dozens have been injured. About two million people have been left without electricity, sufficient energy or water supplies and have no access to healthcare. In a press statement the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria announced that the bombardments targeting the electricity infrastructure alone have so far caused material losses of 56 million US dollars.

We are facing a new dimension of Turkey's invasive war that is aimed at occupying, "ethnically cleansing", and destroying more areas of North Syria. The latest attacks have been announced by the Turkish government with the declared aim of wiping out "all infrastructure, superstructure, and energy facilities" in order to destroy all basis of life in North and East Syria and to depopulate the region. These attacks are targeting the lives and the security of more than six million people of different cultures and beliefs - such as Kurds, Arabs, Suryoye, Circassian, Turkmen, Ezidi, Christians, Muslim and others - living together on common land, and fulfilling their

vital needs within the structures of Democratic Autonomy. Despite ongoing airstrikes, tens of thousands of residents of the cities and regions under attack are out on the streets condemning the attacks and declaring their determination to continue their common resistance against war and occupation –for a life of dignity, peace and freedom.

The latest Turkish attacks add to the systematic drone warfare, airstrikes and military operations carried out by Turkish army forces in the Kurdish regions on Syrian and Iraqi territory. Since 2020, the lives of community workers, journalists, politicians, members of the Autonomous Administration, the women’s movement and the self-defence forces have been deliberately targeted. Just between January 2022 and September 2023, due to about 190 Turkish drone strikes 163 people lost their lives and 218 were severely injured. Among them there are dozens of members of the YPG-YPJ and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) who have fought against Islamic State (ISIS) to defend humanity. Therefore, it does not seem to be a coincidence that the Turkish army started its massive air strike operation exactly at a time when SDF carried out large-scale operations to prevent the resurgence of ISIS.

Although all these attacks by the Turkish army on Syrian territory involve clear violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes and thus are contributing to deepen the humanitarian crisis in Syria and the whole Middle East, neither the UN nor other international bodies, states or forces have yet adequately condemned these crimes or taken any effective steps to stop them.

Therefore we call the international community and all concerned bodies to take urgent action to prevent further crimes against humanity and to stop Turkey's war and occupation policies.

We call urgently all the sensitive and committed people in the world to

- Counteract Turkey’s disinformation policies and media censorship by providing and spreading information from sources in the targeted region itself.

We demand international organisation and governments to

- Establish a No-Flight-Zone for the Turkish Air Force, including armed and unarmed UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) over Syrian and Iraqi airspace.

From all over the world we demand urgently that

- The Turkish Government stops its war attacks, politics of occupation, and systematic killings of women's rights defenders and people living in any part of Kurdistan, especially in the territories of North and East Syria, and North Iraq.
- Turkey ends its occupation and genocidal practices on Syrian territories such as in the regions of Jerablus, Afrin, Gire Sipi and Serekaniye.
- In accordance with international law, war crimes and crimes against humanity should be prosecuted, including genocide and femicide committed by president Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) government.

The great powers of the world do not view the autonomy of the Kurdish people in a favourable light, because it threatens their interests and ways of exercising power. The great world powers do not want to see the example of millions of Kurdish people being propagated. They do not want the world to know about the Kurdish people who meet in more than four thousand local assemblies to decide themselves over the course of their lives. In these assemblies, women exercise full political, economic and social rights. The same Kurdish people are out to defend themselves with weapons in their hands. They exercise justice through popular committees, and their means of production are collectively owned. None of them renounces their faith, their language, their beliefs or customs. They live together with others, accept their differences and organise themselves accordingly. In other words, the world powers (governments, nation-states, corporations, the powers that be) cannot respect, and even less let live and flourish a Kurdish society that is struggling for a world in which many worlds fit.

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8. Colectivo Llegó la Hora de los Pueblos (México)
9. Radio Zapote
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For further information see:

Rojava-NES | Statement to Civil Society and Global Public Opinion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtCcCiXPTmA>

Summary Report: Turkey's Aerial Assaults on North and East Syria: 5-6 October 2023 by Rojava Information Centre

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/139wYAKziKPPWhCiv1WoorXXKW-hJ7j7T/view>

Turkish Warplanes and Drones Target Northeast Syria, 6 October 2023 by AANES

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Turkey's Drone War in North and East Syria, 20 June 2023 by Kongra Star

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