

Kongreya Neteweyî ya Kurdistanê
Kurdistan National Congress
Congrès National du Kurdistan

KNK

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His Excellency Mr. António Guterres
United Nations Secretary-General
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

And to United Nations Security Council

2 March 2018

Re: Turkish Violations of UNSC Res. 2401 in regards to ongoing military operations against Afrin, Syria

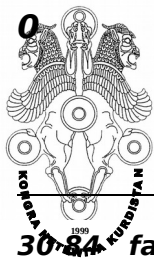
Your Excellency,

Firstly, On behalf of the all listed Kurdish and Syriac-Assyrians organisations and religious groups (Ezidi, Yarsan, Christians), we thank you for bringing the suffering of all innocent peoples struggling under bombardment and assault in Syria to light and making the resolution of this ongoing crisis a priority of the Security Council.

We strongly support the stance that the United Nations Security Council has taken in defense of human rights and international law, and reinforce the importance of UNSC Resolution 2401, calling for an immediate ceasefire throughout all of Syria in order to allow trapped civilians to receive desperately needed humanitarian aid and medical attention.

Unfortunately, despite the unanimous adoption of UNSC Res. 2401, the Turkish government has deemed their desire to destroy the Kurdish people more important than international law, and the Turkish military has continued operations against the region of Afrin in the north of Syria. President Erdogan and his regime have claimed that the cease fire declared by the globally respected body of the UN Security Council does not apply to them, continuing to commit ethnic cleansing and indiscriminate attacks against civilians in spite of both the UN as well as the United States and French governments clearly and publicly affirming that UNSC Res. 2401 does, in fact, include the Afrin region, and calling on the Turkish regime to cease military operations immediately.

The Turkish regime's blatant disregard for the international community and the United Nations constitutes a violation of international law on multiple fronts. Not only is the Turkish government in violation of a United Nations Security Council resolution adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which are considered binding decisions, but they are also responsible for violating international sovereignty by invading Syrian soil across the Turkish-Syrian border with no provocation or justification. In addition, the Turkish invasion has caused a significant disruption of the ongoing fight against the Islamic State, forcing the division of Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in both resources and personnel, and has the potential to set the eradication of the terrorist group the Islamic State back months, if not years. This directly affects the objectives of the Global Coalition Against DAESH and its allies extremely negatively, which the Turkish regime is both aware and supportive of, as evidenced by its continued collaboration with terrorist organizations operating in the region.



Furthermore, the Turkish military continues to strike non-combatant targets in the Syrian region of Afrin, including refugee/IDP camps, civilian villages and residential areas, civil infrastructure, sources of water and food, and historic and culturally significant monuments. These actions are ongoing and intended to demoralize the people of Afrin, and they are committed with no regard for justice or law.

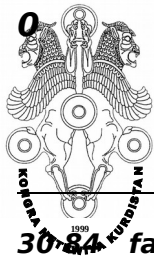
Attacking civilians across an international border who have taken no role in any form of conflict is a clear breach of basic human rights and international law. However, the Turkish regime goes well beyond even these blatant and severe breaches, openly declaring their intent to commit ethnic cleansing against all Kurds in the region, including the murder of innocent women and children as well as the destruction of Kurdish culture, community, and traditions. In attempting to wipe out the Kurdish people, the indiscriminate attacks by the Turkish army are also murdering countless non-Kurdish residents in the region of Afrin, including large numbers of IDPs and refugees who sought safety and security in Afrin after fleeing violence in other parts of Syria. There are currently over 250,000 IDPs/refugees living in the region of Afrin, the majority of whom are ethnic Arabs fleeing from the ongoing violence Idlib and Aleppo. To date, hundreds of civilians have been killed, and many more have been forced from a secure region into the chaos and violence of yet another conflict zone.

Regarding the ongoing attacks on food and water civil infrastructure:

“Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 8 June 1977, article 14; ICRC Customary International Humanitarian Law rule 53 “The use of starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare is prohibited” https://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule53 and rule 54 “Attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population is prohibited” https://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule54”¹

These examples of violations are all clearly documented in evidence collected from the region of Afrin in the forms of witness statements, video footage, images, and more.

- *We call upon the United Nations Security Council to stand strong in defense of Resolution 2401, and not to let the Turkish regime evade responsibility for its actions in the region of Afrin, Syria.*
- *We emphasize the need for the international community to enforce the UNSC cease-fire and to ensure the delivery of humanitarian and medical aid to those in desperate need, both in Afrin and in Ghouta.*
- *We highlight the need for the implementation of a No-Fly-Zone over the Afrin region in order to preserve civilian lives and residences, civil infrastructure, and significant monuments and cultural artifacts. We also invite the international community to aid the enforcement of this No-Fly-Zone with peacekeeping troops or observer delegations.*



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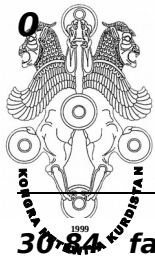
- We call attention to the need for the lifting of the economic embargo against the Northern region of Syria in order to provide necessary humanitarian and medical aid to civilians and the military groups of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the most effective forces fighting extremist organizations such as the Islamic State and Tahrir Al-Sham on an ongoing basis, and not only for the 30-days required by Resolution 2401.
- We reaffirm our commitment to upholding the values of freedom, democracy, equality, and justice for all, as well as our dedication to the eradication of extremism alongside the Global Coalition Against Daesh.

With Respect,

Refik Gafur

On behalf of the all listed Kurdish and Syriac-Assyrians organisations and religious groups (Ezidi, Yarsan, Christians)

1. Kurdistan National Congress – KNK <http://www.kongrakurdistan.net/>
2. YNK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) <http://www.pukmedia.com/EN>
3. PYD (Democratic Union Party) <http://pydrojava.com/en/>
4. GORAN <http://www.gorran.net/en/>
5. HSDK (Socialist Democrats Party of Kurdistan)
6. PÎK (Islamic Party of Kurdistan)
7. KCD-E (Democratic Society Congress of Kurds in Europe) <http://www.kcde.eu>
8. Communist Part of Kurdistan
9. Yekgirtûyî Islam in Kurdistan
10. Association of Islam in Kurdistan
11. TJKE (Kurdistan Women's Movement in Europe)
12. Kurdistan Êzidi Federation
13. Europan Syriac Union (E.S.U)
14. Syriac Union Party in Syria (S.U.P)
15. PJAK (Party of Free Life of Kurdistan) <http://rojhelat.info/en/>
16. Zehmetkêşanî Party of Kurdistan
17. Ayindeyî Party of Kurdistan
18. HDP Europe <http://en.hdpeurope.eu/>
19. P.D.K.S (Party of Democrat Kurds in Syria)
20. P.Ç.D.K-S (Party of Democrat Left Kurds – Syria)
21. PÇK-S (Party of Left Kurd – Syria)
22. Party of Green in Kurdistan
23. Kurdish Institute Brussels <http://www.kurdishinstitute.be/>
24. Association of Democratic Yarsan <http://www.xorhelatnews.org/>
25. PYNA (Party of Free National Union)Rojava
26. T.N.K.S (Movement of Nûjen Kurdistan – Syria)
27. Assemble of Şengalê in Foreign Country
28. Dîwexanî Kurds in Europa
29. Kurdish Unions Party-Syria (EL WEHDA)
30. Kurdish Democratic Party-Syria (El Parti)
31. Mesopotamia Peoples Congres (Syriac-Assyrian)
32. Kurdish Communist Party -Iran (KOMELE)
33. Congress of Democratic people's -Turkey (HDK-E)



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