



Kurdish Centre for Legal Studies and Consultancy - YASA e.V.

YAŞA e.V.

Kurdish Centre for
Legal Studies and
Consultancy

Kurdisches Zentrum
für Studien und juris-
tische Beratungen

Navenda kurdî
ji bo lêkolîn û
rawêjkariya yasayî

المركز الكردي للدراسات
والاستشارات القانونية

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Dear Mr/s. Chairman

My name is Robar Ibish, a member of the Kurdish Center for Legal Studies and Consulting, Yasa, which is responsible for defending the rights of the Kurdish people in Syria.

The Kurdish people in Syria constitute about 13-15% of the total population of Syria, although they are a minority, but they have always been subjected to discriminatory and oppressive policies and have been excluded from exercising their right of life. They have also been deprived of basic human rights as their right to learn in their native Kurdish language under the Baath and the Assad regime.

This situation prevailed till the announcement of the withdrawal of the central Syrian government from the Kurdish areas in northern Syria nearly five years ago. Facing their greatest challenge, the Kurds formed a joint political and administrative system with the rest of the Syrian people to manage their areas in an organized way, and to protect all those components living in these areas from threats and military attacks, meanwhile the rest of Syria was in chaos.

Kurdish regions in northern Syria have become one of the few places in the Middle East where there is peaceful coexistence between all peoples of different ethnic and religious diversity. The Kurdish people was able to learn and speak their native language under this Kurdish self-administration, even though the Syrian regime does not recognize the prevailing educational system in Kurdish self-administration areas, thus preventing and depriving thousands of high school graduates from joining the Syrian universities.

In March 2018, the Turkish state, along with Syrian armed jihadist groups, launched its ground and air offensive on the Kurdish city of Afrin in northern Syria, a city of peace and security, which was a safe haven for all those fleeing the war in Syria.

Since that time, the world is standing idly by and watching the abuses and repression of the Kurdish people in Afrin practiced by the Turkish state and Syrian jihadist groups, where more than a quarter of a million Kurds have been forcibly expelled from their hometown of Afrin, and property has been confiscated, tributes have been imposed, systematic demographic change, and bringing members of the jihadist groups; to settle in Kurd's homes and properties, who the Turkish state is now giving them ID cards as if they are born in the Kurdish city of Afrin.

The Turkish state turned the biggest high school in Afrin (Faisal Qaddour) into a military barrack, the rest of the schools were occupied by extremist groups. Dozens of primary schools in the villages of the city of Afrin were turned into prisons where torture is practiced. More than one third of the schools were destroyed by indiscriminate shelling. Work contracts were terminated for all Kurdish teachers, teaching the Kurdish language was banned, besides people were forced to learn the Turkish language and teach it. That is why thousands of children were deprived from continuing their study, and became refugees all around the world.

The consequences of the Turkish state's genocide against the Kurdish minority in northern Syria have enormous negative effects and serious consequences for the Kurdish people in general, especially children of primary schools age; There are 230,489 students in the Kurdish Autonomous Region schools, while there are 2,225 schools.

As we meet here to discuss the situation of minorities and human rights around the world, the mass media is reporting at the same time what the Kurdish people in the Kurdish areas of northern Syria are being subjected to by the Turkish state and Syrian jihadist groups supported by them, the genocide of ethnic cleansing, the most horrible systematic demographic change by the force of arms, all of which rise to the level of war crimes against humanity, in order to force the Kurdish people to leave their properties and their fathers land, starting with the cities of Serê Kaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and girê sibî (Tel Abyad) and all the Kurdish cities recently occupied by the Turkish state in northern Syria under the pretext of imposing a safe zone without the approval of UN and the international community, with the aim of eliminating the Kurdish presence. All these acts rise to the level of crimes against humanity, according to the report of the Independent International Commission of investigation on Syria in early 2019, which states: "there are reasonable grounds to believe that Armed group members in Afrin committed the war crimes of hostages-taking, cruel treatment, torture, and pillage".

The Turkish Government fully and directly holds responsible for all crimes committed against the Kurdish people in the Kurdish areas of northern Syria; All United Nations entities are responsible for these crimes and atrocities, because the Turkish State is occupying a sovereign State and a member of the United Nations, and because it supports and funds armed jihadist terrorist groups, and allows them to commit grave atrocities against the Kurdish people.

I call on the international community to intervene to stop the systematic ethnic cleansing against the Kurdish people in Rojava in northern Syria, and I call on the Security Council to assume its responsibility for protecting the Kurdish people and standing up to these crimes through the implementation of the mechanisms of the United Nations, by doing the following:

- 1- The imposition of an international-sponsored No fly zone in order to stop all aerial bombardments by the Turkish Government and to protect the Kurds in the north of Syria — the land and people, as we saw during the last century in many areas that witnessed genocide and ethnic cleansing.
- 2- To assist the forcibly displaced Kurdish people under the supervision of international organizations, to secure the safe return of them to their homes, villages and cities, and to stop the grievous process of demographic change.
- 3- In accordance with the 1948 Convention on the Prevention of Genocide, which states that the criminals must be punished, this Convention must be implemented in the near future and the Turkish Government, headed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, must be held directly and fully responsible for all the crimes that took place as a result of the Turkish occupation of Roj Ava, Kurdistan of Syria.

Thank you

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YAŞA e.V. Kurdish Centre for Legal Studies and Consultancy