



Juan Enalo

The Kurdish Center for Studies and legal Consultancy- YASA

Due to the civil war in Syria, we have to talk about the situation of Kurds in Syria before the war and during the war and about the perspectives of the Kurds and other minorities in the postwar period. Prior to the Syrian civil war, Kurds in Syria faced various challenges, including political marginalization and restrictions on civil, cultural and linguistic rights. The Ba'athist government, led by the Al-Assad family, adopted an Arab nationalist ideology that often marginalized ethnic and cultural minorities.

The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, further complicated the situation for Kurds. As the conflict escalated, various factions and armed groups emerged, leading to a complex and multi-sided war.

The vacuum of power allowed the Kurds to establish control in some predominantly Kurdish areas and they played a crucial role in the conflict, often collaborating with the United States in the fight against the Islamic State (ISIS). However, this collaboration created tensions with Turkey, which is against any Kurdish administration or autonomy in the Middle East.

Due to Article 1 Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which was adopted on 18 December 1992: States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity. The Syrian government keeps its old position from the Kurds and their rights. Even the opposition, which claimed to stay for dignity, human rights, and coexistence, did not respect the rights of the Kurds as people and reduced them theoretically to simple individual rights and not group or minority rights, avoiding with this position to recognize the Kurds as such and guarantee their rights in Syria.

The situation became worse, when the opposition represented by the Syrian Coalition, supported Turkey and the Islamic armed groups to occupy Afrin, Serê Kaniya, and Girê Sipî. Kurds are being tortured, arrested, and forced to leave their home and lands and displaced by force. The number of Kurds in the Region of Afrin went down to around 30% of its population after it was more than 95% before the Turkish occupation. Our report Cultivating Chaos after Operation Olive Branch, which we have published in 2020 and the second report, Afrin after operation Olive-Branch: An update on the situa-

YAŞA e.V.

Kurdish Centre for
Legal Studies and
Consultancy

Kurdisches Zentrum
für juristische Studien
und Beratungen

Navenda kurdi
ji bo lêkolîn û
rawêjkarîya yasayî

المركز الكردي للدراسات
والاستشارات القانونية

YASA e.V.
Postfach 7624
53076 Bonn

www.yasa-online.org

tion in north-west Syria published in 2021 show clearly how Kurds are facing war crimes and crimes against humanities in Afrin.

Furthermore, Turkey with its alliances of armed groups in Syria has started building many settlements in the Kurdish region and specially in Afrin and systematically doing a demographical change there by bringing Arabs from other regions in Syria or from the campy outside Syria to settle them in the Kurdish region. This ongoing demographical change will of course make the situation and the conflict insolvable and a cohabitation and integration of groups and minorities into a society of equality impossible.



Kurdish Centre for
Legal Studies and Consultancy