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February 7, 2018

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Global Affairs Canada
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Dear Minister Freeland,

On behalf of the Armenian National Committee of Canada, I am writing to you today, to express our profound concern regarding the current situation that is unfolding in Afrin, Syria.

Since January 20th, Turkey's illegal military offensive against the peaceful Kurdish population of Afrin and specifically the US backed People's Protection Units (YPG) has significantly intensified an already unstable situation. Turkey's blatant invasion of northern Syria has displaced thousands of peaceful Kurds while costing the lives of innocent women, men and children.

The current situation poses a significant threat to the peaceful resolution of the Syrian civil war, thwarting numerous efforts by the international community for peace negotiations and conflict settlement, while undermining the safety of the Kurdish population in the region.

Predominantly Kurdish populated Afrin is one of the most stable and secure regions in Syria. With minimal international aid and support from Syrian authorities, Afrin has become home to many internally displaced persons since the onset of the Syrian Civil War, where the local Kurdish authorities have provided them with food, shelter and other necessities. Today, Afrin is surrounded by forces that do not wish to see this region develop while subsequently contributing to the escalation of the conflict.

We join our voices with thousands of other Canadian activists in calling upon Canadian officials and the international community to guarantee Afrin's stability and security and prevent further acts of aggression by the Erdogan regime.

Since the onset of the Syrian Civil War, the Kurdish people have endured unspeakable hardships to protect their homeland and to rid the world from the threat of ISIS. Therefore, we strongly believe that Canada and the rest of the international community have a moral obligation to stand behind the Kurdish people, call for an immediate withdrawal of Turkish forces and strongly condemn the illegal aggression by Turkey.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Shahen Mirakian – President
Armenian National Committee of Canada