

Information Center of Afrin Resistance



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AFRIN
RESISTANCE

Weekly News Bulletin from Afrin

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15.02.2018 - 22.02.2018

The Information Center of Afrin Resistance is providing direct information from the inside of Afrin. Since the 26th January 2018 we report up-to-date about the invasion and war crimes of the Turkish state and the resistance of the people in Afrin.

This is the weekly summary of the developments in and around Afrin.

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Last Week's Developments inside Afrin

With the defeat of the IS in Syria and especially after the liberation of Raqqa in October 2017, the Turkish state intensified its threats and attacks on the Democratic Confederation of Northern Syria. On this background the Turkish war on Afrin started the 20th January 2018 violating international law and the sovereignty of its neighbour country. The Turkish army has launched this war in cooperation with jihadist groups of the FSA ranks. Many of them are former Al-Qaida or IS members.¹

War and Humanitarian Situation

Since the beginning of the war, those who suffered the most is the the civil population of Afrin: Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, Armenian, Ezidis, Alewites, Christians and Muslims. According to the co-chair of Afrin Health Council between 20 January 2018 and 22 February 2018 due to the attacks of the Turkish army and its affiliated jihadist FSA groups more than 176 civilians in Afrin have been killed and 486 were injured, including children, women and old people.^{2 3 4 5}

Continuing from the beginning of the war in Afrin during the last week from 15th until 22nd February 2018 the Turkish state was attacking Afrin province with airstrikes, heavy artillery shelling, drones and tanks, and from the ground with thousands of soldiers and the jihadist FSA groups. Village guards from Northern Kurdistan, that are being payed to fight against their own people by the Turkish state are also deployed to take part in Turkish occupying operation on Northern Syria Federation. Throughout the week heavy fightings were going on until these moments between the occupying forces and SDF fighters defending their land. Especially the regions of Jinderes, Shiye, Bilbile, Rajo and Shera were under heavy attacks. At the same time many civilian areas in these regions have been targeted over the week, houses were destroyed and damaged. The Abdulrahman cemetery has been bombed, the Şehid Refiğ cemetery, the trainstation in Estira village have been bombed and on the 19th February 2018 once again the Rubar Refugee Camp became target of Turkish artillery shelling. The Turkish occupation like before is not hesitating to destroy holy places and public places, for that reason a mosque in Kherabe Sulik/Rajo and a mosque in Maryamin/Shera have been destroyed and a high-school in Jinderes district was damaged as a result of mortar shelling. At least 5 times the city center of Afrin was bombarded over the last week.

One point that needs to be put focus on is, that there was not one day during these week that civilians did not get killed and/or injured. Furthermore it is reported that due to the attacks on Afrin soil by the Turkish army severe damage and impair was inflicted on the agricultural production in Afrin.⁶

On 16 February 2018 the Turkish army was shelling the village Aranda in Shiye district with some toxic gas that resulted in the suffocation of 6 civilians. The toxic gas used was later on the 18 February 2018 by Afrin health council identified as chlorid gas.⁷

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) were resisting over the last week at all frontlines. According to the daily balance sheets issued by the SDF Media Center at all frontlines heavy clashes are going

1 Dossier: "Radical Factions and ISIS members participating in Afrin invasion"

2 Angela Reşo, Co-Chair of Afrin Health Council

3 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/chidren-victims-d9a1.pdf>

4 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/basuteh-english.pdf>

5 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/women-victims.pdf>

6 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/file-on-agriculture-afrin.pdf>

7 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/human-rights-violations-in-afrin.pdf>

on and the turkish army and affiliated jihadist groups had to suffer many losses. Besides that at least 2 APC, 6 military vehicles, 2 tanks and 2 BMP were destroyed by SDF forces.

On 17th February 2018 SDF forces carried out a special military operation, targeting and destroying a turkis army military headquarter in Qara Xaneh/Hatay.

On the 20th February 2018 as a result of several meetings between YPG and the Syrian Army, official syrian military forces arrived in Afrin to deploy on the border and defend Afrin together with SDF against the violation of international law by the turkish state.

On 18th February 2018 a bomb explosion took place in Qamişlo targeting civillians and killing 4.

On 20th February 2018 a similar attempt was done in Heseke but prevented by YPG special forces.

Resistance of people in Afrin

It is noteworthy and remarkable that despite ongoing attacks, airstrikes, heavy artillery shelling, etc. ten-thousands of people everyday take to the streets to demonstrate against turkish occupation and to support their sons and daughters which are fighting one the frontlines. Not ones but repeatedly next to protests and demonstrations mortar and howitzer shelling is happening but still the people always continue their protest until the end.

During this week also a childrens march took place in Afrin addressing the international community, especially UNICEF which is urged to take a stand and support Afrin people to be able to defend their children against the threat of turkish invasion and occupation.

At the same time over the last days hundreds of people from Sheikh Makhsud in Aleppo made their way to Afrin in support of the Afrin people resisting against turklisk occupation. Sheikh Makhsud itself was a center of war up to a year ago, always under the attacks of so called FSA.

Solidarity with Afrin

At the beginning of this week the long march of internationalists and fellowers came to an end in Geneva/Switzerland giving a statement against the silence of international community and in solidarity with Afrin resistance in front of the United Nations Office.

On the 15th February 2018 more than 50.000 people gathered for a major protest in Strasbourg to condemn the 19 year long arrest of Abdullah Ocalan, the isolation that is forced on him and to show their solidarity with Afrin resistance, strongly dooming Erdoğan government.

Everyday protests, meetings, demonstrations, rallies and manifestations all over the world, from Latin Amerika to Australia, from India to Europe and the USA are being organized by different organizations, institutions, individuals, communities, parties, NGOs, etc. to stop the attacks on Afrin, to show solidarity.

Statements and Analysis

- Bedran Çiya Kurd analyzing the current situation in Afrin and the deployment of syrian forces: “We believe it is a legitimate and positive step that the Syrian army has come to Afrin to protect the province’s borders. Because Afrin is part of Syria. Afrin’s borders are Syria’s borders. The border issue is an issue of sovereignty, and this needs to be defended in

conjunction. This duty against the invasion falls on the Syrian army just as much as it falls on us.”⁸

- NGOs from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and East-India issued an Open Letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations calling for him to take a clear stance against the turkish state aggression.⁹
- Intellectuals, academics and members of KRG parliament gave a joint call to the international community¹⁰
- An appeal was issued by some 100 writers and intellectuals from Norway to condemn the turkish state aggression on Afrin¹¹
- The Mobilisation Platform of Efrin Resistance was founded, they held a press conference in Kurdish, Arabic and English on the 21st February 2018 calling for the youth in all parts of Kurdistan and friends of the revolution internationally to join the resistance in Afrin¹²

8 Bedran Çiya Kurd, ANF English: "Our resistance has changed the political and diplomatic balance"

9 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/open-letter-to-the-secretary-general-of-un.pdf>

10 <https://icafrinresist.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/d8a8d98ad8a7d986-d8a7d995d984d989-d8a7d984d985d8acd8aad985d8b9-d8a7d984d8afd988d984d98a-d988d8a7d984d8a7d995d986d8b3d8a7d986d98a.pdf>

11 <https://www.vg.no/nyheter/meninger/i/G1ynaQ/opprop-til-stoette-for-kurdere-i-syria>

12 <https://ok.ru/video/677327866415>

