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**Destruction of Agricultural Production in the Canton Afrin
as a Result of Turkish State's Aggressions**

issued: 19. 02. 2018

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Afrin, which is located in north-west of Syria, is an agricultural place and its economy is based on agriculture. It comprises about 202,775 hectares.

The Canton Afrin is characterized by a natural mixture of mountains and plains which is ideal for agriculture. A rich variety of vegetables grows in the winter and summer seasons. Afrin as well is known for its high number of olive trees. According to official statistics there are 13 Million olive trees in Afrin. Afrin's ground is very fertile and rich of water resources.

According to estimations, the cultivated area comprises 127,000 hectares. 21,500 hectares are irrigated lands, the rest are not irrigated agricultural areas.

The remaining geographic area is distributed as follows in:

- a) 4,000 hectares of squire and buildings
- b) 1,000 hectares of lakes
- c) 30,000 hectares of sand and rocks
- d) 18,000 hectares of veld and grazing
- e) 22,000 hectares of forests.

Most crops that grow along the province and its surroundings are olives, wheat, barley, lentils, chickpeas, coriander, cumin and potatoes as well as in general summer and winter vegetables. Fruit trees are especially pomegranate, apple, berry, cherry trees and other.

According to statistics of the Commission for Agriculture in 2017, the number of sheep and goats was 140,000 and cattle about 50,000.

11,000 hectares of agricultural land in the Canton Afrin are planted with wheat. These soils need constant care like irrigation and watering. 4,500 hectares of these are in Jindiresse, Raju and Shera district.

The Commission for Agriculture of the Democratic Self-administration in the Canton Afrin provides through its committees in the townships and villages services to the farmers and stock-breeders. The Commission for Agriculture is working in order to save the forests in the province through its forestry department. The irrigation department also works to ensure the continuation of an irrigation project, that extends from the Meydanki dam up to the Jindiresse area.

Since the establishment of the Democratic Autonomy in Rojava in 2014, the Commission for Agriculture has given financial support to the farmers and supported them to solve different problems. Apart from that, seeds and fertilizer have been distributed to the farmers. Also vaccine and fodder were provided for stock farmers.

During this year (2018), in total loans given to farmers for wheat have been amounted as 559 million SYP.

Damage Caused by the Turkish Aggression:

Due to the Turkish aggression on Afrin, beginning on January 20th thousands of hectares agricultural land have forcibly remained without care. Due to attacks of the Turkish army and allied military groups the people have been confronted with severe security dangers. So the farmers have not been able to prepare their soils for the summer season.

Especially, two vital districts that have been a constant target of Turkish army's attacks are Rajo and Jinderisse:

1. The Turkish state has been shelling plains in Shadia, Surka and Qarababa of the district Rajo. This has negatively impacted the security and living conditions of the farmers. The population of this region depends on agricultural activities. Furthermore, since last season the Turkish state has cut off the water supplies coming from the River Avaresh.
2. The second district that should be mentioned, are the plains of Jindiresse. These areas are rich in water and fertile agricultural soil. Due to the frequent arbitrary shelling, the villagers stopped farming completely. We can say that just in this district more than 5,000 hectares have been left without cultivation. Due to live-danger the farmer have not been able to carry out the necessary agricultural activities for the upcoming season.



In general until the second week of February 2018 the attacks already caused a lot of damage to olive and cherry trees in the region Afrin. There are 200,000 cherry trees in the province and we expect that 90 % of crops will be affected. All those trees need constant care.

40% of the olive trees are left without care because of the Turkish attacks. According to the testimonies of villagers from the village Omera in district Shera and the village Adama in the district Rajo “the Turkish state and its mercenaries cut hundreds of olive trees.” Due to the ongoing fightings around these villages, we have not been able to go to these areas to confirm this situation by ourselves.

We can summarize the damage caused by Turkish aggression on the agricultural sector starting on January, 20th by the following points:

- 1- Our agricultural committees (in Raju, Bilbala, Shiyeh and Jindiresse) were forced to stop providing services to the farmers. The facility and building of our committee in Rajo was directly targeted by artillery shelling.
- 2- More than 50 thousand cattle have been killed in Bilbala, Rajo and Shiyeh by bombing and shelling of the Turkish army. Another amount was stolen by mercenaries and the occupation army.
- 3- In the canton Afrin there were 40 chicken fabrics. Due to the war all chicken farms were forced to shut down. In Sherawa 5 chicken farms were targeted by Turkish air-forces. Also the chicken farms in Shera, Jindiresse and Shiyeh had to be closed, due to daily shelling by the Turkish state. The Committee for Chicken Farming declared, that daily loss due to the destruction of chicken farming sector are 6 Mio SYP until now.
- 4- There is a lack of fertilizers. Due to the war there is a rise prices which also concerns agricultural supplies and needs. This has also a negative effect on farmers and consumers.
- 5- A large number of forest trees were destroyed as a result of shelling and bombardments.
- 6- The Meydanki dam was damaged due to targeted attack by Turkish air-forces and some of the irrigation channels were damaged, too.
- 7- Due to the war 75% of the population is now without an income.

Finally it is important to mention that the figures of this report have been identified in the second week of February while the bombardments and shelling on the region Afrin are still continuing.

Urgent measures are required to stop the Turkish state's aggression in order to avoid further human casualties as well as to stop the destruction of nature and livelihood in Afrin.

We appeal to all international organisations to fulfil their duties to protect the principles of international law and human rights also for the people in Afrin – including the right to life, security, access to food and water.