GLOBAL RIGHTS

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE DECEMBER 2019 ISSUE #7

ROJAVA: THIS PROJECT CANNOT HAPPEN
RADICAL DEMOCRACY, DEMOCRATIC CONFEDERALISM
As we are going to print the devastating and disturbing images of yet another massacre carried out by Turkey are reaching us.

This time the victims are the youngest. Eight children between 3 and 15 years old hit while playing in their school yard. A school opened in exile. Because these children had fled from the Turkish aggression in Afrin, their city, in March 2018.

In Til Rifat, helped by the Autonomous Administration, they had begun to laboriously reconstruct an appearance of “normality”. Opening the school for the Autonomous Administration was a crucial point in order to restore that “normal” life these children had lost.

But the “normality” did not last long. On December 2, the lives of these children were wiped out. The verb is hard, but unfortunately it dramatically expresses well the contempt of life constantly reaffirmed by Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

On 9 October 2019, the new Turkish operation against the Federation of North East Syria began. Accomplices of this extermination operation, everyone. The United States, which gave the green light to the attack by suddenly withdrawing its troops by order of President Donald Trump. Russia, which plays on several tables, always to the detriment of all the different peoples living in the territories of Syria.

The European Union that timidly protested in the face of the violence of the mercenaries in the pay of Erdogan. The UN, which is really pathetic in its "demand" for respect for human rights. As if F-16, armed drones, tanks, bombs, were something intelligent. And above all as if the goal of war was not annihilation...

Faced with this new massacre of the Kurdish people and the populations with mythical names that inhabit the north-east of Syria and Rojava, the Assyrians, the Armenians ... only the voice of those who protest at this injustice remains.

We persist, paraphrasing Antonio Gramsci, in refusing indifference. For this reason we continue to denounce the crimes of the Turkish government against Rojava and the north-east of Syria but also against the Kurdish population inside Turkey and all those who oppose the government of the “new Sultan”.

And we also denounce Ankara’s continuing attacks on northern Iraq, South Kurdistan. And we denounce the Kurdistan Regional Government for the timid objections to the increasingly heavy attacks and incursions into Iraqi territory.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, French President Emmanuel Macron and Chancellor Angela Merkel met in London at the side of the NATO summit on 3 December. The meeting ended in a stalemate, as explained in the often contradictory statements on the encounter issued by the four heads of state. If for Erdogan the meeting was “positive” for Macron “the uncertainties of the beginning” remain and for Merkel “there is a need for more meetings”. The next meeting will be in February and will again involve the four heads of state.

Meanwhile, international solidarity must make its voice heard more than ever. Because the death of the children of Til Rifat and all other civilians (over 200 as to 4 December) cannot be “only” and once again another macabre number.

This issue is dedicated to the general secretary of the Party of the Future of Syria, Hevrin Xelef, brutally murdered by mercenaries in the pay of Turkey on 12 October 2019 and to the victims of Til Rifat: Mihmed Ali (11 years old), Mistefa Mihmed (10 years old), Mihmed Haci (7 years old), Arif Cafer (6 years old), Imad Ehmed (9 years old), Abdul Fetah (3 years old), Semir Abdurihman (12 years old), Mihmed Adulriham (15 years old), Hisên Abdulha Kildedo (74 years old), Ali Mehmud Osman (63 years old)
A solution Russia does not dislike, because in this way it has been able to consolidate its centrality in defining the future scenarios of the region, also pleasing its ally Erdogan who is “paradoxically”, being one of the most armed members - useful in anti-NATO function, and allowing also Bashar al Assad to resume the role and control of the territory of the north-east, despite the Turkish mugging of a part of it through a "buffer" zone of 120 square kilometers freed from the presence of all Kurdish fighters, according to the agreements stipulated in Sochi between Vladimir Putin and Erdogan on 22 October.

Agreements that seal a real betrayal of Kurds who, on the ground, had defeated the jihadist forces of the Islamic State for the benefit of the whole world, beginning with the ungrateful Western powers, the United States and Europe, whose only concern is now linked to the risk that at least some of the approximately 11,000 Daesh mercenaries, 2,200 of whom are foreign fighters, in the hands of the SDF, may be freed from the Turkish advance and constitute a new threat of terrorist actions.

The aggression to the Kurds in Rojava and the imposition of a “security zone” in the Syrian north-east for the benefit and under the control of Turkey has thus shown once again how the world of the 21st century continues to be subject to a atavistic norm, sometimes tempered in forms but not in substance: the law of the jungle. With the not small difference that now advanced, expensive and increasingly lethal technologies of war have replaced the clubs. Territorial integrity, international law, the self-determination of peoples, democracy, human rights always affirmed with cynical rhetoric - generally with a higher voice precisely from that West so ready to violate them on the basis of their own conveniences - become waste paper when the economic, energetic, military, geopolitical and geo-strategic interests of the great powers and in particular of the first are at stake: the United States of America.

The reversal of words and truth

Only a mockingly criminal mind could call the military campaigns against the Kurds of Rojava first “Olive Branch” and then “Source of Peace”. Only a vile and petty conception of international politics could abandon them in the rapacious claws of Erdogan after having taken advantage of their courage and self-sacrifice in the deadly struggle against Daesh.

The roots of this new aggression are not only the historical hatred of the Turkish sultan towards the Kurds, the cynicism of his allies and their interests. At the bottom and at the center there is the explosive question of migratory flows and people displaced because of wars, but also the new environmental refugees. Those that appear are in fact apocalyptic scenarios, which are approaching due to delays and resistance in facing climate change. Again, the main responsibility belonging to the denier Donald Trump, who not by coincidence filled

Democratic Confederalism frightens Erdogan's Turkey because it shows in concrete terms how and how much the force of reason can oppose the reasons of force.

his administration with managers from oil companies, and his vassals, like Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro, nospit of the military dictatorship and sponsor of the mining Industry and that of agribusiness assaulting the Amazon rainforest, the irreplaceable green lung of the planet. Similarly to what happened with the unfortunate European agreement with Libya and what is being set up in the Sahel, but also to what is happening on the US border with Mexico, the primary need of the West is to seal the borders, to retain and contain refugees and migrants in distant countries, where compliance with minimum standards and human rights is not mandatory. Subcontracting violations and crimes against humanity is combined with externalization of borders. As if there was indeed a different responsibility, moral and political, between the instigator of a massacre and its executor.

The guardian of Fortress Europe

At least since, in 2016, the role of external border of Europe has been assigned to Turkey, a very well paid role. Turkey was also given an inexhaustible power over its own territory, with fierce arrogance; but, in analogous or even at times, more tenuated forms, this happens in many other countries, where the law rules with violence, it is imposed against the Union itself and a pass over the daily and bloody internal repression, the systematic disfigurement of the rights of the opposition and minorities, as well as of any rule and democratic semblance, with the massive imprisonment of members of a party represented in Parliament like the HDP, with the dismissal of regularly elected mayors, with witch hunts and raids against protesters, Kurds and even Turks.

More recently, Erdogan's cops also attacked a peaceful march in Istanbul to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2019. On this occasion, the General Command YPJ had invited women from all over the world to raise their voices against the occupation and violence inflicted on women in the Middle East, as well as everywhere else: "The struggle of the Mirabal sisters today continues to live in the struggle of thousands of women. We are ready to pay every price to defend the gains of women's struggle. For the hopes of the sisters, for the struggle of our friends Hevrîn, Dayîka Eqîde and Amar, for all the thousands of fallen friends we will further strengthen our struggle in our legitimate right to self-defense against the occupation."

The fear of self-government and confederalism

Indeed, among the causes triggering the aggression and occupation of Rojava is one that surpasses even that of the defense of "Fortress Europe": and it is the need for Turkey and its allies to destroy the only Middle East democracy, that is to say the model of democratic confederalism, whose validity and example is sought to be eradicated, so that it cannot infect other areas and peoples and cannot interfere and oppose the authoritarian regimes of the region, with which the West has a relationship of co-interest and protection.

Democratic confederalism frightens Erdogan's Turkey because it shows in concrete terms how and how much the force of reason can oppose the reasons of force: the nationalist and Islamofascist one, which oppresses peoples and ethnic groups; the male and patriarchal one, who would like to subdue women; the omnivorous and suicidal one of capitalism, which threatens and devastates the ecological balance.

For all this we are with the Kurds, here lies the meaning of this issue of "Global Rights magazine": to take sides, to take part, to show solidarity with those who are subjected to the brutality of the military and state force but who nevertheless resist, since they have on their side the irreplaceable force of reason that fights - and is destined to win - against the law of force.

Law against justice

Moreover, in general, law is nothing more than a distant relative of justice, so much so that they don't even speak among them. It is a photograph and representation of the relationships between classes at a given historical moment, a tool to preserve the dominance of one over the other, as it was said and known in the twentieth century. The law of the strongest is the quintessence of that principle, valid also in the relationship between states. Just look at how the International Criminal Court works.

In Turkey the law rules with violence, it is imposed with fierce arrogance; but, in analogous or even attenuated forms, this happens in many other countries of the world, where likewise justice has been exiled. Just as with the Kurds, justice often has no place and land to live in, but has a crystalline reason that makes it irreplaceable and powerful. Erdogan calls them terrorists, with a blatant twist of the truth of facts and history. Terrorists are those governments and states that call themselves Islamic or pretend to be democrats who impose themselves through fear, deprivation of liberty, police, torture, oppression.

The Kurds have been left alone. The United States have betrayed them, the European Union is blackmailed and turns away, the United Nations stutters powerless. They are alone, repressed and raped because they are right. This is why we stay with them and dedicate these pages to them.
After the attack launched on 9 October 2019 from Turkey, and after the heroic and courageous resistance by Azad Evdikê, Diyar Maoo, Yousef Bero, the collective BANOS FILM of Serêkaniyê, Ersin Çaksu, Orsola Casagrande and ANF press agency.

The current situation sees over three hundred thousand displaced people, at least 200 dead and thousands injured among the civilian population, including many children. The use of chemical weapons (phosphorus bombs) and illegal weapons by Turkey has already been confirmed by various international organizations.

Serêkaniyê
Serêkaniyê is a bit the flagship of the experience and practice of the Autonomous Administration which, not without difficulties, has succeeded in implementing its project of radical democracy, from below and horizontally, which finds its strength in the participation of the various nations composing the society of Northern and Eastern Syria.

After the liberation of Serêkaniyê from the Islamist forces, in 2013, the Autonomous Administration managed to organize the various components of the society, Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians, Chechens, in the co-government of the city, focusing on differences as a wealth and not as an obstacle or problem.

The schools of Serêkaniyê offer pupils, since primary school, the possibility of studying not only in their mother tongue but also in at least one or two thousand other languages spoken in the region, in addition to a “foreign” language, i.e. English or Spanish or French (progressively adding a language every two or three years).

The culture, beliefs, religions, practices of the various nations coexist in mutual respect and mutual knowledge. Because knowledge is the best “weapon” to defeat mistrust, false enemies, prejudices ...

It is not difficult to understand why this type of society is anathema to many. In fact, it undermines the key points of the nation state, one language, one flag, one religion. And it doesn’t play the game of those who feed fears in order to be able to seize and exploit the resources (natural in the first place) of others.

The BANOS FILM project
The BANOS FILM project was born in 2015 in Serêkaniyê. It is a cinema association-school that promotes, in addition to film courses, the production of films in the city of Serêkaniyê and since last year in the entire North-East Syria Federation. The project received a grant from the Province of Bolzano in 2019 which inaugurated the Kurdish Cinema Days at the Library of the World in October.

The archive and technical materials of the BANOS FILM association were rescued in the first days after the Turkish offensive and are now in Qamishlo, where a flat was rented to reorganize the association.

The work of reconstructing the memory and documenting this new offensive has now acquired a new dramatic importance.

The members of BANOS FILM are engaged in recording video materials that testify the forced exodus of the citizens of Serêkaniyê from the city but also the conditions in which they are forced to live, hosted in schools, houses and makeshift shelters in Hesekê.

Despite the devastating conditions, the members of BANOS FILM are filming and editing materials to denounce and tell the story of what is going on. Materials that are going to increase an archive that, at least in its war memory section, was thought to remain closed.

The members of BANOS FILM send the materials shot daily and tell that today more than ever the project continues. It has now turned into an ongoing and itinerant project.
NOT:
Bölgeye 1 milyon kişinin yerleştirilmesi planlanmaktadır.
New Turkish offensive in Rojava:
The role of the US and Russia

A direct and unilateral interference, the Turkish one, which in one way or another has enjoyed a placet by all the powers involved in the Syrian conflict and by the same Syrian Baath regime led by Assad which, while condemning the invasions, opposes a limited resistance both for the weakness towards the Turkish neighbor and for the conditional support of its Russian ally.

A conflict that can be an example of hybrid war and that fits into the broad context of the Syrian war, influencing its development. The establishment of the Autonomous Administration in Northern Syria and the fight against ISIS / DAESH represent one of the contention nodes through which more general strategies are outlined in the context of the resolution of the Syrian conflict and of the balance of the Middle East. Erdogan's Turkey sees its aspirations of hegemony and expansion in the area hampered, as well as the role assigned to Ankara by the great powers from the very existence of the political project of Democratic Confederationalism, both in Syria and in Turkey.

This conflicting dialectic is a prism through which one can read the changing relationships among the powers implicated in the Syrian conflict with respect to Turkey and also the relative impunity of Ankara's operations which in all respects clearly violate international law. Thirty years have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, but Russia and the United States are still the main protagonists of this conflict in the Middle Eastern area that brings into play the hegemony in this strategic area for world balances.

Putin and the Middle East bet

Putin’s Russia has implemented a Gattopardian policy based on Russian interests that have Syria as a bridgehead in the Middle East, on which Moscow wants to play a hegemonic role by taking advantage of the void left by the US erratic politics in recent years.

The Russian direct intervention (September 2015) in support of the Assad regime - put on ropes by the jihadist opposition militias - marked a turning point in the development of the conflict, consolidating the Russian military presence in the area. In addition to the only Russian military base in the Mediterranean (Tartus), military garrisons or airbases, such as those of Hmeimim (Latakia) and Shayrat (Homs), have been built throughout the Syrian territory.

Russia has not only supported Assad since the start of the conflict in 2011 but played an independent
Moscow has not only supported the Assad regime in the solution of the conflict. In this role-play, Russia has adopted an evolutionary policy both diplomatic and military towards Turkey, where the apparent contradictions, punctual alliances, agreements, military interventions have contributed to consolidate the Russian presence both in strategic terms and in the role of power decisive in the solution of the conflict. Moscow has not only supported the Assad regime itself which has accepted Moscow’s decisions on fundamental issues. A super partes role that Russia has self-assigned itself which explains Putin’s all-out play with Erdogan’s Turkey. A member of NATO, Turkey represented, both in terms of geographical location and political choice, the country that more than any other fed and supported the armed opposition to Assad, including ISIS, and has excluded from the outset the Northern Syria Autonomous Administration which Ankara considered its main enemy.

In this role-play, Russia has adopted an evolutionary policy both diplomatic and military towards Turkey, where the apparent contradictions, punctual alliances, agreements, military interventions have contributed to consolidate the Russian presence both in strategic terms and in the role of power decisive in the solution of the conflict. Moscow has not only supported the Assad regime but has been advocating, since 2013, the presence of Kurdish representation in the ephemeral United Nations peace initiatives, the Geneva Conferences; has hosted and still hosts a representative of the Northern Syria Federation, has promoted a dialogue between Damascus and Qamishlo, partially recognizing the Kurdish demands for changes to the constitution of Syria on a federal basis. Despite being antithetical to the interests of Turkey, this policy allowed Moscow to play the “Kurdish card” with Turkey to create contradictions within NATO and to face the economic offensive of the USA and Europe with the economic sanctions imposed for the “Ukraine issue”.

In this sense, the Russian government, starting in 2014, has entered into a series of economic and military agreements with Ankara, developing and consolidating the already existing ones that led Russia to be. In 2019, the second partner for Turkey’s trade interchange: the construction of the Bluestream and Turkstream gas pipelines, the construction of the first Turkish nuclear power plant in Akkuyu, the development of economic relations in other sectors such as tourism and the military, with the purchase of the S-400 missile defense system. Direct explicit support of the Erdogan government to the anti-Assad militias, Moscow’s documented accusations of Ankara’s support for ISIS, the shooting down, in November 2015, by the Turkish aviation of the Russian fighter plane SU-24 (the first Russian plane shot down by a NATO country since 1952), the killing, in November 2016, of Russian ambassador Andrey Karlov in Ankara, were all put in a drawer. This partnership of interests was sealed with the agreements of Astana and Sochi (2016-18) between Russia, Iran and Turkey which in fact meant the use of the “Kurdish card” out in the open and the green light to invade Northern Syria as bargaining chip in the broader context of the conflict.

The weakening of the anti-Assad militias that besieged Aleppo coincided with the go-ahead for Operation Euphrates Shield (August 2016), the Turkish invasion to stop the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) advance in Northern Syria after the liberation of Mambij. The Russian military agreement on the Canton of Afrin in 2017 paved the way for the Olive Branch operation in March 2018 in exchange for the descalation zones in the region of Idlib, anti-Assad militia strongholds, with the presence of 12 Turkish military garrisons. And the recent agreement of 22 October 2019 signed in Sochi between Putin and Erdogan legitimizes, for Moscow, the presence of Turkey on the Syrian territory but at the same time extends the Russian presence on the border with Turkey where until now US military were present.

**Trump-USA conflict of interest**

The arrival of Russian helicopters at the Sarrin base near Kobane abandoned by the US army on November 15, is one of the consequences of the Sochi agreement between Erdogan and Putin. The US withdrawal announced by Trump with a letter to Erdogan on 7 October, which gave way to Operation Peace Spring, closed the circle of the US swinging policy towards the Administration of Northern Syria and Turkey. Moreover, on the Syrian conflict the debate within the US administrations has seen the contrast between the American State Department and the CIA.

US direct support for Syrian Democratic Forces began in 2015 to coincide with the Russian and Iranian intervention in support of Assad and with a change of course in supporting anti-Assad militias and fighting ISIS, which is the official motivation of the US presence in Syria.

The osmosis between the various militias and ISIS, the direct and indirect support of Turkey, in addition to the failure of the creation of a militia directly controlled by the USA, with a cost of 500 million dollars, led the US administration to support the SDF, which on the ground were the most effective contrast to ISIS.

The Obama administration first and then Trump always stressed that support for the SDF was not political but military in the fight against ISIS but not against the Assad regime. But support for the SDF, whose main component is the Kurdish YPG (People’s Defense Units) considered a terrorist organization by Ankara, has involved a dual language in US diplomatic activity towards Turkey. Erdogan was able to move on this contradiction by attacking the US like no other NATO country for this “marriage against nature” (US-SDF) pulling the rope of diplomatic and economic relations.

With the advent of Trump at the White House, the US policy has taken on a provocative tone, with bombastic statements, announced, and within hours...
dismissed. The scorching climate between the two countries was in fact always deactivated with decisions that satisfied Ankara, which continues to have the fourth commercial partner in the US, but above all the first when it comes to the supply of arms.

Moreover Trump has never denied admiration for Erdogan and even the Muslim Ban, a law wanted by the US president to limit the entry of citizens coming from muslim countries, does not apply to Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, US allies. Business is Business. Trump is linked to pro-Erdogan lobbies that operate in the United States, fully funded by Ankara, which is consistent with the interests that Trump himself has in Turkey represented by the Trump Tower in Istanbul.

Despite the threats of sanctions and accusations made by US state apparatuses to the Erdogan government, the latter moves as if everything were actually part of an already written script. The arrogance and impunity shown during Erdogan’s visit to Trump in Washington, in May 2017, by the Turkish president’s bodyguards who savagely attacked a peaceful demonstration is in line with the nomination, last October, as president of the Istanbul stock exchange, of Hakan Atilla, director of the Hal-Bank convicted by a US court for violating Iran’s embargo laws.

Despite the contrasts within the security apparatus and the promises of the US military commanders, Trump pursued a policy of slow abandonment of the support to the SDF, not without sudden changes of course, justifying this choice with the ISIS defeat on the field. Ankara’s pressures have found favorable ground with the voluntary or forced exit of men from the American administration who protested the abandonment of the SDF considered “the best ally in the fight against ISIS” and denounced the Turkish complicity with ISIS as is the case of former Syrian envoy Brett McGurk.

Confirming the mistrust of the US military apparatus towards its Turkish NATO ally, there is the joint US-SDF operation which led to the killing, on 27 October, of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in Barisha (Idlib) and one of his deputies, Abu al-Hassan al-Muhajera in Jarablus. Al-Baghdadi was five kilometers from a Turkish military garrison while Abu al-Hassan al-Muhajera lived in Jarablus in northern Syria, under Turkish control since 2016, after the Euphrate Shield operation.

Despite these evidences, Trump has in fact paved the way for the Turkish invasion, first with the promise of joint Turkish-US patrols on the Turkish-Syrian border, the withdrawal of the SDF and the dismantling of defense posts and then with the announcement of the withdrawal of the US forces from the border that eventually led to the invasion of the Turkish army and the jihadist militias of the Syrian National Army. An invasion also approved de facto by NATO through its secretary Stoltemberg.

Russia and the United States have redrawn new borders where ethnic and religious political pluralism, participatory democracy and gender have been repressed in blood. Where the announced ethnic cleansing is accepted and religious fundamentalism governs those territories.
The Turkish state placed in strategic places on the border line the groups which claimed to be composed of “Turkmens”, such as Sultan Murad, Sultan Suleyman Shah, Sultan Mehmed Fatih, Muntasir Billallah and Samarkand. While it puts the groups composed of Arabs on the front line to fight against the Kurds.

The idea of the Turkish state is to create a sort of “Turkmen belt” on the border with Northern Syria.

Worst case scenario: The Adana Agreement

After the Adana Agreement reached on 20 October 1998 between the Turkish state and the Syrian regime, Turkish intelligence began to invest in these groups and is now trying to legitimize the occupation by placing these groups on the 5 km line along the border line.

The Turkish state, knowing that it will not be permanent in Syria, places elements of these 5 groups in the regions in order to implement the “5-kilometer hot line” article on the border line.

The Turkish state keeps these 5 groups behind in order not to suffer losses in the conflicts. While these strategic groups have under their control important places such as border gates and road routes, other groups, mostly composed of Arabs and foreigners, are leading inward.

After the occupation of Afrin the mercenaries of other groups competing with Sultan Murad had been clashing with one another.

Now along the border of Syria there are groups composed of “Turkmen”: the majority being from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, the Uighurs composed of mercenaries brought from the Caucasus and Central Asia. These groups were located in Idlib, Cebel Ekrad (Kurdish mountain), Cebel Turkman (Turkmen mountain) Bab El Hewa Border Crossing, Entarib, Cindirê, Raco, Bilbilê and era districts in Afrin, Bab Al Selame Border Gate in Ezaz.

Now the Turkish state has deployed them on the border lines of the region and started to settle these groups along the first 5 kilometers of the border and in Girê Spî and Serêkaniyê.

THE TURKISH STATE IS USING DIFFERENT GROUPS TO OCCUPY SYRIA. THEY ALL GO UNDER THE NAME OF “SYRIAN NATIONAL ARMY-SMO (CEY UL WETENÎ)” AND EACH HAS A SEPARATE AGENDA ALTHOUGH IN THE END THEY ALL SERVE ONE AGENDA, TURKEY’S.

THE TURKISH STATE HAS ONE PLAN, WHICH IS TO DE-KURDISIZE NORTHERN AND EASTERN SYRIA AND ULTIMATELY TO INVADE THE REGION, SUCH IT DID WITH ISKENDERUN LIVASI (HATAY) AND SELL IT TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

THE TURKISH STATE USES DOZENS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS, MANY OF THEM ORIGINATING FROM AL QAEDA AND THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD TO OCCUPY SYRIA.

National Syrian Army:

The National Syrian Army is the mercenary group of Turkey, working in Syria. It is composed of different groups, mostly composed of Turks and otherb groups from the Caucasus and Central Asia.

ERSIN ÇAKSU
There are 29 groups under the name of Syrian National Army working for Erdogan.

1- Ehrar El Ereqive: This group broke off from ISIS in Deir Ezzor and moved to Idlib. It came to the fore for its brutality, plundering, theft and rape.

2- Cey El Nuxbe: Formerly Cey El Tahrir announced in 2017 that they reorganized under the name Cey El Nuxbe. This group led by Mhemed Emed El Seyêd operated in Aleppo, Latakia, Hama and Idlib. Together with Nusra they killed Kurds in Til Eran and Til Hasil. They took part in the occupation of Afrin.

3- Liva Suqur Al Sham: This group, which was founded by Ehmed Abu Isa in 2011, worked with Al Nusra for a long time, and later joined Ehrar Al Sham. Known for its jihadist ideas, contains a large number of foreign mercenaries. They took part in the occupation of Afrin.

4- Feylaq El Damascus: Established in 2014 with the participation of 19 groups. This group, headed by Fadil Elah El Heci, took part in the attacks against eheba and êx Meqsûd. This group, which is also in the occupation of Afrin, has good relations with the Turkish state and is one of the largest structures within the SMO.

5- Ehrar al-Sham: This group, one of the largest, was founded in 2011 by Hesen Ebo. The group, which operates in many places in western Syria, had a fluctuating relationship with Al Nusra. They’re working together in Idlib right now. They joined the invasion of Afrin.

6- Hamza Division: This group, which was previously active mainly in Dera, Aleppo and Damascus countryside, started to operate mainly in Bab when relations with the Turkish state developed. Led by former ISIS member Seyf Ebubekir, has good relations with the Republic of Turkey and took part in the occupation of Afrin.

7- Liwa El Fatah: This group, which had previously worked with different groups, announced that it had joined the al-Shamiya in 2017.

8- Jaysh al-Ahfad: One of the first groups to form the National Army Bloc. Together with Liwa Samar-kand, they were initially part of the Firqet El Hemze. This group, led by êx Husen Geud, took part in the occupation of Afrin.

9- 23rd Division: Formerly active in Aleppo and Idlib, where we found it under the name of Sertip Hesen Recûb. They took part in the Euphrates Shield and the occupation of Afrin.

10- 9th Division: This group, which was organized as special forces in 2014, was part of the Hezim movement supported by the Pentagon. When this structure, which was in favor of the Islamic idea, carried out some actions against Al Nusra, they were liquidated by Al Nusra, and the Turkish state reorganized them. They joined the occupation of Afrin from the south of the city.

Along the border with Syria there are groups made up of “turkmens”: most of them come from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and then there are the Ughur, mercenaries brought from Caucasus and Central Asia.
11- Foc El Mustefa: Eli Necar Abu Mejdo is the leader of this group based in Marê which is known for its proximity to the Turkish state. This group, known for its statements against the Kurds and the SDF, was found in Afrin, especially on the Bibilê line.

12- Liva El Mexavir: In 2013, this group, which operates in Homs and Damascus countryside, withdrew to Idlib after an agreement with the regime and took part in the occupation of Afrin.

13- Firqet Al Mutasim: This group, based in Marê, received arms and training support from the United States and was led by Mihemed Xelil Hesen. They took part in the occupation of Afrin.

14- Front Al-Shamiya: This group was established in 2014 and was headed by Ebid El Eziz Selamê. When Asifet El Shimal joined them in 2017, Abu El Sico took part in the direction. They took part in the occupation of Afrin.

15- 5th Regiment: Also known as Foc El Xamês is led by Mistefa Kepso. This group operates in northern Hama and Idlib and joined the occupation of Afrin.

16- Liva Al Shimal: It was created by Feylaq Al Sham by bringing together groups such as El Fecir El Sadêq, Sirac al Din, Ansar al Allah, Omar Abu al Hezen and Mexawir al Sunne. This gang group operating in Manbij, Jarablus and Shehba region took part in the occupation of Afrin.

17- Rical El Harb: It is a group that operates around Aleppo and Idlib.

18- Liwa Sultan Osman: Founded in 2017 by Raxêb Osman, nicknamed Abu Omar, this group was located in the vicinity of Bibilê in Afrin.

19- Jaysh Al Islam: Established in 2011 in Eastern Guta, was one of the largest groups. The commander of this structure, known for its Salafi ideas, was Zehran Elûş. This Saudi-backed group used chlorine gas in the Shêx Meqsûd attacks. After Zehran Elûş was killed, his brother Mihemed Elûş took his place. This group joined the Riyadh and Astana meetings, and after leaving Guta settled together with Feylaq Al Rahman in Bab and Afrin.

20- Festakim Kema Umirt: Istanbul was the place where it was founded in 2012 with the participation of 7 groups. Mistef Biron (Seq is Abu Quêteyb) is the leader. The group has developed many partnerships, and is supported by Turkey, Qatar and the Saudis.

21- Jaysh al-Sharqiyyah: It is one of the small groups and is members are from the eastern regions of Syria.

22- Suwar al-Jazeera: Shah Ahmad and Abu Zeynêb al-Hashimi are the leaders of this group, which emerged with the aim of fighting against the Kurds in the Cizirê region. This Jarablius-based group took part in the attacks on Manbij and the occupation of Afrin.

23- 51st Brigade: Heysem Cemil fesi was the head of the group that was established in 2015. When he took part in the National Army, the group leader became Mihemed Dêrî. They attended the meetings in Geneva and took part in the occupation of Afrin.

24- Firka al Shimaliya: Liwa Fursan El Heq was the first name of this group which was founded in 2012 in the town of Kefer Nubul, in Idlib. The CIA-backed group was headed by Faris al-Beyoush, but in 2017 Ebid Kerim Yehya took his place. He was also killed in Şêx Meqsûd.

25- Sultan Murad: The establishment of this group, to unite Turkmens when the Syrian war started, dates back to 1998 after the Adana Agreement. Group leader, Yusuf El Selêh’s relationship with MIT goes as far as the Adana Agreement.

Fehim Isa was in charge of the field and Serb Ehmêd Osman was in charge of the military. It is the
group on which the Turkish state invests the most. Control of borders and borders gates are left to this group.

26- Sultan Suleyman Shah: This group, which was composed of Turkmens in Bab region, tried to form some Kurdish groups in Qibesin region. However, it did not succeed. This group, headed by Abu Emse, took part in the occupation of Afrin.

27- Sultan Mehmed Fatih: This group was established by the Turkish state in the town of Xendura in Jarablus in 2012 and stayed in Aleppo for a long time. They joined Sultan Murad in 2015 and left in 2016. They mainly occupy Jarablus, El Rai and Ezaz and took part in the occupation of Afrin.

28- Muntasir Billallah: This group, which was previously located in Aleppo, operates mostly in Bab, Al Rai and Jarablus. This group is led by Firas Basha, works directly under the Turkish intelligence and took part in the occupation of Afrin.

29- Samarkand Brigade: Founded in Aleppo countryside in 2016, this group is supported by the Turkish state. It consists of people brought from Central Asia, especially Uzbeks. They explained the reasons for their establishment as fighting against the Kurds and the regime and took part in the occupation of Afrin.
According to the plans and propaganda of Erdogan, the safe zone, 30 kilometers deep, he secured in north-east Syria with a military occupation operation, will constitute a valid and necessary “barrier against terrorists”. The other and main objective was to secure a territory to resettle a good part of the more than three and a half million Syrians who had escaped the war and who are currently detained in Turkish refugee camps, based on agreements with the European Union which rewarded the infamous service with six billion euros.

For the ultranationalist sultan, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party), but also the PYD (Democratic Union Party) of Rojava and, in general, the Kurdish people are nothing but terrorists to annihilate, as indeed he has been trying to do that for a long time.

Terrorist” is a definition which is now increasingly becoming an “umbrella word”, under which to enclose the most diverse phenomena; a label that is readily attributed to the enemy, never to friends, accomplices or allies, and much less to oneself. It is those who have the power to dominate the media and to write the History who confer this qualification or don’t.

The Israeli Menachem Begin had been head of the Irgun, a Zionist paramilitary group, until its dissolution in 1949; he was wanted internationally for terrorist crimes, including a bomb detonated in 1946 in a hotel in Jerusalem, claiming 91 victims. Later, he became Prime Minister of Israel from 1977 to 1983 and was even awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1978: massacres and bombs, in short, are sometimes considered a praiseworthy viaticum for peace, a legitimate and worthy practice, albeit substantiated in indiscriminate murders. Even more true for the massacres directly carried out by a state power, and even here the examples and references could be many and too many, starting with the “industrial” massacres, that is to say from wars in all their declinations, aggression, robbery or “humanitarian”. Terrorist is the one who loses them, hero and patriot who wins.
Turkey, the godfather of Daesh

Coming to recent times, in much of the world Daesh/ISIS, the self-proclaimed Islamic State, is unanimously judged and condemned as a bloody terrorist structure. A phenomenon, however, whose origins, ties and characteristics are avoided and not reconstructed: “Daesh has a mother: the invasion of Iraq. But also a father: Saudi Arabia and its religious-industrial apparatus.

Saudi Arabia is a successful Daesh”, has effectively summarized Kamel Daoud, Algerian intellectual and journalist. It could be added that Daesh also had a godfather, very protective and benevolent: Erdogan’s Turkey, precisely the one who accuses of terrorism the Kurds, or those fighters who, organized in the Syrian Democratic Forces, militarily defeated the Islamic State, being allied with the US-led coalition, with that same Donald Trump who has now betrayed them by handing them over to the fierce revenge of Erdogan, gratifying them also of the posthumous judgment of being “more dangerous than ISIS”.

In the changing game of alliances between powers, realpolitik and cynical and hypocritical turns, in the past years even Russia had openly accused Erdogan and his family of managing illegal trafficking with ISIS the oil which he “stole from the legitimate owners of the Syria and Iraq”. Just as Turkey itself was suspected of arming, training and managing across its borders the flow to Syria of foreign fighters eager to enlist in jihadist militias and even to cut off some Western heads.

The business of the war on terror

Nothing new: consistency, loyalty and objectivity certainly do not belong to those states and governments whose primary interest is to oppress the people and to favor that “military-industrial and political complex” of which we have already spoken (“Global Rights”, No. 1/2015). Indeed, oil and war corporations have always been a government within governments, starting with the US one. Over 2 million and 200 thousand people work for the Pentagon alone, over one third of them military, 742 thousand civilians, 826 thousand in the National Guard and in the reserve forces; that Department of Defense (but it would be more appropriate to call it of Offense) owns hundreds of thousands of buildings and structures scattered over more than five thousand sites, assets for over 2,400 billion dollars and manages a budget which, in 2018 alone, was 639 billions of dollars. Together with the many other military bodies, intelligence agencies and those of scientific, spatial and technological research for war purposes, it constitutes a sort of State within the State, with enormous resources and a large yet opaque and elusive power.

It is a lump of interests that has managed to make a huge new business out of the war on terror not only a political but also an economical one, parallel to that of the traditional war, including privatizing and outsourcing numerous activities to contractors and external companies. Just a few figures: from the attack on the Twin Towers in 2001 to the beginning of 2018, the US spent $ 2,800 billion on fighting terrorism; in those years, as much as 16 percent of the US budget was destined to combat Islamic fundamentalism.

The figures on world arms trade are also impressive. The United States is also a lion’s share here, with 36% of the global volume of business, and being Turkey’s leading supplier.

From the attempted coup to the real one

Among the effects of the attempted coup against Erdogan in July 2016, is having cracked his relations with the United States, which he suspected of being the coup sponsor, and, conversely, those of having strengthened the understanding with Vladimir Putin, who would have instead alerted him about the current danger.

In reality, the failed coup was a precious opportunity given to the Turkish president for a very heavy,...
and still lasting, internal repression against every opposition as well as for a further strengthening of its powers. A partial balance shows 4,279 dismissed judges, 3,000 of them arrested and in pre-trial detention, hundreds of radios, newspapers, websites have been closed, 150 journalists are still in prison, while thousands of teachers have been removed from their posts in the universities and schools.

To the direct and “legal” state repression, the special laws, the curfew, the bombing of PKK settlements in the Kurdish cities of southeastern Anatolia such as Cizre, Sirnak, Nusaybin and Sur, with many thousands of civilians killed and tens of thousands of displaced people were also joined by the “dirty war”, with thousands of cases of forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, with massacres and attacks, such as the one in Ankara that on 10 October 2015 caused about 100 victims during a public meeting attended by members of the HDP, the Peoples’ Democratic Party, associations, trade unions and peace activists, with targeted killings even in European countries, such as the one that took place in Paris on 9 January 2013 where three Kurdish militants, Fidan Dogan, Sakine Cansiz and Leyla Saylemez, were executed.

A murder for which the responsibility of senior officials of the Turkish secret services have emerged.

The Turkish state crimes are therefore innumerable, although still tolerated for various reasons and mutual convenience by the international community, Europe and the USA, as we have seen again at the time of the Turkish invasion of Rojava and the subsequent acceptance of the status quo for the benefit of Erdogan.

But if his regime can still impose itself with force and blackmail, with NATO weapons and bases present on its territory, it cannot prevent the clear truth from emerging in the consciousness of global democratic public opinion: the terrorists are them.
"Only through inclusive dialogue we could build a democratic Syria."

PYD (DEMOCRATIC UNION PARTY) CO-CHAIR SAHOZ Hesen in this long interview with Serkan Demirel explains why the United States have turned their back on Kurds, the role of Russia and Syria and the various agreements reached with Turkey by the different players on the field, almost always to the detriment of Kurds and the democratic confederalism system implemented in Northern and Eastern Syria since 2012.

Mr. Hesen, the Turkish state continues its occupation attacks on North East Syria, there was agreement among US and Russia and Turkey. Can you explain what is going on?

First of all, I must state that the situation in North East Syria is actually a process of chaos and what is happening in the region is closely related to all the problems of Syria.

The eyes of local and foreign powers in Syria are on the Rojava region, because these lands are rich in both underground resources and culturally. In addition, the democratic life built in the region, the experience gained and the high presence of Kurds in the region disturb the neighboring countries, especially the Turkish state.

Since 2011, the Turkish state has been shaping its Syrian policy, plans and projects on the territory of Rojava. It supported several mercenary groups and attacked the region. The Turkish state, which cannot get what it wants with mercenary groups like Al Nusra and ISIS, is now attempting to occupy the region itself.

Turkey is trying to prevent Kurds from having a status and along with that it is trying to crash the system built here where Arab, Syriac and Armenian peoples are living together. We have been pushing for a resolution of any tension from the beginning with talks. On this basis there were some agreements with the USA, but every time the Turkish state carried out plans to occupy Rojava. Finally, it has launched invasion attacks using mercenary groups.

In this process, we have warned both the US and Russia that the Turkish state’s invasion attempt...
will affect not only the Kurds but all the people of the region and will bring Syria into chaos again. If a solution is not found, we will resist any occupation. However, when the Turkish state preferred the occupation and massacre attacks, we clearly resisted. Our resistance to the invasion has foiled Turkey’s plans. Our resistance and the fact that the peoples of the world stand beside our righteous resistance have created a new agenda in the world. As such, states had to change their politics.

Then, under the request and with the approval of the SDF, the United States entered into an agreement with the Turkish state. Despite the good-will we have shown here, the Turkish state did not comply with the agreement it made with the United States and continued its attacks on new regions and villages. They have crossed the 30-32 km border line.

After that, a ceasefire took place, agreed between Russia and the Turkish state. According to the agreement, the Turkish state would not expand the occupation area and would remain bounded within the zone it has agreed. The SDF did not know the contents of this agreement. There were negotiations with the Russians on some points of this agreement. Previously, negotiations were held with the Russians and the regime on border security.

we are continuing our efforts to reach an implementation of the agreements. The Turkish state today does not comply with the agreement it has made with the Russians, it is still carrying out occupation attacks. Despite the agreement, it also attacked the regime forces on the border. According to news, a number of regime forces have withdrawn, others have been captured.

In other words, the practice and plan of the Turkish state is based on breaking Syria and we express this in every meeting we hold. As a result of these attacks, there is currently a chaos in the region. The Turkish state does not comply with the agreements and ceasefire. Today, Erdogan talks about attacking Kobane. Erdogan wants also to reactivate ISIS with these attacks in the region.

Agreements with the Turkish state may have been made, but the war and occupation attacks are still going on. We told the US, Russia, Europe, everyone, the attacks on Rojava will deepen and this will deepen the crisis in Syria. The Turkish state will never be confined to a city in northern Syria.

In the agreement signed by both the US and Russia with the Turkish state, a 32 km area is mentioned for withdrawal. What does this mean?

The SDF mentioned no dimension when it comes to withdrawal in its statement. They just said ‘we will reasonably keep our forces away’. The Turkish state is trying to create a justification for the occupation using the excuse of ‘YPG on our border’.

On this basis, the SDF has reached an agreement with Russians and the regime in order to have regime soldiers on the borders on the basis that both public order and civilian administration would remain as they were before.

The SDF and YPG are not present in the city center, where there were only domestic defense forces. Under the agreement, if the regime’s troops settled on the border, the YPG and SDF forces could pull back one step, which would not be a major problem. If they guarantee us on this and if such a solution exists, it would not be a problem for us to have Russian and regime forces on the border thus to prevent the attacks carried out by the Turkish state. The fact that the regime is on the borders is not an issue for us, we have already expressed that we are in favor of a political and negotiated solution with the regime.

All this said, if there is an attack against our region carried out by the Turkish state or another power, we will protect our people in every way we can.

Despite the statement of the Autonomous Administration which it has accepted agreements and ceasefires with the US and Russia, every statement issued by Turkey is a new threat to invade...

Non abbiamo concordato di ritirarci di 32 km: un We did not agree to withdraw 32 km, such a debate is wrong. We have not accepted the existence of the invaders on our land, what we accepted is a ceasefire.

In this process, we are looking for a solution through negotiations with Russia, the US and European states. We tell everyone that we do not accept the Turkish state’s plan to invade North East Syria and we will resist it.

We say that the ceasefire or alliances can be turned into dialogue if we are interested in Syria’s future. If the regime forces come to the border, the pretext of occupation of the Turkish state will disappear. However, if the Turks continue to stay in the region we will resist as Syrian people.

Erdogan did not accept the agreement with the United States because he wants to occupy North East Syria. We told Russia and the United States that the Turks did not respect the ceasefire and agreements. And indeed they have not.

Despite the fact that it was the one who made the agreement, Turkey is not respecting it.

Russia and the US have to see Erdogan attitude. Unless the Turkish state is completely removed from the region, there is never going to be a solution to the crisis in Syria and the whole world has to see this.
We think that the United States will stay for the oil. They don't want the oil to fall into the hands of ISIS, or perhaps in the hands of the [Damascus] regime or Iran.

We think the US will stay for oil. They do not want the oil to fall into the hands of ISIS, or perhaps in the hands of the [Damascus] regime or Iran. This policy concerns the United States. It is true that they have returned to some areas from where they had already withdrawn, but they have not settled in every region. They don't seem to be going back to the areas where the regime is located. We cannot know all the military relations, but it seems that they will stay in the region and settle in certain areas. I do not think that they will settle in as many regions as before, as they will only stay in Dêir Ezzor and Cizîre canton. The meetings of the United Nations-sponsored Syrian Constitutional Committee are taking place in Geneva. As before, representatives of the Autonomous Administration were not invited to these meetings. How do you evaluate this situation? The crisis in Syria will never be solved in this way. There is no solution without us in Geneva. It is a one-sided perspective and does not provide a solution. Social problems that occur after heavy wars are never solved without inclusiveness. If there is a solution, it should cover every party involved in that conflict. On the one hand, there is a regime, which has led to many economic and cultural problems in society in the past 50 years, on the other side there are groups called 'opposition' which survive with the support from other countries. Most, in this group, are supported by Turkey, radical jihadist sectors, that are trying to give them legitimacy by sitting on one side of the table under the name of the 'opposition'.

There is a democratic power that is not invited at the talks table, but represents a third way in Syria, the democratic autonomous administration, which is neither linked to the regime nor to regional powers. Yet, we are the only forces that want a democratic Syria, but we are not at the table. We have repeatedly stated that there is no solution to the war if we are not all at the talks table. Everyone knows very well that we are the only democratic force in this land. This is a great deficiency in terms of the future of Syria if we are not all at the table. Those at the table are in pursuit of protecting their own interests, while the autonomous administration defends the existence of a democratic Syria. Every time you are not called at the negotiation table is because of Turkey. Is it really like this? It is an excuse to say that the Turks do not accept us. The Turkish state already wants to kill us, to destroy us. If the attitude of the Turks is to act, we could never bring a solution to Syria. We do not agree to attribute this to the attitude of the Turks each time. We said to Russia to be the guarantor country and start negotiating with the regime. We always say that no one can avoid the Kurdish question. Today, all peoples in North East Syria want to live in a democratic Syria under the roof of the autonomous administration. Syria will no longer be able to be ruled as before. Therefore, we have to find solutions to our problems through dialogue. Our alliance with the regime today is related to the border, but we believe that this alliance should be further advanced on other issues.
TEV-ÇAND (TEVGERA DEMOKRATIK YA ÇAND Ù HUNERÊ MEZOPOTAMYA: DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT FOR MESOPOTAMIAN CULTURE AND ART) WAS BORN WITHIN THE KURDISH LIBERATION MOVEMENT TO PRESERVE, PRODUCE AND SPREAD KURDISH CULTURE THAT, AS THE LANGUAGE, HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO A HEAVY REPRESSION FROM THE STATES AMONG WHICH KURDISTAN HAS BEEN DIVIDED (TURKEY, IRAN, IRAQ AND SYRIA).

TEV-ÇAND IN EUROPE HAS OVER 4000 MEMBERS, KURDISH ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, INTELLECTUALS, WRITERS FORCED INTO EXILE.

The first photo meeting visitors entering the TEV ÇAND cultural centre in Kobane is that of Hozan Serhat, one of the members of Koma Berxwedan. Hozan Serhat was a PKK guerrilla and a fine musician who played saz and composed some of the most precious songs in contemporary Kurdish music. His album, Hewler, a gem, its songs a 'must' for all musicians.

Hozan Osman is the co-chair of TEV-ÇAND cultural centre in Kobane. He welcomes GR in the centre which has been taken over by TEV-ÇAND after the regime left the city.

Before that, Hozan Osman says, in regime times, Kurds would meet at Bakir Kurd’s house. Kurd is a dengbej, kurdish storyteller.

The regime, says Hozan Osman, “did not allow Kurdish ceremonies to be held, but in Bakir Kurd’s house we were able to share stories and songs. In 2013 we moved into this building”. In fact the building being shown to us used to be an Arabic Cultural Centre, but after the victory of the Rojava Revolution it has been turned, as Hozan Osman proudly says, “into a democratic cultural centre, where all cultures and languages have their own status and are celebrated”.

In other words, this is the house of the plurality of cultures of languages of the city of Kobane. “Everyone is free to celebrate in its own culture”, says Hozan Osman.

Reclaiming our own culture

The centre’s main activity is music. Here children get courses in a variety of instruments but can get also singing classes. “Most teaching is done
through playing activities”, says Hozan Osman. There is a recording studio and classes of folklore and dance are also given.

“It wasn’t easy - admits Hozan Osman - to get people used to celebrate freely in their own culture and language again. It has to be remembered that in regime times all cultures except the Arabic were considered by the regime as ‘something bad’.

And with the years, people got to feel that their own culture and language was something which needed to be kept and celebrated in secret, or even forgotten or set aside. In this sense - says Hozan Osman - the assimilation policy of the Baath regime worked”.

The Autonomous Administration since its establishment in Kobane and the rest of Northern and Eastern Syria, has always given culture - or rather cultures in plural - a prominent level.

In fact, cultures (together with languages) are one of the pillars of the Democratic Autonomy model proposed and implemented in the liberated areas of Northern and Eastern Syria. So the Administration made extraordinary efforts to ensure all cultures and languages were given opportunities and spaces where to express themselves.

Working with children

"Children - says Hozan Osman - are coming to this cultural centre to learn about their traditional instruments, music, dances, language. We have opened a cultural school and now these subjects related to all areas of culture are taught in an academic way”.

Hozan Osman points out that one of the attempts by all regimes is that of destroying other people’s cultures. "Indeed - he says - we saw this, in all its brutality, in Afrin when the Turkish state invaded the city and villages.

Turkey wanted to erase the cultural values of the people of Afrin, and it did it violently, by changing the names of streets and schools replacing the
Working with children is crucial as children are the future of our lands.

original ones with Turkish names”.

Some of the families who were forced to flee Afrin had found shelter in Kobane and TEV-CAND has been working with children since they arrived here.

“There are now around 25 children coming to the centre - says Hozan Osman - to be trained and to recuperate their culture”.

Working with children, says Hozan Osman, “is vital for us, because children are the future of our lands.

We promote all cultures in the same ways, which is why we have opened smaller centres in villages where there are other cultures and identities as well. No one is discriminated and no one feels discriminated in the Democratic Autonomy model. We are very proud of this”.

The martyrs of culture

We are talking while walking around the centre. The library has some 13,000 books, a little treasure for all culture lovers. “This building - recalls Hozan Osman - were heavily damaged during the DAESH siege, in 2014. Artists who worked for this centre have fallen martyrs defending Kobane”.

A stone remembers and pays tribute to the martyrs of TEV-CAND.

Cinema projects

Hozan Osman reiterates the importance of working with children and the population living in the villages around Kobane. “Every day - he says - we go to the villages and we present a film or have a talk”. Cinema is the other field which TEV-CAND is promoting. Indeed this year the Rojava Film Festival will be held in Kobane, from 13 to 19 November.

A Cinema Commune, on the style of that of Serêkaniyê, has been created in Kobane as well. A group of film makers have been producing short films and scripts for feature films are currently being written.

We continue our tour of the centre, going to the first floor. Here an entire room is dedicated to art. In fact, it is more like a painting workshop. Paints are hanging from the walls and laid on the floor.

Many are portraits of the young YPG and YPJ martyrs who liberated the city in Kobane, in January 2015. There is a portrait of Sara, Sakine Cansiz, one of the founders of the PKK and a source of inspiration for young Kurdish women. She was murdered in Paris on 9 January 2013, together with two other women Kurdish politicians, Fidan Dogan and Layla Saylemez.

There are portraits of Kurdish People’s Leader
Abdullah Ocalan, who has imagined, dreamed and theorised the Democratic Autonomy model which is now being successfully implemented in Northern and Eastern Syria.

Beside portraits are more abstract paintings, landscapes, mythological legends and stories.

Theatre projects

We go downstairs again and stop in front of a little ‘museum corner’. Here the photo of Ayşe Sen, old instruments and beautiful kilims.

“We are also working on theatre projects. - says Hozan Osman - We have been rehearsing a play and we will be performing it soon.

The play is in Arabic and Kurdish languages, which are the main languages in the Canton.

The defeat of Kobane was also a defeat of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who during the siege of the city in 2014 had declared: “Kobane is about to fall. And if it hasn’t fallen yet, it will fall.” It did not happen.

Today, commander Meryem Kobane tells Global Rights Magazine: “In Kobane, our people fought for all of humanity. What inspired us during the months of siege was also international solidarity, in particular the one expressed by women who sent us their support from all over the world. Today in Serekaniye and in the North East of Syria the Kurdish people are fighting again for all humanity. Not supporting the Kurds right now means writing a black and shameful page in the history of the 21st century.”

What message would you send to the international community?

There are two places where decisions are made: the United Nations and NATO. It is there that the international community and in particular women must go and shout loud and clear that the aggression carried out by Turkey must be stopped. Those who were praised yesterday as heroines and heroes around the world, the YPJ and the YPG, cannot be invisible today. That’s why we ask friends all over the world to make their voices heard in places of power.
You especially appeal to women...

Yes, because in Serekaniye and along the entire border there are once again women on the front line to defend the honor of our people, the memory of our martyrs, but also our achievements.

Because the struggle for freedom has been and is above all the struggle for women’s freedom. This is why it is not enough to demonstrate in the streets. It is important to go to the centers of power where decisions are made and to tell what we are going through at this time in the northeast of Syria.

Women must denounce how Turkey is killing children, women, young people, the elderly. Why Erdogan has the same face as al-Baghdadi [the head of the Islamic State killed in a US operation on Kurdish intelligence on 26 October 2019.]

This war cannot be stopped with words but with practice and this means constantly exposing the Turkish crimes in the places where the interlocutors of this war are found. And I refer mainly to the United States, but also to Germany and the United Kingdom.

The Turkish invasion began in Serekaniye, and not surprisingly...

Serekaniye is a historically important place for the Kurds. This is where the Rojava revolution began. It is here that coexistence between different nations...
has flourished in recent years since the liberation of the city, in July 2013.

Here Kurds, Arabs, Arameans, Assyrians and Chechens lived in peace and harmony. And it is also here that Tell Halaf is located, the place gave its name to the Halaf period, between 6100 BC. and 5400 BC.

It is no coincidence that Turkey has begun its invasion from here. Because the goal is certainly to exterminate the Kurds but also the other cultures that live peacefully in this region under the Autonomous Administration born with the Revolution.

Turkey has since the beginning of the offensive also attacked the prisons where the mercenaries of the Islamic State are detained, as reported by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

This is the confirmation that Turkish President Erdogan wants to free the mercenaries. His goal is to reanimate the Islamic State. It is in the interest of the whole world to prevent this war from continuing. Because if action is not taken immediately, everyone will be complicit in the return of a reactionary mentality and practices that are those of Erdogan’s Turkey and its mercenaries of the Islamic State, al-Nusra, Daesh or whatever the name of the organization they are part.

As for us, the Kurds, we will resist because resistance is our freedom. The Kurds will resist wherever they are. But this, I want to reiterate this, is not just our struggle. If this war doesn’t stop, the consequences will be catastrophic for all humanity.

"The Kurds will resist, because resistance is our freedom. The Kurds will resist wherever they are."
Temelli: Turkey is witnessing a political coup

Sezai Temelli is the co-chair of the Peoples’ Democratic Party, HDP, and a member of the Turkish parliament. Recently he was in Strasbourg, heading a delegation of HDP members who participated in various meetings in the European Parliament to denounce the latest repressive measures of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s regime.

In this interview, Temelli addresses the issue of the political coup carried out by the government which led to the dismissed of the legitimately and democratically elected HDP mayors. The new offensive began on 19 August, when the co-mayors of the cities of Diyarbakir, Mardin and Van were dismissed and replaced by trustees. At the time of going to press (late November), the mayors who have been dismissed are already about thirty.

During his stay in Europe, Temelli participated in the hearing of the European Court of Human Rights which dealt with the detention of his predecessor, former party co-chair, Selahattin Demirtas, presidential candidate who carried out the electoral campaign from prison, where he has been held since 2016. How do you assess the latest repressive measures taken by the Turkish government against the HDP?

In the field of democratic politics, the powers that cannot face their opponents with democratic practices tend to become authoritarians so as not to lose control.

The State of Emergency is the most obvious evidence of this authoritarian tendency. The permanent and continuous application of the State of Emergency has been designed to hit the HDP but now affects all segments of society in Turkey. Indeed, after the elections of 7 June 2015, the entire country is under a permanent state of emergency, where the workers’ right to strike is prohibited, writers and journalists from the opposition are arrested, academics...
The total isolation of Ocalan is preventing not only a peaceful solution to tensions in Turkey, but also the possibility to contribute to peace in the Middle East.

and intellectuals must become invisible, we are all subject to repression and torture. The social sectors that do not surrender to the Erdogan regime are subjected to constant pressure.

The declaration of the State of Emergency (OHAL) is now only a legal formality. In this context, the appointment of trustees in the three metropolitan municipalities, after the political coup of August 19, is the best evidence that the State of Emergency is now permanent.

What is your response to this permanent State of Emergency?

We will insist on practicing democratic policies against illegalities and repressions. We will not change our broader vision, which is based on the request for peace.

We are taking responsibility for voicing the hope of peace and democracy emerging from Turkish society. In this context, we want to create a democratic republic through a policy that puts people at the center and the biggest obstacle to this aspiration is the AKP-MHP alliance, so we will have to face and overcome that alliance by building a democratic alliance with all the oppressed sectors of Turkey.

Can we say that the latest repressive measures are a reaction to the obvious signs of loss of Erdogan’s absolute power?

We have been witnessing a loss of power by the regime for some time. For our part we have intensified the daily struggle, with democratic patience, and we have made Erdogan’s regime lose in the March 31 elections, making this loss of power visible.

The success of the HDP strategy in the March 31 election had a strong impact on state alliances, including the government one, AKP-MHP. The success of the HDP has contributed to giving courage to other opposition political groups that have decided to face Erdogan.

If today it is possible to talk about other political equations in Turkey, it is thanks to the success of the electoral strategy of the HDP. It is also evident that the regime is going through a serious economic crisis, which produces one million new unemployed each year. The only tool in the hands of a regime that has lost its democratic legitimacy, both inside and outside, is repression.

What do you expect from the European Union?

Turkey is experiencing problems similar to those in many countries governed by authoritarian regimes. But it is important to highlight the issue of total isolation to which Abdullah Öcalan is subjected, in clear violation of national and international law.

This isolation hinders not only a peaceful solution to the tensions in Turkey, but also the possibility of contributing to peace in the Middle East. This situation directly affects our partners in Europe. We must adopt a rigorous and firm attitude, Öcalan’s isolation must be eliminated to guarantee peace in Turkey and the Middle East.

On the other hand, there is a permanent violation of fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey. We have asked our European partners to adopt attitudes that go beyond concern for rights and freedoms. Another problem is the situation of politicians imprisoned as hostages, with shameful accusations and trials.

We believe that there are many things our interlocutors can do in favor of the liberation of our previous co-chairs, MPs, leaders and activists of the party.

As for the Kurdish question, how would you summarize the current situation?

Abdullah Öcalan, in the last meeting with his lawyers in the maximum security prison on the island of Imrali, insisted on the dangers inherent in keeping the current deadlock and on the need to find a “mentality” that knows how to respond to his call for dialogue.

It seems that one of those “mentalities”, within the State, has tried to reaffirm its “no” to a solution to the Kurdish question by appointing trustees in our main municipalities.

Analyzing the past and the present, we clearly see what was the result of the non-recognition of the existence of a Kurdish question. The Kurds have sent a clear and democratic message to the AKP-MHP alliance, which the Erdogan regime does not want to understand, which is why it insists in excluding the HDP, in this case appointing trustees in the main municipalities where the HDP won by a large majority, Diyarbakir, Van and Mardin.

At the same time, in Syria, Turkey plays war drums with increasing force.

How to respond to this situation?

The only way to change this reality is to build policies for a democratic solution based on dialogue and negotiations. We will continue to manage the transition process through the struggle-negotiation dialectic.

We will expand, strengthen and deepen our struggle, to try to resolve the Kurdish question and the question of democracy in Turkey, always based on dialogue and negotiations.
The Authors in This Issue

Erşin Çaksu
Journalist with the news agency Firat News. Lives in Rojava. He was director of the newspaper Özgürülükçü Demokrasi.

Orsola Casagrande
Journalist. She worked for the newspaper Il Manifesto for 25 years. Is co-editor together with Sergio Segio of the online magazine wwwGLOBALRIGHTSINFO. She writes for the Basque newspaper BERRIA. She edited for the English publisher COMMA PRESS (www.COMMAPRESS.CO.UK) the book of Havana. Soon to be published again for Comma Press KURDISTAN +100 and the book of Venice.

Serkan Demirel
Journalist of the news agency Firat News. He also worked for the press agency DICLE.

Giovanni Giacopuzzi
Author of several books on Basque-Spanish politics, he has been following politics in Bakur Kurdistan and Rojava for several years through conferences, articles and solidarity projects. Currently collaborates with the association Threatened Peoples’ Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker di Bolzano-Bozen.

Sergio Segio
Creator and editor of the sixteen volumes of the report On Global Rights. In the nineties he promoted and directed the monthly magazines “Narcomafie” and “Fuoriluogo”. In 2001, after the events of the G8 in Genoa, he promoted and directed the online information agency “Testimoni di Genova”. Since 2003 he has been the director of the non-profit association Società Informazione For which he designed and created the report on Global Rights. He promoted and directed the websites www.DIRITTIGLOBALI.IT and www.GLOBALRIGHTS.INFO. Since 2015 he has founded the international online magazine “GLOBAL RIGHTS”, which he co-edit with Orsola Casagrande.

Who We Interviewed in This Issue

Sahoz Hezen
Since September 2017 he is the co-president of the PYD (Democratic Union Party). He was a member of the Democratic Society Movement (TEV-DEM), the civil society organization that carried out and led the most important changes since the victory of the revolution of Rojava in 2012.

Meryem Kobane
The commander of the YPG-YPJ during the siege of Kobane. The city had been attacked by the Islamic State in September 2014 and was freed by the YPJ and YPG in January 2015.

Hozan Osman
He is co-president of the TEV-ÇAND Cultural Center in Kobane.

Sézai Temelli
Born in Istanbul in 1963. From 11 February 2018 he is co-president of the HDP, the People’s Democratic Party together with Pervin Buldan. Temelli is a founding member of the HDP and was a deputy for the second constituency in Istanbul from June to November 2015. Before being elected co-president of the HDP in the third ordinary party congress, he was deputy president responsible for economic policy. Temelli has a degree and a doctorate in finance and has taught political science and public policy at the University of Istanbul.
ROJAVA: THIS PROJECT CANNOT HAPPEN
RADICAL DEMOCRACY, DEMOCRATIC CONFEDERALISM