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# INTERNATIONALE DEBATTE

## Kurdistan



**Urban Warfare  
and City-Guerrilla  
As A Strategy  
of the Revolutionary  
People's War**

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# **Urban Warfare and City-Guerrilla As A Strategy of the Revolutionary People's War**

At least since the dawn of the 21st century, the city became the main setting of the most diverse martial confrontations, both in confrontations between two (quasi-) state players or during a civil war. Until recently, major battles in history were mostly fought outside of the cities and their population were affected only exceptionally, but beginning with the Second Big Imperialistic Distribution War the sight of armed conflict was displaced more and more into the urban space. Stalingrad, Berlin and many more battles went down in the history of warfare, and theorist and soldiers started to study the city as a battlefield more in depth. Even rebellious movements and non-state actors knew how to make use of the terrain of the city, of its characteristics and features, and developed completely new tactics and methods which brought even the armies of the big superpowers to a breaking point.

The war for the Chechen city of Grozny in 1995, the defense of Beirut against the Zionist occupying forces in 1982, or the long-lasting resistance of the Islamists and their so-called 'Iraqi Resistance' in Fallujah in 2004, shows very clearly that it is possible for a power inferior in weaponry and

logistics, to thwart the advance of even the most well-equipped armies with enough will, determination and the right use of the known terrain. For revolutionaries, the city was a terrain in which armed resistance was organized and implemented, and thus always of special interest. The capitalist concentration in the cities, the concentration of the working class in near-homogeneous working-class districts and the exacerbated social problems which urbanization brought with it made the city a focus point for social disputes from the beginning. The city has always had a double character. On the one side, the masses of exploited and oppressed, full of resentment and anger about the existing conditions, collect themselves in modern cities, on the other side, the city also represents a stronghold of the enemy, which is defended by a high concentration of security forces and sophisticated strategies of monitoring and repression. Because the city is a center of capitalist production, as well as a place of public administration and of strategic meaning for the enemy, its loss, would have far-reaching consequences. Already early after the urban uprisings of 1848, different revolutionary theorists

started to make first military-theoretical considerations and developed different approaches as to how the urban uprising could be organized and defended. During the uprising of the Paris Commune in the spring of 1871, the developed concepts were put to the test once again.

The population of Paris offered determined resistance for two months and was ready to make many sacrifices, before the uprising of the Commune was drowned in blood. The suppression of the Paris Commune was in many ways formative for the socialist world movement and, still today, marks the beginning of significant boundaries in the revolutionary camps. Apart from the political conclusions that were drawn out of this traumatic defeat, the experience of the barricade battles of Paris led to a renewed debate regarding questions of military theory and warfare. Especially after the victory of the Great Socialist October Revolution in the year 1917, early 20th-Century Europe witnessed numerous uprisings, revolts and armed confrontations in the cities. It quickly showed that surprising revolts and a takeover in a surprise coup, practiced successfully in St. Petersburg in 1917, was neither successful in Central European cities, nor was adaptable to non-industrialized, colonized countries. The liberation struggles in Asia, Africa and America developed in accordance with local conditions. Revolutionary leaders and thinkers like Mao-Tse Tung, Vo Nguyen Giap or Che Guevara gave the guerrilla war a clear form, strategy and tactics. The guerrilla became the universal weapon of the oppressed in the struggle against a technically-superior enemy, inspired by the examples of Vietnam, Cuba and Palestine, and due to the knowledge of revolutionary warfare methods across the world.

### **The concept of the urban guerrilla**

In its complexity, the urban terrain offers revolutionary and uprising forces good basic conditions to melt into the population and to operate overtly. It is no coincidence that mainly on the South American continent revolutionary fighters started to adapt the concept of the guerrilla to the city. Instead of a one-time revolt, the power of the enemy in the city and in the countryside should be eroded in a long-lasting war of attrition. Theorists like the Spanish revolutionary Abraham Guillén and Carlos Marighella were among the first to put the ideas and experiences of this era onto

paper and thus helped the concept of urban guerrilla reach global dissemination.

But that the concept was understood and applied in different forms. Furthermore, in Europe, new experiences were being made with the concept of urban guerrilla, of which even today important lessons for the revolutionary world-movement can be learned. Even liberation movements like the Irish IRA or the Basque ETA used the cities as a site for confrontation.

### **The self-administration-resistance in Kurdistan**

The liberation movement of Kurdistan also made early first experiences with the military confrontation in urban terrain under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Kurdistan. From targeted attacks against Turkish colonial-fascism, through to the big people's uprising - the Serhildans of the 90's - the movement came into contact with different forms of actions and methods, adapted them to theory and applied them in practice. Especially Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the liberation movement, produced numerous analyses, conversations and held lessons with questions of the urban revolts and the interaction of city and countryside in the fight for liberation. The conflict in North Kurdistan in the years 2015 and 2016, however, is unique to the history of the liberation movements. On the one hand, the intensity of the confrontation – and, in particular, the steadfast will and heroism of the fighting comrades – has also highlighted the struggle as a special event in the history of the revolution of Kurdistan. Spontaneously, driven by the need of an appropriate response to Turkish attacks and to defend one's own population, simple youths have shown a resistance that should shock the fascist regime to its foundations.

Without big preparations and with very limited resources, yet driven by the dynamism of the general people's revolt and borne through the broad support of the masses, the resistance was organized so quickly it should frighten the Turkish police.

The self-administration-resistance is an historical event in the earlier history and should become a didactic play, not only for the revolutionary movement in the region but for all who fight for a freer world.

The French revolutionary Auguste Blanqui wrote in his 'Instruction for an Armed Uprising': "In the popular ranks, the situation is very different. There,

they fight for an idea. There, they are all volunteers who are motivated by enthusiasm, not fear. They are superior to their adversary not only through devotion, but even more so through intelligence. They have the moral and even the physical upper hand as a result of their conviction, vigour, and resourcefulness, their vitality of mind and body; they combine stout hearts with clear heads. No troops in the world are equal to these elite men.

So what then do they lack in order to vanquish their adversaries? They lack that sense of unity and solidarity which, in leading them to coordinate their efforts towards one and the same goal, thereby fosters all those very qualities that isolation renders powerless. They lack organisation, without which they have no chance. Organisation means victory; dispersal means death.” Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, revolution is a matter in which success or defeat is decided by the degree of organization and the form of the organization of the fighters. If one can assume deficiencies in the resistance in the cities, then perhaps they are inadequacies in the organization and preparation for revolution, but not a deficiency in self-sacrifices, courage, determination and trust in the victory of the revolution.

What Blanqui wrote about the urban revolt after 1848 applies even today for the experience of the resistance of 2015 and 2016. It is significant to draw the right conclusions and lessons out of this experience, for only through a successful fight will we make right by the memory of the comrades killed in action. For the fight of the liberation movement, the self-administration-resistance is an important turning point and significantly marks the development of the strategic line till today.

Below we will take a more precise look at the revolutionary process, but especially the long-lasting impacts and results of the self-administration-resistance.

## **Regional and historical context**

To understand the events that took place in the years 2015 and 2016 in the cities of the occupied North-Kurdistan and in order to identify the real meaning of the self-administration-resistance, it is necessary to consider the events within a regional and historical context and as a general confrontation between revolutionary forces and Turkish fascism. Evaluating the confrontation as an isolated event or only out of a military-technical perspective cannot justify the sacrifice and the fight

of the comrades in the cities; instead, one must engage the actual reality of the war and its strategic character. If we want to recognize the real meaning and historic dimension of the city war in North-Kurdistan, learning as revolutionary militants of the experiences, mistakes and successes as well as analyzing its impacts on the further course of the People’s War in Kurdistan until today, then it is especially necessary to overcome national borders in our heads and to consider the revolutionary process, which develops in Kurdistan and the Middle East, no matter if in Syria, Turkey, Iran or Iraq, as a whole. Indeed, the different organizations that are joining the liberation movement of Kurdistan and the revolutionary movement in the Middle East may remain distinct in their aspirations and independent of one another, yet in their tactical leading, in their strategic goal, the construction of a free Kurdistan and a democratic Middle East, they are all united. Without doubts, the Workers’ Party of Kurdistan (PKK) represents the strongest and most developed revolutionary power of the region, as well as the strategic brain behind the revolutionary process and thus takes the clear role of leadership and avant-garde. The line of the ‘Revolutionary People’s War’ for the enforcement of the democratic autonomy against all enemy attacks, founded by Abdullah Öcalan, and practically developed by the PKK since 2010, today unites mostly all military self-defense-units as well as most of the political and social organizations in all parts of Kurdistan behind a united strategy and military doctrine. This strategy counts on the dissemination of social self-defense and by that the blooming of a fully developed People’s War against the occupation, instead of only professionalized and specialized military formations. It is found in a constant process of development and change since 2010. Starting with the results of the guerrilla war in the mountains of Kurdistan, through to the lessons that were learned out of the revolutionary fight in Rojava and North Syria, and further towards the practice of the urban fight and the city guerrilla in North Kurdistan and Turkey, experiences of the war were dialectical processed and evaluated in the past years.

## **The guerrilla of the 21st century**

In the course of this progressing process, the guerrilla forces of the HPG and YJA-Star, especially, began with the extensive restructuring, reorganization and modernization of their units and

forces. The middle-term strategic goal is the creation of something which we can call the guerrilla of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Especially the past five years of war made the forces of the liberation movement painfully aware of their own defects and inadequacies in warfare and the topic of a further professionalization in accordance with the requirements that are forced by a highly technological NATO-army took center-stage on the agenda.

Especially in the question of how the hostile reconnaissance and technology on the battlefield can be effectively resisted with the most simple funds and limited resources, the guerrilla made successful steps forward in the last years and could thus minimize their losses, disguise their movements and operations and by that increase the impact of surprise attacks against hostile oppression forces up to a completely new level. Especially the last confrontation between the guerrilla and the Turkish occupation army in the South-Kurdish area of Heftanin, which lasted from the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 over the whole summer until today (beginning of 2021), has clearly shown the current level of development of the project of modernization and provided practical proof to the world that even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the guerrilla can successfully withstand an oppressive army which is armed to the teeth. In Heftanin, the whole repertoire of the guerrilla of the 21<sup>st</sup> century came fully into its own for the first time: from the professional deployment of snipers and sabotage-groups, through to the lightning-fast attacks and ambushes, up to the powerful attacks from the air and long distance, performed by the newly created air-defense-forces S. Delal Amed and the artillery unit of the guerrilla. Because of the application of new methods and tactics, the enemy was robbed of any breathing room. The Turkish soldiers, once filled with confidence by Turkish propaganda, soon became prisoners of their own fear on the occupied summits and hills. Indeed, it may have occurred to the invaders, under the use of combat helicopters and under the thundering bombardment of the Turkish air force and artillery, to take control of the occasional hills and peaks, but this in no way means that they gained the territorial upper hand over Heftanin. Quite the contrary, the guerrilla could maintain its freedom of movement and is still fully present in all areas of Heftanin. It was and is the guerrilla who decides where and when it appears, attacks and disappears again into the depth of the mountainous terrain of Heftanin. During the

whole confrontation, it was clearly the guerrilla that held the initiative on the battlefield and made the occupiers' lives hell. The enemy may build as many positions he likes, he can bury himself and hide behind his high-tech tactics, but all technology in the world cannot save them from the determined attacks of the guerrilla. The more bases the enemy builds, the more targets are offered to the partisans; the more they push forward, the higher their material and human losses will be. That is the inevitable dialectic of the fight between occupying forces and guerrilla. The historical resistance of Heftanin has shown what is meant when the chief commandant of the center for People's Self-defense (NPG), Murat Karayilan, speaks about the goal of the creation of a 'ghost-guerrilla'. The 'ghost-guerrilla', a guerrilla that moves invisibly, undetected by the hostile forces and that appears, attacks and disappears, in the most unexpected moment, became a bitter reality for the Turkish occupiers in Heftanin and will from now on haunt them in every battlefield.

## **Strategic debates**

Without a doubt, the discussions on the reorientation of the guerrilla influences not only the forces in the mountains of Kurdistan but also the work of the self-defense-forces, militias and the social organization of Rojava. In Northeast-Syria especially, since the Turkish invasion in January 2018 and October 2019, an enlivened debate about how the strategy of the Revolutionary People's War under different conditions and the tactical conditions in Rojava can be successfully implemented has taken place. Here, the geographic conditions and the barren landscape of North-Syria complicate the defence, especially against the hostile air forces. The Turkish occupiers are quite aware of this problem and thus rely on their air sovereignty. Nevertheless, through the experiences gathered in the past years, new techniques and methods were developed to make this hostile technology miss its mark. Without going more into detail at this point, we can for certain surmise that the preparations of the revolutionary defense-forces were improved and the necessary lessons of the battles for Afrin, Girê Spî and Serêkaniyê were learned. On the one hand, the willingness of the professional defense-forces were significantly increased in the past year, on the other hand, there were important progresses in the broadening of the social self-defense and the establishment of local



and decentralized and organized people's militias. The strategy of the Revolutionary People's War bases itself thereby on the arming and military education of the broad masses. The technical superior Turkish occupation-machinery can only be faced with a total resistance-war in North Syria. The active participation of the majority of the population in the defense of the revolution, whether at the frontline or further back, whether with weapons in hand or ensuring the supply of the population and their fighters, will decide between victory and defeat. The fascist invaders make no difference between civil and military targets and don't just fail to stop massacres on the civilian population, but use these consciously as a part of their terror-strategy to force the people to escape and leave their home. The people of North-East Syria haven't seen the blood-stained face of the fascist occupiers already too often and know only too well which crimes Turkish fascism and its Islamist gang of murderers perform in the occupied areas day-to-day. Hundreds of thousands have already been displaced from their homes, uprooted, made homeless and robbed of their property. If the next offensive of the Turkish occupiers starts and the remaining freed areas also become a target of their barbaric attacks, then there will be no safe space to withdraw for millions of people, and thus resistance at all costs will become the only option. If we see this confrontation between the revolutionary forces and Turkish fascism as a life-and-death struggle, a question of being or not-being for a whole nation, then this applies all the more for the destiny of the revolution of Rojava.

## **Victory over fascism or neo-Osmanism**

Not only in Rojava or in the mountains, but in all four parts of Kurdistan, Turkey and the whole Middle East the intensity of the confrontation demands a decisive conclusion. The people of Kurdistan and the whole region stand at a crossroad. Either they succeed in forcing Turkish fascism - the biggest and strongest bulwark of the counter-revolution in the region - to their knees and defeat it once and for all, or the revolutionary forces sustain a strategic setback and for the people of the region a dark century under the rule of the neo-ottomanism of Erdogan begins. The liberation movement of Kurdistan and the allied forces of the revolutionary left in Turkey are aware of this reality and the requirements which the history of the revolutionary movement brings with it. Therefore

they have started with a powerful urban-guerrilla-offensive this year that is sure to strike at the heart of Turkish fascism: the urban centers in the west of the country. After five years of war, and considering the unlimited brutality of the fascist violence brought even against its own people, there can be no doubts of the necessity to bring the war into the cities to reach a decision in favor of the revolution. Next to the modernized guerrilla on the countryside and in the mountains, the development of a professionalized and powerful urban-guerrilla as well as the creation of numerous local semi-professional and amateurish self-defense and action-groups is a fundamental pillar in the Revolutionary People's War. Since the war in the cities in 2015/2016 the liberation movement has also undertaken a detailed valuation, self-criticism and appropriate realignment and re-organization in this sector. This undertaken efforts for the reconstruction of the structures that were crushed by the hostile repression and the renewed anchoring of the urban guerrilla have borne fruit for the first time. With the professional units of the YPS/YPS-Jin, the revenge-forces and the Revolutionary Youth Movement DGH, the militias of the People's United Revolutionary Movement HBDH as well as independent initiatives like the 'Children of the Fire', there exist a lot of active urban-guerrilla-groups in North-Kurdistan and Turkey today which organize resistance against the fascist dictatorship with effective methods, attack the presence of the enemy in the cities of Kurdistan in its shape of policemen, collaborators and agents and that carry a part of the unleashed war of extermination back to the enemy. To understand the actual reality of the urban-guerrilla-struggle in Kurdistan and Turkey, its historic meaning and the tactical and strategic considerations behind it, it is necessary to have a clear view of the process of the self-defense-resistance, the regional development of the war as well as of the lessons that were learned by the movement.

## **Creating own structures**

The self-administration-resistance is not an event that develops separate from the general political-military developments in the region, but has to be considered as a direct consequence of the preceding events and in the context of the revolutionary process in Kurdistan and the Middle East. In the course of the Syrian uprising in 2011, the forces of the liberation movement succeeded in July 2012 in

wrestling single cities in the north of Syria - in Rojava/West Kurdistan - from the forces of the Syrian dictator Assad and to free them. In place of the administration of the old regime, new organs of the people's power in the shape of people's councils and communes were established and soon a federal administration across regions was founded, in that all of the ethnic groups of North-Syria were equally represented and could make use of their civil rights. Very soon thousands of young people surged in the ranks of the newly-founded People's Self-Defence Units (YPG) and strengthened the defence lines of the revolution. The revolution of Rojava abruptly changed the existing balance of power and helped the revolutionary powers of the region reach a completely new position. This new conflict situation, and especially the successful guerrilla-resistance from 2011 until the end of the year 2012 in the north of Kurdistan, forced Turkish fascism to the negotiating table and in the year 2013 the negotiations started - the so-called "solution process".

## **The "solution process"**

In 2012 the offensive in Şemzînan under the leadership of the guerrilla-commander Ş. Reşîd became the first successful experience in the strategy of the Revolutionary People's War. The offensive, in which not only the units of the guerrilla participated, but the majority of the patriotic minded population of the small strip along the border triangle of Iran-Iraq-Turkey. From the acquisition of food, weapons and ammunition, through the spotting of hostile forces, through to sabotage-actions and the direct participation in the armed operations – it was a broad support of the people that transformed the offensive to a complete success and left the enemy no choice but to withdraw from the rural areas. In order to escape from their own distress and to reorganize their own forces, and not because, as is often falsely claimed, in order to work on a democratic solution for the Kurdish question, did the state sought a dialogue with the leadership of the movement. Right from the beginning, Turkish fascism never had any intentions to reach peaceful resolution, but instead tried to use the terms of the ceasefire for the implementation of the notorious concept of liquidation. The massacre of Paris on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013, in which the three revolutionaries and militants Sakine Cansiz, Fidan Dogan and

Leyla Saylemez were assassinated by the Turkish secret service, revealed the real intentions of Turkish fascism even before the ceasefire. The leader of the movement, Abdullah Öcalan, nevertheless understood to use the situation and to get important concessions from the enemy.

On the occasion of the Newroz-celebration on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2013, the leader of the freedom movement, Abdullah Öcalan, called in written form for a ceasefire and a part-disarming of the People's Self-defense Units in North Kurdistan began. With the ceasefire and a partially-enforced reduction in armed forces, the confrontation in the North Kurdistan should have reached its nadir and with it new possibilities for legal policy and self-organizing of the population should have emerged. The process of building democratic autonomy by structures of autonomy from the bottom up, which already began in the year 2005 in the North Kurdistan, was able to begin again in the current partly-relaxed atmosphere. In every part of North Kurdistan, up to the urban centers of Turkey, communities and people's councils, organizations of women, cultural centers, self-organized centers of education and cooperatives were established. The Democratic Regions Party, DBP, as political party of the democratic-confederal movement in North-Kurdistan, won the regional elections in nearly all areas in North Kurdistan with an overwhelming majority and took up its position in the municipalities. The project of the People's Democratic Congress and its political party, the HDP, as democratic unity of all socialist and progressive forces of Turkey began to take shape and prepared to compete in parliamentary elections with full strength. The hard-won possibilities of legal policy were completely exhausted, which benefited those in favour of building a social counter-power.

## **Organizing the youth**

Without a doubt, this process was also filled with intense confrontations between the state power and the people's forces. No state in the world would ever be quiet when society builds its own autonomous structures and makes the state's apparati unnecessary, but will intervene in this process with all its available means. This intervention can be repression but can escalate up to obvious terror, it can be several arrests and bans up to a total war of extermination, like in North Kurdistan in 2015. Which methods the enemy

wants to and will use in the end is dependent on the relationship of the existing powers between revolution and counterrevolution and on the specific situation.

Between the years 2013 and 2015 it often came to assaults, abductions and political murders by the state power. Overwhelmed from the dynamics of the new social awakening, in which millions had take part, the enemy used obvious violence more and more, and tried to intimidate the awakened masses with political terrorism. To fight back against the attacks of the enemy and to take action against the collaborationist criminal underworld, local self-defense committees were soon established in all cities. Citizens began to patrol in their districts and villages and guaranteed a self-organized security there. Especially the youth movement which began to self-organize in 2013 under the name YDG-H and YDG-K (Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement and Patriotic-Revolutionary Young Women) as a militant semi-professional urban guerrilla, contributed essentially to counter attacks and to defend the hard-won achievements. After the foundation of the YDG-H in the North Kurdish area of Cizîr at the beginning of the year 2013, the organization of the YDG-H spread rapidly to all areas of North Kurdistan and soon thousands of young people took place in the rows of the YDG-H. YDG-H and YDG-K organized strongly horizontally in the form of small autonomous cells of 4-5 people, which developed their own work independently, according to a predefined central action scheme. The way of organization in cells corresponded to the known scheme of clandestine organization and guaranteed on one side the protection of their structure from hostile attacks and on the other side the form of decentralized organization which allows for the possibility of a high level of local initiative, which revealed unknown dynamics. The activities of the youth movement were from the protection of demonstrations and public events, through the fight against drug traffic and prostitution in their own districts, up to targeted attacks on representatives of the state-power and the punishment and extermination of agents, snitches and collaborators. Street battles and skirmishes with the state occupation forces became a daily routine in all cities of North Kurdistan and in the mainly Kurdish districts of Turkish metropolises. On the political level the established self-administration structures began to work on the most social issues, which led to the creation of an own jurisdiction as an

alternative to the courts of the occupiers. In the streets the actions of the youth movement more and more made the territory uncontrollable for the state. With each day the sovereignty of the Turkish occupation in North Kurdistan began to continue to break and the state intensified its attacks. Soon it was obvious that the so-called "solution process" from the side of the state was not more than a cheap spectacle and would not last long.

## **Attack on Rojava**

Despite the ceasefire of 2013, one cannot speak of a pause in the Turkish war of extermination. It rather must be considered as a displacement of focus. While the fronts in North Kurdistan cooled somewhat, in the north of Syria a massive attack from Islamist groups against the revolution of Rojava began. Forces of the Syrian Al-Qaida, at that time known as Al-Nusra-Front, as well as criminal gangs, which named themselves as „Syrian opposition forces“, massively attacked the liberated areas. For these attacks they were supported by Turkish fascism, armed from Turkish stocks and coordinated by the Turkish secret service MIT. Wherever they could, they massacred civilians, plundered and hijacked. In the summer of 2013, up to 3000 Jihadists tried to get into the city Serêkaniyê through the Turkish borders from the south and the north. They were able to bring parts of the city under their control, but their attack was successfully broken and countered. Only because of the complete mobilization of the population from Rojava and through the brave effort from thousands of young women and men, could the revolution continue to exist in this vulnerable time. The intention of Turkish fascism and its supporting NATO-imperialists to liquidate the revolution in Rojava with the help of their established and controlled Islamist gangs was not achieved. The revolution was an unforeseeable consequence of their Syria strategy; it established itself and became stronger and stronger. While the secret services of the North American imperialists started to train Islamist gangs, in training camps they specifically set up to this end, to handle with new weapons and began to equip them with new American weapon systems, inside of the country, the FSA and Al-Nusra gangs began to restructure themselves. Not one year later, they would be known the world over as "Islamic State". The revolution of Rojava with its own independence-based principle of the „Third Way“, a way beyond the dictatorship from Assad



and the collaboration with the imperialistic intervention, was a thorn in the eye of imperialism and its local representation, Turkish colonial-fascism, from the beginning and they wanted to erase the revolution no matter what. So it was not random that, in the summer of 2014, the time of the for the world surprising rise of the “Islamic State”, it first attacked the Şengal-mountains in the north of Iraq and the small city of Kobanê, instead of using the advantage of the situation to attack Baghdad and Damascus. Inside the leadership of the “Islamic State” there were of course different opinions on where to attack first.

Many of the Islamist leaders blocked the proposal to push the offensive to the liberated areas. At the end the part which was under influence of the Turkish secret service MIT could prevail and so the Jihadists first attacked the Yazidi-inhabited Şengal Mountains in August, and after that began to besiege Kobanê in September 2014. The freedom movement determinedly intervened and send guerrilla groups from the mountains of South-Kurdistan in to the Şengal-mountains in a hurry, to rescue the Yazidi civilians from a genocide by the Islamists. At the same time, the Women- and Self-defense-Forces of the YPJ/YPG started with a push from the Syrian territory and with an unprecedented military operation opened a corridor that allowed for the escape of hundred thousands of Yazidi civilians that were trapped by the Islamist gangs. In the Şengal Mountains the rise could be stopped and so the battle to the liberation of the city Şengal began, which lasted for more than one year. In September of 2014, the Islamists moved forward near the edge of the city center of Kobanê. The revolutionary defense units fought with all strength for every meter, every house and every street. At the beginning of October almost more than 90 percent of the city center of Kobanê was in the hands of the gangs of the “Islamic State”. The situation seemed to be desperate and news media the world over were busy speculating when the resistance would finally be broken and the city would be totally in the hands of the enemy.

Just in that dark hour of dogged resistance the revolution mobilized all it's forces to finally striked back. Comrades, like Arin Mirkan and many more, sacrificed themselves, transformed their bodies into mobile bombs and caused the enemy great loss. They became the vivid expression of determination against the capitulation and for the resistance at all costs. With their action they declared to the world: Not one meter back, victory or death.

## The Kobanê uprising

From all parts of Kurdistan, especially from the north, hundreds of volunteers made their way through to the border. They tore the fences and wires and took their place in the front of the resistance of Kobanê. The vast majority of them were adolescents without any experiences in fighting or an absolved arms training, but what they did possess was a fearless will and a strong determination to triumph. These hundreds of volunteers played a crucial role in turning the course of the war. They managed to stop the gangs from gaining land and prepared for the counterattack. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October in 2014, the peak in the battle of Kobanê, a mass uprising occurred, which transformed the land within several hours into a condition similar to civil war. The proclamation of the leader of the liberation movement, Abdullah Öcalan, which was transmitted from Imrali by a delegation of the HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) to the people was unequivocal: Everyone should do what they could because the day after it could be too late. In less than an hour thousands of people, sympathizers of the liberation movement and supporters of the Turkish democratic revolutionary movement, streamed onto the streets. Barricades were built and violent street riots started, especially between the YDG-H and the hostile police forces. These fights surprised the state heavily. To crush the riots the state used state repression and paramilitary as well as Islamic gangs like the state-protected Hizbullah counter-guerrilla, built up in the eighties. Under this repression thirty people died. In this spontaneous situation the militant organization of the youth movement could take as organized force the leadership and gave the protests a completely new character. In the three days of the uprising - without question the protests and fights continued - the people in many cities in the north of Kurdistan achieved the aim of drawing the occupying forces of the state away from their districts. In this form, three districts were liberated in the north of the Kurdish city of Cizîr. They stayed liberated until February 2015, when the youth movement withdrew themselves tactically after an appeal of the leadership of the movement as well as under the control of the people and their self-administration structures. In most respects the uprising of Kobanê was a prelude to the self-government resistance of the next year and marks

the beginning of the end of the so-called “solution process”.

## **Change of heart of the USA**

When it became foreseeable that Kobanê would not fall easily but instead would become the decisive turning point in the war against the gangs of the Islamic state, even the imperialists had to accept that the revolution of Rojava would not just be wiped off the map. Instead, from now on, the revolution would appear as a reality that they could not ignore. Subsequently, the United States of America changed their strategy and the newly-formed international coalition against the Islamic State formed an alliance with the liberation forces of Rojava. Instead of the military extermination, the North-American imperialists planned in their military and political centers a concept that included the long-term political liquidation and integration of the revolution of Rojava. Without weakening the liberation movement in the north of Kurdistan, driving them into the corner, isolating and thus destroying them, such a plan would be unthinkable. Therefore the spearhead of the revolution, which is the liberation guerrilla in the mountains in the north and south of Kurdistan, was targeted. The calculation of the US imperialists was clear: the revolution as a whole should be weakened as a regional factor and different parts should be isolated. The destroyed and marginalized leftovers of the revolution should be forced to their knees, brought to capitulation and thereby made submissive to imperialist interests. Also, Turkish fascism was confronted with the immense potential that the uprising of Kobanê revealed. It was forced to take serious steps to secure his interest and began to work out a new liquidation plan in coordination with US Imperialism. In October 2014, just after the Kobanê Uprising, in one of the conferences of the Turkish national security council (MGK), a plan to “force them to their knees” was passed and the Turkish leadership began hastily preparing for a large-scale liquidation campaign against the Kurdish liberation movement and the democratic forces of the region. Already, during the parliamentary election in 2015, the chosen course by the Turkish leadership became apparent when the delegations of the HDP were prevented from entering the prison island Imrali without any legal ground.

Beginning on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2015, Abdullah Öcalan once again was kept in total isolation and the negotiations which were happening up until this moment were effectively finished. The election campaign of the Peoples’ Democratic Party, HDP, was targeted with violent attacks a dozen times. Assaults on events and party offices were on the daily agenda, as well as bombing attacks in the North-Kurdish city of Amed, two days before the parliamentary elections. The democratic powers, as the only real opposition to the Turkish fascism, were prevented from entering parliament at any price. But the will of the people could impose itself and for the first time in the history of Turkey, a democratic party entered the parliament by 13 percent. Parallel to the successes of the legal policy, the revolutionary forces of Rojava liberated the Northern-Syrian border town of Tel Abyad (Girê Spî) during the S. Rubar Qamishlo offensive on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 and by that united for the first time the isolated areas of the self-administration, Kobanê and the region Cizîr. Inside of Turkey, the state spread rumors of a so-called terror-corridor getting out of control. Thus, Turkey asked NATO for help in building a so-called “security zone” in the north of Syria.

## **The Suruç massacre**

As a result of the establishment of this so-called “security zone”, the security of the north of Syria only weakened. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, an “Islamic State” jihadist committed suicide, blowing up members of the youth-organization of the Social Party of the Oppressed (ESP). Inside the HDP, the ESP is the strongest faction alongside the North-Kurdish DBP. 33 youth lost their lives in the massacre in Suruç. This suicide attack can be seen as the activation of a comprehensively prepared strategy of destruction. Based on the following actions taken by the Turkish State, we can assume that the Turkish secret service was behind the bombing attacks, acting as a coordinator. Instead of turning against the openly acting structures of the “Islamic State” in Turkey, President Erdogan led the charge in a massive wave of arrests of Kurdish and democratic politicians. Demonstrations for justice for the victims of the assassination attempt of Suruç were attacked with tear gas, water guns and bullets. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2015, the Turkish air-forces flew far-reaching air-attacks against the safe space areas of the guerrillas, known as the Medya-defense-areas in the north of Iraq. With the

air-attacks that were coming in waves, the de facto, already long terminated “solution process” was now over in a formal way. It was this Turkish fascism that dissolved the validity of the ceasefire and started a renewed campaign against the democratic policy and the achievements of the liberation fight. Also, it was at this time that a ground military operation against the liberated areas of Rojava, an invasion against the guerrilla areas of South-Kurdistan, were openly discussed. The elected councils and self-administration-structures became the first targets of the Turkish waves of arrests. These came with nightly house searches and skirmishes between the self-defense-forces of the youth movement and the security forces of the fascist state. As a reaction to the Turkish attacks and to counter their strategy of comprehensive destruction, the guerrillas started a new offensive and restarted their activities in the north of Kurdistan. In the cities, the youth organized self-defense forces and their defense soon resulted in the first fatalities. In response to attacks by the Turkish state, a general popular uprising started in August 2015 that soon took all the cities of North-Kurdistan with it. The population unilaterally declared their democratic autonomy which has been denied by the hegemonic institutions of the occupying Turkish state which has international legitimacy. For the protection of their cities and communities, improvised barricades were built and ditches were dug and the administration of the public life passed through the hands of the democratic elected people’s councils. Quickly, it became clear that the attacks of the Turkish state are not individual temporary events but a total war. It was the revolutionary youth movement which understood this reality first and decided to resist. The cells of the YDG-H organized themselves into paramilitary self-defense-forces that protected the barricades against the attacks of the fascist occupiers. Throughout the whole summer, a dozen Kurdish cities declared democratic autonomy with protection provided by the population.

## **Defense of the cities**

Attacks by police units could be repelled successfully in the first months of the resistance, despite curfews and sieges for days. The Turkish strategy of destruction stagnated as a result of the determined resistance in the cities and in the mountains. Forced to reorganize, the hostile attacks slowed in the fall. The resistance forces used this

time to strengthen their ranks. New defense lines were built, logistic supply lines were organized, and the ranks of the resistance forces increased in number.

While the Kurdistan Communities Union KCK claimed a month-long unilateral ceasefire on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 in order to guarantee democratic conditions for new elections on the first November, the enemy used propaganda to turn the public against the resistance. Ultimately, Turkish fascism answered the advance of the liberation movement with brutality. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, 102 people were killed by a double suicide attack during a freedom demonstration in Ankara. The state was showing their true face again and after new elections, a large-scale offensive with the participation of thousands of units of troops, for the first time also forces of the regular military, started to break the resistance in the cities. The relative immobility of the guerrilla in the winter months was exploited by the Turkish state to have a free hand in the destruction of the urban resistance.

## **Bombs and massacres**

One after the other, the troops of the Turkish colonial fascist state rearranged the liberated cities and cordoned the resisting communities off from the external world. Under the use of heavy weapons, permanent barrage of the artillery and also under the participation of the air-forces, the Turkish occupation-forces, supported by jihadist mercenaries, often recruited from Syrian gangs, attempted to pass the barricades and ditches to enter urban resistance areas. Cities like Gever, Silopi, Cizîr, Nisêbin and also the liberated city quarter of Sûr in Amed became an area of war. The high numbers of civilian victims were thus not collateral damage but a consciously calculated part of the counterinsurgency-strategy of Turkey, a NATO state. To force the civilian population, who were the basis of the uprising and supported the resistance fighters, to escape, the Turkish state conducted bombings of civilian areas and had snipers open fire on everything and everyone that dared to resist the curfew. The revolt, that started in summer under the leadership of ordinary youth with Molotov cocktails, handguns, shotguns and a few assault rifles, escalated in Winter 2015/16 to an open war. The organization of YDG-H/YDG-K wasn’t prepared enough to handle this level of war. So, in January 2016 the structures of YDG-H/YDG-K dissolved themselves in favor of a new military



formation and the founding of the civil defense units YPS and YPS-Jin were announced. The defense was reorganized and professionalized with commands at the city and regional level. Through the clever use of sabotage and mines, as well as tactically positioned snipers, it was possible to inflict heavy material and personnel losses to the fascist occupying troops which thwarted the progress of the Turkish operation in a massive way. The non-urban warfare trained Turkish army saw itself confronted with an enemy who used the well known three dimensional battlefield of the city for its own purpose and struck again and again in well thought out ambushes. In cities like Nisêbîn, the Turkish army could not, despite all of their advanced technology, gain control over any territory for months and the term “Nusaybin-syndrome” became a dictum in the Turkish press to describe the psychological constitution of the soldiers that survived.

To break the will of those that fight, the Turkish leadership sought sanctuary in the brutal terrorist methods out of the manuals of NATO-counterinsurgency and committed one massacre after another. In the third month of the winter offensive, the Turkish forces committed an incomprehensible massacre in the city Cizîr. As the Turkish forces pushed toward the liberated areas and besieged the last strongholds of the resistance, a large group of civilians sought shelter from artillery fire in a cellar. On the direct order of Turkish military leadership, at least 178 people were burned alive in this cellar with gas as Turkish soldiers say nationalist anthems. Their cries for help to the world were broadcast on television and radio days before, immortalizing their struggle against the Turkish state. Following the massacre, Turkish troops gained back control of Cizîr and the city was occupied again. At that time, one million people were already forced to escape their homes as a result of the violent onslaught of Turkish fascism. Just like in the 90’s when the Turkish army burnt down more than 4000 Kurdish villages to push guerrillas further out, the Turkish followed the same NATO-doctrine of complete depopulation of the cities to break the resistance. After months of bitter fighting, in March 2016, the city quarter of Sûr in Amed fell into the occupier’s clutches. Then, the Turkish state turned their attention towards the Turkish-Syrian border and the city of Nisbêsîn. Although the resistance was fighting more or less by themselves, they sustained the defence of the city throughout the month of May. This forced the

Turkish occupying state to become desperate and they started to attack Nisêbîn from the air. As a result, the remaining YPS-forces announced a tactical withdrawal from Nisêbîn on the 25th of May 2016 to prevent further massacres on the civil population. Elsewhere, in the mountains of Botan surrounding Şirnex, the resistance fighting lasted until the first week in the month of June. Eventually, the remaining fighters fell şehîd and this first phase of the resistance came to an end.

## **Evaluation and reorganization**

As such, the self-defense resistance of 2015 and 2016 ended with the withdrawal of the civil defense units from Nisêbîn and the suppression of the revolt of Şirnex. Still, this should not be understood as the final text in the conclusion of a book’s chapter. Quite the contrary, soon after a comprehensive evaluation of the events was made and there was a reorganization of the structures that were crushed by the fascist violence. At the same time, after the first term of the resistance, heavy ideological attacks were made against it from all sides. Different forces tried and still try today, to present the resistance as a mistake, as a pointless fight and a pure military defeat. This is especially true with petty bourgeois forces that while open to the movement in theory, condemned the resistance in large part. The defense of the heroic people’s resistance and the brave victims of those killed in action, made a public analysis of this stage of the resistance more important. The civil defense units successfully organized their first conference in April 2017 and underwent deep reflection and self-criticism and decided to realign the strategy of military action. The self-administration’s resistance was thereby understood as coming from this experience of learning from mistakes and inadequacies. The final declaration of the conference read as follows: “Our conference on YPS’s fighting practices from the past through the present, characterized by questioning and self-criticism, has historical meaning. The approaches and attitudes, which could lead to the heroic attitude of our people in not finding complete success and victory were criticized and the attitudes that weren’t worthy of our pioneering task, given to us by history, were questioned. In light of our people, and our heroic martyrs, we have developed in our self-defense resistance fighters a sincere self-criticism process and this self-criticism has resulted in appropriate decision making. The practical

processes and experience of the past shows us that while the level we achieved was not sufficient for complete success and victory, such success and victory is absolutely possible. Just as the experience gained from the Paris Commune in France opened the way for the Russian revolution, the democratic autonomy that emerged from the urban resistances in Kurdistan will one day open the way for democratic revolution in the Middle East. This historical determination has been made.”

## **Defeat or success?**

The resistance occurred under natural circumstances and with limited resources and insufficient preparations. The decision to start the resistance was spontaneous and in response to the state’s violence, rather than a decision made liberally as the result of long conversation and strategic calculations. To face the comprehensive strategy of destruction utilized by Turkish fascism, which also includes the ground military operations in the liberated areas of the revolution in the north of Syria and the guerrilla areas in South-Kurdistan, in an adequate way, there was no other way than total resistance. With just considering the resistance from the military perspective at the level of single cities, one could assume pure military defeat of the resistance. However, considering the larger picture, including Kurdistan and the region as whole, it is better to understand the resistance in the cities as thwarting the fascist Turkish state’s larger goals of conducting a large offensive against Rojava and the Medya-defense-areas. The revolutionary forces, due to the self-sacrifice of the resistance fighters of Nisêbîn, Cizîr, Gever, Sûr and many other places, could breathe for two more years. In those two years, Manbij, Tebqa, Reqqa, and Deir-az-Zor were liberated from ISIS and their fascist caliphate and the strategic alliance of Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, Assyrian people and all ethnic groups Northeast-Syria's was forged. It was in this that the Syrian Democratic Forces, the biggest revolutionary army in the history of the Middle East took a concrete shape and the Democratic Confederation was founded as an expression of the collective will of all people in Northeast-Syria. These recent developments and achievements of the revolution, whether it be in Northeast-Syria or in other areas like the Şengal-mountains, would be inconceivable without the significant role the self-administration played in the regional revolutionary struggles. Insofar as this is concerned, the youth urban

resistance fighters can’t be talked about in defeating terms, but has to, in light of the fact that the Turkish state’s total war was thwarted, be talked about as a success. The revolutionary process never proceeds in a linear fashion, but dialectically and with no clear distinction between victory and defeat. Every setback results in a new lesson which becomes the basis of the next offensive and to lose territory means little in the context of the larger war. From the military-tactical side of things, the methods used in the barricade fighting was assessed as necessary in that situation, but ultimately an insufficient manner of fighting for the future. Instead of conducting modified trench warfare against the enemy, the units of YPS/YPS-Jin reorganized themselves as a professionalized urban guerrilla. The long existence of the liberation fight in the countryside and in the mountains waged by the guerillas made their presence and activities an omnipresent factor for occupying forces that they have to be constantly aware of. Like in the countryside and in the mountains, this guerrilla war should be established in urban areas under the YPS-organization. This would become the second pillar of the Revolutionary People’s War and would limit the freedom of movement of the fascist occupying forces. The YPS has organized themselves as local units, acting as respectable citizens in public life, but with a professional military education and equipped with all technical skills to deal with hostile occupying troops in an effective manner. Their organization is completely clandestine and separated from all other structures. Their units, organizing themselves in cells and acting in an autonomous and self-organized way, attack the existence of the enemy in the form of sabotage and arson attacks, targeted assassination attempts against representatives of the hostile apparatus and attacks on the security forces of the police in the cities, in different ways. Examples of similar, yet by no means identical, organizational and military approaches include ETA and the IRA in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to the basis of this approach, the units of YPS started reorganizing underground as an urban guerrilla force. The youth movement dissolved in the summer of 2016 into the organization of YPS under the banner of the Revolutionary Youth Movement and the Movement of Revolutionary Young Women DGH and DGKH. Within the concept of a revolutionary people’s war, the structures of the youth movement - organized as the “Serhildan Movement” or “Movement of Rebellion” - make up the third pillar and guarantee,



through its broad, non-professional organization, a mass foundation for the war strategy.

## **The Serhildan Movement**

Using the most simple resources, such as blunt instruments, sharp blades, improvised incendiary and explosive devices, as well as easily replicable actions, they are taking militant actions in a way which allows for an uncontrollable spread of resistance. Arson attacks against elements of Turkish colonialism, the Turkish war economy, and collaborators of the regime, became a common theme of the resistance that was also found far outside the youth movement with imitators from all ages participating. Despite always responding with arbitrary waves of arrests, torture, and even the assassination of suspicious persons, the fascist Turkish state could not prevent the arsons and actions from spreading. In fact, during the last two years, we have seen an unprecedented level of arson attacks that have damaged the Turkish economy by the billions. The hundreds of actions every month have had an effect on the decline of the Turkish economy and the fall of the Turkish Lira.

## **Peoples' United Revolutionary Movement HBDH**

The fourth pillar of the Revolutionary People's War in North-Kurdistan and Turkey are the revolutionary and communist forces of Turkey, the strategic allies of the liberation movement. In March 2016, ten different revolutionary and socialist organizations of Kurdistan and Turkey united under the avant-garde of the Kurdistan Workers' Party to form a united revolutionary front, that declared its existence as the Peoples' United Revolutionary Movement or "HBDH". The common goal is the defeat of fascism, the liberation of Kurdistan from colonialism and the construction of a democratic Turkey as part of a larger revolution in the Middle East. The guerrilla associations that formed out of the armed forces of these different parties in 2016, 2017, and 2018, conducted their first military actions that shook Turkish fascism all the way to the coast of the black sea.

In July 2019, the militias of the HBDH claimed a number of professional and extremely complicated sabotage and arson attacks in the Turkish metropolises. The attacks took place during a time

when Turkish fascism was trying with all its power to start a new invasion against the liberated areas of Rojava. With Turkish army's and their Islamic Jihadist gang's invasion of Rojava during October 2019, a new phase of reinforced resistance began in North-Kurdistan and Turkey. The intensity and the pulse of the beatings of the urban guerrilla increased noticeably during this time and new groups and independent initiatives of Kurdish youths claimed attacks on targets in urban areas in response. Other small groups such as "Children of the Fire Initiative", as well as the women's group "Women of the Sunrays", and "revenge units" took actions at this time and gained spectacular attention around the world.

## **The line of action of the "Children of Fire"**

Within these initiatives, there are no fixed organizations but rather a common identity, a group in which everyone feels like they belong to it and dedicate themselves to its goals. In these groups, everyone "from 7 to 70", as they commonly say, are what constitutes the age of most of their members. The actions of these initiatives are highly concentrated in western Turkey and it is their declared goal to eliminate safe spaces for elements of the fascist Turkish state and to bring the liberation war to the heart of the enemy. The "Children of Fire" declared in their founding document their great respect for and recognition of the fighters of the PKK, but that they also stated more actions must be taken outside of those taken by the guerrillas and revolutionary parties. It is not enough to attack the perpetrators of fascism and occupation when they are in active service in their uniform, one also has to attack them in every scenario, in their houses and at the home of their families, in order to hold them accountable for their crimes. Every supporter of the fascist regime, members of the AKP and MHP, the capitalistic goals of the Turkish economy, as well as the tourism economy, are legitimate targets of actions of the initiatives. Unlike what is claimed by Turkish propaganda, the "Children of Fire" share no organizational connections with the PKK, but they have the same goal; the recognition of an official status of autonomy for Kurdistan. Until Kurdish people can exercise their right to self-determination, they have declared that they will continue their actions without interruption and have stated they will "make hellish lives for those who burnt our brothers and sisters alive in the cellars of

Cizîr". Starting with only a few arson actions, hundreds have now spread through the whole of Turkey. The children, who became witnesses in the 90's of how their villages went up in flames, have grown up and brought the fire back to urban areas against the fascist Turkish state.

## **Exposing the false peace**

In the year of 2020, they succeeded against all repression and state measures by raising the urban guerrilla fight in Turkey and Kurdistan to an unprecedented level and forcing the hostile apparatus to stutter. With hundreds of attacks and actions of resistance in urban areas of Turkey, the bloody fight was taken to the heart of the beast and the deathly silence of fascism was disrupted. The fire, that was inflamed in the supposed safe urban areas and the tourist-places of Turkey, had exposed the lie of false peace and showed the world that Turkey is a country at war and that this war will know no borders anymore with immediate effect. After a long term of reorganization and rebuilding, the units of the Civil Protection Units YPS/YPS-Jin began a professional urban guerrilla war, as part of their offensive against Turkish colonialism and its collaborators which started in May, sometimes attacking Turkish forces several times a day in different places. Through the actions of the militias and the revenge-units, it was made clear once and for all that anyone who makes common cause with the fascist regime will be held accountable. Numerous fascist police, agents and collaborators already became targets of the militias and were punished as a result of military operations in the formerly liberated cities. The fight in the urban cities and cities goes forward every day, while in the countryside, the guerrillas have proven to maintain their revolutionary capacity. Today, the war against Turkish fascism is waged on all fronts in the homeland and abroad, in the mountains and in the plains, in all villages and cities, with strenuous effort. Assessing the breadth and quality of this urban guerrilla warfare is a task historians must deal with today. Even if mostly ignored by the revolutionary public by now, the urban guerrilla war in Turkey has gained a level and a strength unparalleled in history. For the revolutionary world-movement there is a lot to learn from this example. It is self evident that the urban guerrilla, despite most modern repression-apparati, remains in no way an outdated concept, but rather a powerful weapon in the hand of the oppressed. Just

as it is possible to evade enemy surveillance on land in the mountains through sophisticated maneuvers, camouflage, and the right tactics, it is also possible to remain under the radar of an oppressive state in the city. The question of the role of the guerrilla in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not a question that only has relevance for the Middle East. Showing, through our practical efforts, that it is possible to take on even a highly technologized NATO army, is something that concerns all the oppressed people of the world and all its revolutionaries. It is a question whether the end of our fight will bring about liberation and if revolution remains possible. Without the prospect of success in the armed struggle, global liberation cannot be conceived.

One of the commanders of the resistance of Sûr, Ş. Xemgin Roj, wrote in one of his last diary entries: "May come what ever will come, the end will be wonderful." The year 2020 definitively shown that the end of this fight is not reached yet and the last word will not be spoken by fascists but by the people. The resistance that started in 2015, has not ended, it has only reached a new phase - a new phase of revolution which lives on in the continuing resistance of the self-administered cities. While Turkish fascism continues war preparations and prepares itself for a new invasion against the freed areas of Rojava, the defence areas of Medya and Şengal, it becomes more and more clear that further war is on the horizon. Either the end of Turkish fascism will be forced in a united fight of the people or a strategic setback will be the consequence for the revolution in the whole area. In this light, the Kurdistan Communities Union have mustered all available forces to a united mobilization against the Turkish fascism with their offensive of the 12<sup>th</sup> of September: "Stop isolation, occupation and fascism – It is time for freedom". The different organizations of the urban guerrilla followed the call and further intensified their attacks. Without doubts this war will only find its end when the regime of the AKP-MHP, the dictatorship of Erdogan and Bahceli, lays vanquished on the ground. The biggest obstacle for the breakthrough of the revolution in the Middle East and the strongest bulwark of the regional counter-revolution is without doubts Turkish fascism. If together we succeed to bring this regime down, the regional and global effects are only hard to imagine and will have extensive consequences for world history and the further progress of the revolution.

The global resistance movement ought not position itself as supporters of only one side but has to understand itself as part of the fight against Turkish fascism. As a part of a global front line against Turkish fascism within imperialist countries and all over the world we must increase the resistance against the culprits of this war, the supporters and backers of the Turkish fascism to a maximum, in order that they may show their true colours. If we attack united as one front, then we will succeed in condemning Turkish fascism to the dustbin of history. Today the fight against Turkish fascism is the historical responsibility of every single revolutionary and its destruction the key that will open the door for a democratic revolution in the Middle East. Only a global response will suffice to counter the attacks of imperialism and Turkish fascism on the revolution.

*Death to fascism!*

*Victory to the Revolutionary People's War!*

# **Annex 1.**

## **YPS: YPS: With rifles in our hands and determination in our hearts**

**It has now been five years since the YPS and the YPS-jin were created in order to fight in coordination, against the terror of the Turkish state in Northern Kurdistan.**

The civil defense units of the YPS (Yekîneyên Parastina Sivîl) and the autonomous women's structures of the YPS-jin issued a statement for the fifth anniversary of their first coordination they also commemorated the male and female combatants who fell in the struggle for self-administration in Northern Kurdistan.

According to the YPS statement, the territorial demarcations, which were put in place after the First World War, prevented the emergence of a Kurdish nation state in the Middle East and denied the very existence of the Kurds. The borders between the states that succeeded the Ottoman Empire mainly followed the interests of the colonial powers of the time. As a result, the predominantly Kurdish-populated areas were divided between four newly created states - Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq - and the Kurds were thus denied their right to self-determination. "Our struggle for freedom, which emerged as a rebellion against colonization and the denial and genocide that accompanies it, produced an epic tradition of resistance under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan".

**To the south and the west the Is, to the north the plan of destruction**

In order to annihilate the struggle for freedom, Turkish fascism resorted to various methods as well as to various allies, especially their international ones. This was in order to implement their overall concept of annihilation, as is highlighted by the joint statement of the YPS. In western and southern Kurdistan, a certain "barbarism" has recently appeared in the form of the jihadist militia of the "Islamic State" (IS): "But whether it is Kobanê or Şengal - thanks to the resistance of thousands of

martyrs, the barbarians of the IS have been fought tooth and nail to prevent a total genocide.

In northern Kurdistan, state fascism launched its plan of destruction at the same time (tr. "Çöktürme Planı", mutatis mutandis: "Kneel down", ANF). With the significant development of the annihilation plan, the main goal was to liquidate our liberation movement and to bring people to their knees in the cities and regions where the liberation movement is largely supported. The determined people of Kurdistan, inseparable from their concept of a "Free society is an organized society, an organized society is a society that defends itself", opposed the annihilation plan by digging trenches and joined the resistance, responding directly to the brutal attacks on the Turkish state. Young people, women and the population of each city have put themselves behind the barricades in order to defend their communities".

**First the YDG-H, then the YPS**

The resistance in August 2015 against the siege of Kurdish towns by the Turkish army and the curfews that accompanied it, was first carried by the youth organization known as the YDG-H, which was organizationally autonomous but ideologically aligned with the "project of democratic self-government". As armed self-defense acquired a broad social base during the military siege, the forces had to be adapted to the new conditions and subjected to widespread social control. In light of these conditions the YPS and YPS-Jin were founded at a local level.

**With guns in our hands and determination in our hearts**

"Historic battles were fought in Gimgim, Farqîn, Sûr, Rêzan, Bismîl, Dêrika Çiyayê Mazî, Kerboran, Nisêbîn, Cizîr, Silopiya, Hezex, Gever, Wan and Şirnex. The children of the Kurdish people became the pioneers of resistance under the aegis of the YPS/YPS-Jin. They left a historic legacy of inestimable wealth in a very short time". The Civil Defense Units Coordination remembers Asya Yüksel and Mehmet Tunç, the two co-chairmen of the Cizîr People's Council who were murdered in the infamous "death cellars" by Turkish security forces, the actor Hacî Lokman Birlik, whose body was riddled with 28 bullets by the policemen of Şirnex and dragged through the city by an armored vehicle, of Sêvê Demir, Pakize Nayır and Fatma

Uyar, who were executed in Silopiya, Çiyager Hêvî (Cihat Türkan) who led the resistance against the Turkish siege in Sûr and Nûcan Malatya - also known as "Kanasçı -Sniper- Roza" who fell there, "and the many others who died opposing the fascism of the Turkish state, its tanks and its grenades, its thousands of soldiers. With pistol in hand and determination in their hearts, they resisted the enemy's objective of bringing them to their knees and thus thwarted their plan of destruction".

### **Revenge for the fighters that have fallen**

The very existence of the main coordination of the YPS/YPS-Jin, which is based on organized self-defense, is in itself an "act of revenge," the organization continues in its statement by saying: "Because revenge is our duty. In this sense, we celebrate our fifth anniversary and address the word to our fighters: that in the sixth year of our resistance, we will extend self-defense into all areas of society in the spirit of urban warfare. Our attachment is to the flag given to us by those who have fallen, and we will carry it for as long as is necessary".



## **Annex 2.**

# **Civil defense units launch a "retaliatory offensive"**

**Because AKP fascism will not be banished without outside intervention, the civil defense units YPS and YPS-Jin have launched a "reprisal offensive" against the counter-guerrilla and its supporters in Northern Kurdistan.**

The civil defense units, the YPS (Yekîneyên Parastina Sîvîl) and the autonomous women's organization YPS-Jin announced a "reprisal offensive against imperialists and their accomplices" in Northern Kurdistan. In a press release, the coordination of the two youth organizations described the background, objectives and implementation of the offensive. We reproduce below the following statement: "No political or military force, even if it is weakened and on the verge of disintegration or dissolution, will disappear from the scene unless its existence is interrupted by another force. No political or military force will easily transfer its sovereignty to another. "This rule especially applies to fascist structures. From past experience, we know all too well the reality of fascism. In Kurdistan and Turkey, fascism has already been institutionalized by the AKP/MHP."

Like its historical predecessors, this new version of fascism will not clear the field without outside intervention, but will only collapse with the fist of revolutionary resistance. The resistance developed so far has already brought fascism to the threshold of disintegration. That is why its motto is: "More and more fascism, more and more massacres. »

Human history is marked by examples of social resistance for democratic rights and freedoms as well as struggles to defend these same rights against oppressors, colonialists, fascists and status quo states. In the streets, neighborhoods, villages, communities and cities, the peoples' sense of freedom has shifted from a mentality of statism and the search for domination to revolutions that have shaped human history. The resistance for self-administration that has been carried out in Northern Kurdistan marks an important development in the

revolutionary process of the Kurdish liberation struggle.

The fascist army, fanatical about race, came and attacked our people with genocidal intentions, but it shattered against the historical resistance of self-administration. The defense of one's own existence and freedom, combined with a conscious and active actions of self-defense, broadens the people's front, while the enemy front is pushed back. From Cizîr (Cizre), Sûr and Silopiya (Silopi), the resistance spread to Nisêbîn (Nusaybin), Şîrnex (Şîrnak), Gever (Yüksekova) and Hezex (Idil), uniting the people and the guerrillas in a revolutionary people's war. Fallen comrades such as Çiyager\*, Zeryan, Xebatkar, Çeko, Êriş, Ruken, Islam and Axîn, whom have been immortalized in the spirit of this resistance, were not only pioneers who demonstrated how the struggle for freedom is being waged victoriously in practice. But they also showed how colonialism could be crushed. Today more than ever, it is the time of revolutionary militants, pioneers and patriots. It is the time of Çiyager, Zeryan and Mehmet Tunç. It is the time to spend one's life not at home but in the resistance. It is time to develop effective lines of resistance against the fascism of the AKP/MHP, which is on the verge of collapse. This of course should be based on the revolutionary strategy of the people's war. Only in this way can this fascist dictatorship be completely discarded. The only revolutionary and patriotic duty at the present time is to develop these lines of struggle.

The line between the loss of the basis of existence and self-liberation is very thin, as the history of our people shows. It is only through our resistance that we have been able to reach the point where we are today. Our President, Abdullah Ocalan, has led offensives against the genocidal system and achieved practical results. Even in the prison on the island of Imrali, in conditions of total isolation, he leads without ever settling and with an overtly offensive style. This characteristic of leadership is an essential trait of our tradition of resistance. This commitment is at the basis of all the achievements that have been made in Kurdistan. With the strength and morale that this tradition of struggle gives us, and knowing that resistance is the only way to fight fanatical fascism and its accomplices. The actors responsible for the massacres of our people, we, the YPS and the YPS-Jin, are beginning our "retaliatory offensive against imperialists and their accomplices". As long as the fascist dictatorship is not destroyed and its accomplices and supporters

are not eliminated, the existence and freedom of the Kurdish people cannot be guaranteed. The fact that we are waging a war against fascism for the right for self-determination makes it impossible for them to deny our existence. Living with fascism is impossible. The only thing possible is to oppose and fight it.

It is necessary to extend and develop the resistance and struggle to all areas of life. The institutions, individuals and structures of fascist colonialism are everywhere. Because of the comfort that fascism enjoys as well as the atmosphere created by the "special" war in Kurdistan, the fascists and their supporters are unquestionably moving throughout our towns and villages and trying to betray our families' values through coercion and cruelty. It is obvious that as revolutionary and patriotic sons and daughters of our people, we cannot stand by and watch these events unfold. In the offensive we have launched, we will not allow this network of agents and their supporters to act without counterpart. With this in mind, our units must not delay the planning of their operations and direct actions. Without limiting their freedom of movement, because of the Corona pandemic, they must develop creative methods in order to act in accordance with an offensive fighting style.

In the context of the historical responsibility that our experiences bring, there are opportunities and methods that each of us can use in cities, neighborhoods and villages to strengthen the resistance. The enemies are not only soldiers and police. There are also traitors in everyday life who attack the "Free Kurds" and their lives. All collaborators and sympathizers infiltrated into our society who work for the preservation of AKP/MHP fascism are on the list of enemies.

These people who feel protected in neighborhoods and kinship relations, who exploit the warm social relations of the Kurdish people, create a more dangerous situation than Sars-covid-2. We must protect ourselves against them and keep our distances. The partisans of fascism do not even deserve to be greeted. We have not forgotten Mehmet Tunç and Sêvê Demirel, who resisted in a devoted manner for autonomy, nor the massacres of the State of the time which have not faded from our memory. In the last four years, every moment has been mixing our anger with the fire of our revenge. With the offensive style of Şehîd Çiyager, we have reorganized ourselves and put ourselves in the spotlight to demand accountability from the AKP/MHP regime. As long as ideological isolation is not broken, as long as we cannot live a free life, as long as the genocidal attacks have not ended, we will carry out actions of revenge in all circumstances".

After reading the statement, the YPS/YPS-Jin commented on the first attack of the retaliation offensive. According to the statement, one of their units carried out sabotage acts against Selahattin Yildirim, a paramilitary fighter of Kurdish origin from the notorious "Dagger Unit" (Hançer Timi), happening as early as April 27 in Dergule near Şirnex. These counter-revolutionary forces gained great notoriety in the 1990s for crimes such as the kidnapping, extortion, torture and rape of Kurdish civilians. According to the YPS, Yildirim, who was seriously wounded during the operation, allegedly took part in the Turkish army's curfew and siege massacres in northern Kurdistan between 2015 and 2016, as well as in operations against the guerrillas. "He fought his own people and is responsible for the deaths of many patriotic Kurds," he said. Yildirim also participated in the attack on the guerrilla cemetery in Gabar".

## **The concept of the urban guerrilla**

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### **Annex 1.**

#### **YPS: YPS: With rifles in our hands and determination in our hearts**

It has now been five years since the YPS and the YPS-jin were created in order to fight in coordination, against the terror of the Turkish state in Northern Kurdistan.

### **Annex 2.**

#### **Civil defense units launch a "retaliatory offensive"**

Because AKP fascism will not be banished without outside intervention, the civil defense units YPS and YPS-Jin have launched a "reprisal offensive" against the counter-guerrilla and its supporters in Northern Kurdistan.