

Open letter to the US and EU governments

The attacks against the Kurdish population and the PKK must be immediately halted

We are deeply concerned about the recent developments inside Turkey, Syria and Northern Iraq.

It is difficult to understand why the Turkish government is sending forces in response to the bombing of Suruç where 32 left-wing youths were killed, when it is exactly those forces – namely the YPG from Rojava/Northern Syria and the PKK - who took action to save thousands of Ezidi people in Şengal, and have resisted in the most effective way the terror organization “Islamic State” (IS).

The democratic structures of self-administration in Rojava along with the PKK stand for a society is peaceful, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and based on gender equality. These are exactly the principles that are upheld as international ideals.

Turkey’s attacks, carried out with the apparent support of the US and the EU-governments, clearly show that their policy does not aim to secure stability for all the societies in the region and the true well-being of the populations.

Under the pretext of fighting IS, the Turkish government is in reality trying to push back and defeat the Kurdish movement in the whole region. With its bombardment of regions such as Kandil, Zap, Avaşin and Metina in Northern Iraq, the government President Erdogan and Prime Minister Davutoglu has brought the peace process with the PKK to an end – and with its military operations against Rojava Turkey is endangering the future and lives of the peoples in the whole Middle East.

The US government seems to have given a free hand to Turkey to commence military operations against the PKK and the democratic self-administration of Rojava in exchange for permission to use the airbase of Incirlik.

It seems more than reasonable to suggest that the consequences of such policies will cause immense suffering and engulf the region in chaos in the long term. Supporting the destructive domestic and foreign policies of the Turkish government, while there is ample evidence that it has been working with IS for years, is seriously deepening the conflicts in the whole region which is already subjected to prolonged war and ongoing destruction. It should be obvious that this course of action will only lead to more deaths and the forced migration of thousands, possibly millions, of people.

It is therefore at best irresponsible that the US government can express its support for the proposal for a so-called “buffer zone” in Rojava/Northern Syria. The AKP has been seeking to create such a zone for a long time with the aim of overturning the democratic self-administration of the people of Rojava and to undermine the growing influence of the democratic Kurdish forces within Turkey.

In addition to the aforementioned military operations, Turkish police conducted raids arresting more than 900 persons. Most of them are associated with the Kurdish People’s Democratic Party (HDP) and other progressive activists in Turkey – only a very few were connected to IS. The Turkish government is acting increasingly aggressive against the HDP and the Kurdish population since the AKP lost its absolute majority in the recent elections and is trying to provoke civil strife. The fact that the German

federal government is continuously cooperating on all levels including military and security policy and is installing its Patriot missiles at the Syrian border will lead to a further escalation of the situation.

We strongly urge you to withdraw from such a geo-strategically motivated policy which brings about unimaginable suffering without end. Peace is a central issue, but the actions that you support are actually endangering world peace.

In the interest of peace and democracy it is necessary to acknowledge the self-administration of Rojava and to change the approach towards the PKK, to start a progressive dialogue and to urge the Turkish government to stop its destructive and aggressive policy. In order to relaunch the peace process between the Turkish government and the PKK, negotiations have to be started again. It is also essential to recognise the vital role that Abdullah Öcalan can play in bringing about peace as a chief negotiator for the Kurds and in this respect he has to be set free.

It becomes more and more clear that the alleged war against IS in Syria is used as a cover to destabilize the whole Middle East and to annihilate the Kurdish movement. It is a pertinent question whether the actual intention is to overthrow Rojava, to proceed to Damascus, destroy sovereignty and to divide the country. The attacks against the Kurdish population and the PKK must be brought to an end immediately.

We urge the US and the German governments to make a stand by all means possible against the escalation of violence initiated by the Turkish Government and the inhuman practices of the IS.

If you don't do so with regard to the severe situation all the fine words of your government representatives expressing concern for the plight of the Ezidi and Kurdish population as well as the people of Rojava will seem utterly cynical and indeed dishonest.

Signatories

Prof. Dr. Norman Paech, Professor i. R. University Hamburg, Gemany;

Matjaz Hanzek, sociologist, former Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia at the parliament assembly of the Council of Europe, Slovekia;

Dr. Alexander Neu, member of the German Bundestag, THE LEFT, Germany;

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Andrej Hunko, member of the German Bundestag, THE LEFT, Germany;

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Britta Eder, barrister Hamburg, Germany;

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Martin Dolzer, member of the state parliament Hamburg, THE LEFT, Germany;

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Janet Biehl, author, USA;

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Prof. Dr. med. Ulrich Gottstein, founding member of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), Germany;

Dr.h.c. Hans von Sponeck, UN Assistant of Secretary-General a.D.;

Ulla Jelpke, member of the German Bundestag, THE LEFT;

Sevim Dagdelen, member of the German Bundestag, Member of THE LEFT, Vice-chair of the German-Turkish Parliament Group;

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Lord Avebury, member of the House of Lords, UK;

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