



October 6, 2023

## Open Letter

Over the past years, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) has aspired to be a pillar of stability and a model for a political solution to the Syrian crisis, whose humanitarian and security repercussions have become clear to the international community.

The AANES, which administers a third of Syria's territories, has proposed political and social solutions to the dilemmas of the Syrian crisis, including the issue of refugees, by providing livelihoods for civilians and by building crucial infrastructure. By doing so, the AANES hopes to contribute to the recovery of the region and reduce waves of migration towards neighbouring countries and the West.

There is no doubt that many challenges and difficulties stand in the path of construction and stabilisation. One of the most serious challenges is the ongoing Turkish attacks that target prominent leaders in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who have a long track record of combating terrorism and who contributed to the elimination of the Islamic State (ISIS) or Daesh. The Turkish attacks cannot be justified. They violate not only international law but also the de-escalation agreements that Turkey has reached with both the United States and Russia.

On October 4, 2023, Turkey began targeting economic facilities and infrastructure. These are crucial institutions that serve civilians and contribute to establishing stability in North-East Syria (NES), which is home to more than five million Syrians, as well as hundreds of thousands of displaced persons. Last year, Turkey also targeted power stations and energy sources, which had dire consequences for the region's economy and civilians' lives.

On October 5, 2023, 15 Turkish drones bombed infrastructure, service facilities, and gas and oil stations, resulting in civilian casualties. Turkish drones launched two strikes in the vicinity of Washokani camp for the displaced people of Sere Kaniye (Ras al-Ain) in the Al-Hasakah countryside. Three civilians were injured in the bombing of a factory in the village of Mushayrafa al-Hamma, northwest of Al-Hasakah.

Jal Agha Dam, located north of Jal Agha district, was also bombed, in addition to some villages in the countryside of Kobani, Tal Tamer, and Al-Hasakah, which resulted in civilian casualties.

The Turkish bombing destroyed two oil storage facilities southwest of Tirbespiyeh (Al-Jawadiya) district, and two oil stations in the countryside of Jal Agha district. It also caused two power stations to go out of service, as well as a water station in the village of Al-Rakba, located south of Tal Tamer district.

The ongoing violations and attacks carried out by Turkey in NES are tantamount to an open war against the Syrian people and the SDF. The Turkish pretexts to justify the aggression are baseless. The SDF has issued a statement confirming that the suicide bombers did not use NES as a transit area to carry out the Ankara attack. Turkey did not provide any evidence to prove its claims.

Turkey has always tried to export its internal problems to neighbouring countries, such as Syria and Iraq, rather than searching for democratic solutions domestically. This is not the first time Turkey has used baseless claims to attack NES. Turkey has always sought to undermine the AANES's project, which is characterized by inclusivity and provides equal rights to all people regardless of their ethnic or religious background.

The AANES abides by international laws and seeks good relations with neighbouring countries. We call upon the Turkish government to resolve the Kurdish issue in Turkey by peaceful means and not to resort to military solutions, which have not borne fruit over several decades.

The modern history of the Turkish State in dealing with the Kurdish issue has been characterized by oppressive and genocidal approaches. The Turkish State is now using those same methods to suppress the Kurds in Syria and Iraq. The recent attack on Sulaymaniyah Airport and the headquarters of Kurdish movements in Erbil is consistent with Turkish policies against the Kurds.

The international community must, therefore, adopt a firm stance towards the irresponsible actions of the Turkish government, which undermines regional and international security and stability.

The continuation of the Turkish attacks would allow ISIS/Daesh cells to become active and pose a threat to both regional and international security. Worsening instability could lead to a huge wave of migration towards neighbouring countries and Europe.

The AANES calls on the key actors in the Syrian file and the international community to exert maximum pressure on the Turkish government to stop its escalation in NES and to withdraw from the Syrian areas that it occupies. This will open broad horizons to move forward towards a Syrian political solution, which will guarantee peace and security in Syria and the region.

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