

118 Syrian Organizations Call on the International Community to Assume Responsibility towards Afrin and all of Syria

The undersigned organizations demand; an immediate end to massive human rights violations in Afrin and all of Syria, fair accountability for perpetrators, safe and dignified return of original residents, and demographic change cessation

Five years have passed since Turkish military forces and a coalition of Türkiye-backed Syrian armed groups took over the entire district of Afrin in northern Syria. Living under occupation, locals of Afrin have been subjected to countless violations on a daily basis. The ongoing violations and the inflicted constant fear forced tens of thousands of civilians to flee their homes without any hope of imminent return.

The Afrin offensive was simultaneous with another by the Syrian government forces and their Russian allies against [Eastern Ghouta](#). Regime troops and allies recaptured Ghouta from rebels, after a blistering assault, which killed hundreds and ended in a Russia and Türkiye-brokered surrender deal. The deal transferred tens of thousands of opposition fighters and original residents out of the area and resettled them in parts of Syria's north, including Afrin.

Independent international organizations and United Nations committees documented violations of various kinds in Afrin, including [killing](#) in unlawful attacks, [arbitrary detention](#), enforced disappearance, ill-treatment, [torture](#), [looting](#), and [confiscation of property](#). Furthermore, hindering the return of displaced original residents, especially the Kurds, as well as acts of Turkification and demographic change have been monitored.

Lack of accountability for these grave human rights violations, in addition to the persistence of impunity make the Turkish-occupied territories completely unsafe, and do not comply with the [criteria of voluntary return](#) set by the United Nations. All this while almost 70% of Afrin's original residents are still forcibly displaced since 2018.

In its latest [report](#), issued on 7 March 2023, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic confirmed the continuation of arbitrary arrests and detentions by the Syrian National Army (SNA) in Afrin. The Commission confirmed that witnesses interviewed for the purpose of the report revealed cases of beating, torture, and ill-treatment in places of detention and during interrogations, with the presence of Turkish officials. In addition, the Commission's report cited cases of civilian property seizure with reports from interviewees of being prevented from regaining access to their properties and threatened if they tried to claim them back. Furthermore, the Commission said that it continued documenting cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence, perpetrated by SNA members, including of children.

As an occupying power, Türkiye has not assumed its responsibilities in areas under its influence in northern Syria, including Afrin. No real action has been taken by the Turkish authorities to ensure the protection of civilians; Türkiye rather gave its SNA proxies a free

hand to commit human rights violations against the original residents of those areas. Even the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces failed to stop the human rights violations of the SNA, which supposedly operates under it. Therefore, the undersigned organizations urge the UN Security Council to take the necessary measures; to provide appropriate conditions for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of the residents of Afrin and all Syrians, to redress victims, and to punish perpetrators.

The signatory organizations make the recommendations below:

1. The United Nations

To cease attempts of ignoring and circumventing the situation in Afrin and other Syrian parts occupied by Türkiye, and compel the latter to assume its responsibilities as an occupying power under international law.

2. The Turkish Government

- (a) To stop politicizing the situation of northern Syria's population and turning a blind eye to the human rights abuses that they have been subjected to. This is with the aim to evade recognizing the Turkish presence in Syria as an occupation; which has been already proven by international committees and human rights organizations citing Türkiye's effective and direct control over northern Syrian territories.

- (b) To take all measures – within its authority – necessary to ensure public safety and order and provide special protection for women and children in the areas under its control and stop the gross violations of human rights that its forces and allied militias continue to commit against civilians.

3. The Human Rights Council/The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic: To provide a comprehensive and accurate briefing on the intertwined web of roles and interests of all foreign/external powers intervening in the Syrian conflict, and its reflection on the state of compliance with the International humanitarian law (IHL) international human rights law (IHRL).

Organizations and Associations Signing the Statement:

1. Act for Afrin
2. Adil Center for Human Rights
3. Afrin Platform
4. Afrinpost Network
5. AIN SHAMS Organization
6. ALAHD Organization
7. Allied for Peace
8. Al-Raja Organization for Relief and Development
9. Al-Zajel Organization
10. Amal Al-Furat organization

11. Amal For Development
12. Analysis and Strategic Study Organization ASO
13. Anwar Al-Ghad Organization
14. Aras Charity Association
15. Areej Organisation
16. Ashti Center for Peacebuilding
17. Assyrian Society for Helping and Development
18. AYADI Moubra Organization
19. Azdehar Organization
20. Balsam Organization For Development
21. Better Life Organization
22. Better Tomorrow Organization
23. Center Defanse
24. Clemency Organization
25. Community Solidarity Organaization
26. DAN for Relief and Development
27. dari Center
28. Dawlaty
29. Dijla Organization for Development and Environment
30. Dya Al Aml Association
31. Ebdaa Organization for Development
32. Edraak Organization for Development and Peace
33. Enlil Center
34. Enma aljazera Organization
35. Environment and Water Association (EWAS)
36. Espoir Afrin
37. Eternity
38. Euphrates NGO
39. Ezdina Organization
40. Fariq Snae al Mustaqbal
41. FDO Organization
42. For Feminist
43. For Them Organisation
44. Friends Charity Association
45. Green Women's Association
46. Happy land
47. Hdf Humanitarian
48. Hevy for Relief and Development
49. Hope Makers
50. House of Citizenship Organisation
51. Human Hope Team
52. Human Rights organizations Afrin - Syria
53. Human Rigts Organizatin In Jazeera
54. Humanitarian and Development Cooperation
55. Iwaa organizations
56. Jian Charity Association
57. Kesksyi Organization

58. Khutwa Association
59. Kurdische Gemeinschaft Herne ASO
60. Kurdish Committee for Human Rights (RASSED)
61. Kurdish Cultural Association of Geneva
62. Kurdish Feminist Voices
63. Kurdish Organization for Human Rights in Syria (DAD)
64. Laila Initiative
65. Lelun Association for Victims
66. Lights for Development and Construction
67. Manara Organization
68. Mary Association for Culture, Arts and Environment
69. Max Vison
70. Nama Organization
71. Nasmel Amal
72. Nujin Society for Community
73. Okkaz
74. Oxygen Shabab
75. PEACE SHE LEADERS NET WORK
76. Peace tent
77. PÊL- CIVIL WAVES
78. Purity Organization
79. Qadar Organization
80. QRD Organization
81. Qudwa Organization for Building and Development
82. Ras Al Ain/Serê Kaniyê Platform
83. Reng for development
84. Rescue and Relief team
85. RFD Organization
86. Rights Defense Initiative
87. RojHilat for Relief and Development
88. Rose for Support and Empowerment
89. SALAM. ORG
90. Sara Organization To Combat Violence Against Women
91. Sawaed Development Organization
92. Scsd
93. Shar for development
94. Share for Community Development
95. Shawshka Women's Association
96. Shilan Association for Relief and Development
97. Silav Organization for Civil Activities
98. Society for Threatened Peoples GfbV/STP
99. Stability Support Centre
100. Synergy Association for Victims
101. Syriac Cross Organization for Relief and Development
102. Syrian Cancer Society
103. Syrian Kurdish Journalists Network
104. Syrians for Truth and Justice

105. Taa marbouta
 106. Tara Organization
 107. Tel Abyad Forum for Civil Society
 108. The Leading Woman
 109. The Levant News
 110. The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression
 111. Weqaya Association
 112. Wheat Olive Platfrom
 113. Women for Peace
 114. Women of Hope
 115. Youth For Change
 116. Youth Optimistic
 117. Zakon Organization
 118. Zameen for Development and Peacebuilding
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