



Afrin Under Occupation (274) - Special: Six years of aggression and occupation... Violations, war crimes, crimes against humanity and broad demographic change



*Arabic to English Translation**

At four in the afternoon Damascus time, January 20, we remember those terrifying moments that overshadowed the Afrin area six years ago, when 72 Turkish warplanes bombed 108 targets within an hour and a half of the attack, so that the sounds of explosions, flames and columns of black smoke raised the clear sky of Afrin and its prosperous lands with oaks, pines, sumac and olive trees... Thus, Turkey announced the start of its comprehensive war on the region, which does not exceed an area of /2500/ km², under the name of "Olive Branch", after mobilizing its forces, launching media campaigns and directing about /90/ thousand mosques to read Surat Al-Fath and pray to God!

Perhaps the UN Security Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security and protecting human rights, but it failed to find a solution to the Syrian crisis, and is incompatible with it, due to the conflict of key parties in the Syrian arena, and has not been able to protect civilians in any way, except by adopting a mechanism for the entry of UN humanitarian and relief assistance without covering the entire Syrian territory.

Turkey tried to call the areas it occupied in three military operations (2016, 2018, and 2019) in northern Syria a "**safe zone**", without success, because it is not based on a legal basis and is politically and morally unacceptable in terms of facts and practices, these areas, including Afrin, have become arenas for the spread of militias, infighting and Turkish military activity, and a springboard for hostilities in Conflict with Syrian parties controlling other areas; in addition to the displacement of the Kurds of the indigenous population from their areas, exposing The remaining for various types of violations and, crimes, most notably the systematic change of demographic architecture, in addition to the destruction of infrastructure and the widespread seizure, theft and looting of private and public property.

Shortly after the occupation, the area was divided into military sectors of the militias of the so-called "Syrian National Army - Syrian Interim Government" and they are still deployed among civilians and controlled with an iron hand under the supervision and directives of Turkish intelligence directly, without

establishing a civilian pattern of governance or holding some kind of elections, where political life and public freedoms are absent, and even these militias shelter hundreds, if not thousands, of ISIS members and leaders, in addition to securing a passage for them to flee abroad, some of whom were killed by Airstrikes by international coalition forces.

Afrin turned from **a relatively safe and stable area** witnessing natural development in various fields during six years under the previous Autonomous Administration to **an unsafe area** during six years of Turkish occupation and the power of its Syrian mercenary militias associated with the Syrian-Brotherhood coalition, after the aggression on January 20, 2018 using various types of land and air weapons and the recruitment of about /20/ thousand mercenaries from the opposition militants, and its actual occupation since March 18, 2018.

War crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed against the region and its people, which are grave violations of international humanitarian law, while the international community is silent about them.

We summarize them as follows:

– The crime of aggression:

Afrin was never a threat to its surroundings, but received about /50/ hostile attacks between the years /2012-2017/ AD from groups called (Free Syrian Army), ISIS, Al-Nusra Front, and from the Turkish army as well, causing material damage and casualties killed martyrs and wounded; while the Turkish border with Afrin was safe, no attack was launched against Turkish territory and there was no imminent threat against it, and therefore the Turkish invasion came in violation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, so it constituted aggression On the territory of another state, which in itself is considered a crime according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which has become a pervasive occupation under the Hague Convention of 1907 and all the standards of international laws related to it, and according to the facts and practices on the ground as well.

– Use of prohibited weapons:

There were reports from the former Autonomous Administration that the Turkish army used cluster bombs, as well as chlorine gas in the village of "Arande" - Shieh/Sheikh Al-Hadid, during the invasion and military aggression.

– Mutation of corpses:

During the war, jihadist militants published videos showing their sickening assault on the bodies of martyrs of Kurdish fighters, as their crime against the body of the martyr Barea Kobani revealed the extent of the hatred hidden in them. The militias also did not allow residents to bury the bodies of dozens of Kurdish martyrs after the end of the war, as they remained in the open and exposed for months.

– Premeditated killings, massacres and attacks against civilians:

Mass massacres were committed (Domesticated Rubaria, Mobato, Koblieh, Bosoteh, Hekje, Avreen Hospital, Berbeneh, Jenderes, Freiria, Mahmoudia neighborhood, Yalangoz...) and convoys of civilians were targeted during the attack on Afrin, where the number of victims of the invasion reached nearly /300/ civilian martyrs and dozens whose names were not documented, including dozens of children and women, and more than /1000/ wounded civilians, except for the martyrs and wounded of the Asayish forces (Internal Security), the People's Protection Units and Women YPG-YPJ and volunteers to defend the area; while about /293/ civilians Victims of martyrs since March 18, 2018 until today, whom we were able to document, due to armed robberies, torture, car explosions, mines, physical liquidation during kidnapping, execution, and others, except for cases of forcible death due to persecution and infringements or because of the difficult living conditions imposed by the occupation in its various manifestations, and it is necessary to recall the massacre of Jenderes, which was committed on the eve of Nowruz, March 21, 2023 by members of the "Eastern Army" militias, in which four brothers were killed.

– Widespread destruction and seizure of property:

During the aggression on the region, thousands of homes and public and private properties were vandalized and destroyed, and the invaders resorted to robbing homes and confiscating property and money, and the day / 18 / March 2018, was called the Day of the Locust, when the city of Afrin was subjected to widespread theft of shops, warehouses, houses, machines, machinery and others in full view of the world, as stealing, looting and armed robbery to date are underway on a large scale. Most of the olive presses, the pyren and soap factories, clothing workshops, shops and warehouses in the industrial zone have been robbed or their owners have paid large sums of money to the militias in order to protect their facilities or recover their loot, and they also pay monthly tributes. The seizure of shops, homes, real estate, agricultural land and olive groves continues, especially those belonging to absentees and many of those present as well, through many tricks and methods, which together exceed half of the properties of the people of Afrin. The gunmen and those who were resettled also refrain from evacuating homes and shops belonging to the people of Afrin, despite their repeated demands and filing numerous complaints, in addition, some Kurdish families were evicted from their homes or homes belonging to their relatives in order to house recruiters instead.

– Seizing some villages:

The Turkish army and the militias loyal to it seized some villages and prevented their people from returning to them, such as ("Qastal Jendo, bofloneh, Sinka, Ba'arovo" - Sharra / Sharan, Telefeh - Jenderes, "Shekhourzeh" - Belbeleh...) and take them as military headquarters or residences for militants, the villages (Jelbereh, Koblah, Dermeshmsh, Zrikat, Bosleh, Kholto, Rubaria, chia/Jabaliyah, Darwish, Rajo) are still abandoned and empty of their inhabitants.

– Targeting civilian sites, facilities and houses:

During the aggression on Afrin, the Turkish army did not hesitate to target infrastructure, sites and civilian facilities, including hospitals, medical centers, poultry and livestock facilities, schools, mosques, religious shrines, administrative buildings, bread ovens, drinking and irrigation water stations, Maidanky Dam facilities, olive presses, and others, a large part of which was subjected to deliberate sabotage and theft, such as communication towers, landline telephone networks and public electricity, and many facilities and infrastructure are still out of service, as it was built instead of Some of them are facilities belonging to Turkish institutions, and thousands of homes in the area were partially or completely destroyed or some burned during the military invasion.

– Poor infrastructure and poor services:

Theft and deliberate sabotage affected basic infrastructure, including networks, stations, and centers of electricity, communications, drinking water, schools, institutes, university, agricultural irrigation networks and channels, electric power groups, municipalities and others, and some of them - including school buildings - were occupied as military headquarters, becoming at their lowest or non-existent, and the services provided are still low, despite the restoration of some institutions and the establishment of some of them, and even decimated the high prices of foodstuffs, fuel and electric power on the shoulders of the people, in addition to neutralizing the services of most Syrian government institutions. and poor conditions of the road network.

– Destruction of cemeteries and archaeological sites, theft of antiquities:

The Turkish aggression targeted many archaeological sites with heavy bombardment, such as (Ain Dara archaeological hill, Nabi Hori, Taqalka, St marron...) and caused serious damage to hide historical monuments with them, and the occupation authorities turn a blind eye to the theft and search for antiquities, and even supervise and participate in most of them, where all hills and historical sites - despite their abundance - were subjected to excavation, digging, vandalism and theft of their antiquities and buried treasures with various simple and heavy tools, such as what happened in the sites and hills (Hori, Ain Dara, Brad & St marron, Burj Abdalou, Qiboreh, Jenderes, Gamrouk, Simolko, Zerofkeh, Ktkh, Drumeh, Doderia Maidanaky, Marwaneh Tahtani, Jarnaz, Bazarieh, Kharabeh Alou, Kaoura, Belilco, Burj Haidar...) And many Islamic and Yazidi shrines. On the other hand, the tombs of the martyrs in (Kafr Safreh, Metino, Kafr Shileh) were targeted and destroyed by shelling, and the tombs of religious and cultural figures were vandalized,

such as the tomb of Dr. Nouri Dersem, and the tombs and tombstones written in Kurdish and the graves of the Yazidis were vandalized, and the occupation authorities exhumed in mid-July 2021 the bodies of /71/ martyrs of fallen Kurdish fighters and civilians who fell in the last days of the aggression in March 2018 from a regular cemetery inside the city of Afrin, removed it and distorted its facts.

– Prisoners, illegal detention and enforced disappearance:

The Turkish army did not disclose the number of prisoners it has and their fate, and the militias have special prisons, and about /500- estimated number/ detainee person is still forcibly disappeared and unaccounted for, and the testimonies of some of those released indicate that about /1500/ were hidden in the prison of the town of Al-Rai under torture and in harsh conditions, most of whom were released. During the second half of 2020 AD to the end of 2021, the occupation authorities released forcibly disappeared detainees between /2-3.5/ years, which confirmed the existence of secret prisons, especially that video published on 28/5/2020 AD during the launch of an attack by the "Army of Islam" militias on the headquarters of the "Hamzat Division" (formerly the Asayish building) in the forest of Mahmoudiya - Afrin, in which /11/ women appeared who had been absent for two years.

– Random and arbitrary arrests:

Apart from kidnapping, detention and waves of arrests, there were raids and random arrests, on charges of relationship with the former Autonomous Administration, whether military, civilian, volunteer service, night watch, etc., where Turkish intelligence leads the campaign through its local tools (police, courts, militias, network of agents...) This is sometimes accompanied by direct beatings in front of the eyes of the family members and torture in interrogation centers, which sometimes leads to murder (such as what happened with lawyer Luqman Hamid Hanan, who was arrested on 19 December ,2022, by Turkish intelligence and the Afrin police, and handed over to his family a lifeless body on 22, December,2022), and the confiscation of mobile phones, searching homes, tampering with their furniture, insulting and sometimes stealing money, where some cases are repeated against the same people, sometimes for five times, affecting women, minors and the elderly as well, and leading to the imposition of a penalty, Imprisonment for different periods and fines, and in some cases with harsher penalties, and the Turkish judiciary sentenced some civilian detainees to life imprisonment and imprisonment for different periods on dozens of them, some of whom were transferred from Afrin, and the arrests affect Afrin residents residing in Turkey based on malicious reports prepared by the Turkish intelligence, in regard, the Turkish government commits a flagrant violation of Article /70 / of the fourth Geneva convention /1949 /, which does not allow "the occupying power to arrest, prosecute or convict protected persons for acts committed or opinions they expressed before the occupation...".

The random and arbitrary arrests have occurred on a large scale and are premeditated, and they are continuing, not only against those close to the former Autonomous Administration, but against most of the Kurds - the original inhabitants of the region, the first of which is not only to generate financial revenues, but also to insult and intimidate the indigenous people and push them to leave their homes and properties, and to establish a security database about them for the benefit of Turkish intelligence, especially since most of the perpetrators of violations and crimes are not held accountable and easily get away with it, at a time when the law and (the judiciary that has been Its establishment in Afrin) is a tool to abuse detainees and indigenous people, not to redress them, redress their grievances, hold criminals accountable and arrest thieves, which confirms with conclusive evidence that it is a systematic hostile policy being carried out against the Kurds under direct Turkish supervision.

Despite the passage of six years since the absence of the previous Autonomous Administration, the specter of accusations of having ties with it, even if participating in the guard for one hour, still haunts the remaining Kurds, as well as those returning to their homes are being interrogated, most of them arrested, and royalties and fines are imposed on them.

– Torture, inhuman or degrading treatment:

The remaining people of Afrin were subjected to daily insults, extortion and provocation, abductions and widespread arbitrary arrests, and are still continuing, as most of the abductees and detainees have been

subjected to torture, which is a routine practice, including women, minors and the elderly, and some of them have been threatened with slaughter according to published videos; the fate of about 500 /an estimated number/ of them is still unknown and without a trial, even a sham, and the families of most of those released have paid fines or ransoms, sometimes reaching /20/ thousand US dollars. During the second half of 2020 to the end of 2021, the occupation authorities released detainees who were forcibly disappeared between / 2-3.5 / years, after their health

conditions deteriorated, which confirms the existence of secret prisons, the most famous of which is the notorious Al-Rai town prison, whose file has not yet been closed, in which about /15/ detainees died without handing over the bodies of most of them to their families or informing them of their deaths, as they were buried in a secret place; of execution; most of those released do not dare to talk about secret prisons and the conditions they went through.

– Population removal and demographic change:

forced displacement by hostilities during the war of more than 250,000 indigenous people and preventing the return of about 200,000 of them from areas of displacement and inside Syria, due to the closure of the Afrin crossings by the occupation authorities and preventing the displaced from returning, leaving them homeless in the areas of displacement (the towns of Al-Nubol and Al-Zahra and the villages and towns of Al-Shahba - north of Aleppo...) , some of them fled to Aleppo and the areas of Kobani and Jazira, at a time when the Syrian authorities have also restricted and continue to have access to them. About 600,000 people were also settled in Afrin and its environs, including the families of mercenary militants in Turkey, the families of those recruited from the Ghouta of Damascus, the countryside of Homs, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo and others, and some of the forcibly deported from Turkey, and their housing in the homes, shops and properties of the indigenous people and in many random camps, and built for them population centers and model settlement villages Such as ("Basma" near Shudereh, "Kuwait of Mercy, Second Helping Hand" near Kholto/Khalidiya - Jabal Lilon, "Al-Amal 2" - Koblah/Rubaria, "Al-Za'im, Ajnadin" - Jindires, "Near Matino", "First Helping Hand, Good People, Kefarum Camp" - Kfrum/Sharra/Sharran, "Al-Wafa 2" - Mahmoudiya neighborhood in Afrin city, "Abayer" - Qartloq/Sharra/Sharran village, "Population Centers" - Kafr Safra town, "Jabal Hajj Hassana" - Jenderes, "Village of Excellence 2" - Mobato, "Qatarieh 2, Nawaf Al-Khair" - Jaqalo Tahtani/Sheikh Al-Hadid, "Al-Khair Foundation" - Jabal Al-Ahlam/Kimoreh) and others under preparation and others under Reconstruction; This constituted a major change to the demographics in the region, as the percentage of the Kurdish presence decreased to less than /25% - most of them are elderly/ currently residing in the region, while their percentage before the invasion was more than /95%/, and hundreds of individuals and families returned during the years 2021-2023 AD to their homes, so they were subjected to material extortion, financial ransoms, investigations and imprisonment for some of them, and some of them were unable to recover their property; and demographic change included other areas, in addition to daily pressures being done against the remaining Kurdish in the area, in order to push them to leave their land and properties into a continuous forced migration; as this change elevates to the level of ethnic cleansing against a distinct ethnicity.

- Cultural and national persecution:

What Turkish officials, soldiers, militia leaders and members have repeatedly said about the infidelity of the Kurds and accusing them of separation and terrorism, and the launch of fatwas by sheikhs and legitimists of "revolution and jihad" to loot their property and harm them, mainly reflect racist and chauvinist hostility towards them, as repression and persecution affect them systematically, at a time when recruiters are preferred over them, and even pushed to attack the Kurds and their properties. Except for fighting Kurdish culture and language, changing the landmarks and names of villages, towns and public squares, seeking to dismantle the social fabric, preventing Kurds from celebrating their national day Nowruz, and attacking their symbols, such as destroying the "Kawa Roundabout and Statue" and changing it to "Olive Branch Roundabout", removing the "Nowruz Roundabout" monument and changing it to "Salah al-Din Al-Ayyubi Roundabout", changing the name of the Old Serail Square to "President Rajab Tayyip Erdogan Square", and neglecting the teaching of the Kurdish language in schools except for some optional

hours in some of them, while teaching The Turkish language from the first to the third secondary grade and considering it a failed subject in the approved Arabic curriculum.

In addition to forcing the residents of Afrin and its recruits to issue personal identification cards granted by the occupation authorities in Turkish and Arabic, in order to melt everyone into a new community melting pot and a "neo-Ottoman" identity.

– Religious persecution:

Yazidis were subjected to many violations, including displacement, killing, torture, dismemberment, preventing them from practicing their religious rites and celebrating their annual holidays, as well as forcing some of them to pray in mosques, and mosques were built in some of their villages out of spite, and their shrines and cemeteries were tampered with and many of them were vandalized; also, the only Christian church was stolen, looting and closed, despite the low number of Christians, nobody of them dares to speak about his religion whatsoever; what's more than that, some mosques got targeted with bombardment during the aggression, and some of the holdings were stolen from carpets, copper utensils, and electrical and vocal devices; As Afrin is known for its open social character and the rejection of intolerance in religious beliefs, but the invaders continue to bring religious and social extremist practices and work to impose them on the indigenous population of all religious affiliations, especially there is a radical religious movement active in the region according to the Ottoman-Brotherhood style and under the direct supervision of the "Religious Endowment" and the Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey. Manifestations of celebration and jubilation on Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are absent from the people of Afrin in general amid feelings of sadness, separation, and an atmosphere of persecution and tyranny.

–Turkification, religious extremism and neo-Ottoman ideas:

The occupation authorities continue the policy of Turkification and the spread of religious extremism and neo-Ottoman ideas in Afrin, among young people and children in particular, through media campaigns and under many names (charitable, cultural and religious associations, university, institutes and private schools, Turkish cultural centers, Imam Al-Khatib schools, youth activities, the revival of Turkish events with the raising of the Turkish flag heavily and imitating the gray wolves badge, training courses, kindergartens of paradise buds, ...) and adopts ideological curricula and imposes the teaching of the Turkish language, in addition to Fight the culture and heritage of the region through many changes and violations. Attempts to change the identity and culture of the region, vandalize and steal its cultural property and erase its history continue, such as the conversion of the Roman pyramid shrine of Nabi Hori and the adjacent mosque into a Turkish-Ottoman landmark, which constitutes a grave violation of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 14 May 1954.

– Slavery and impoverishment of civilians:

The occupation authorities have deliberately and continue to cause general paralysis in all aspects of life and block the doors of work for the people of Afrin, in addition to confiscating and looting their property, money and resources, and robbing them of their seasons "olives, grains, fruits, sumac, grape leaves...", and squandering their animal wealth (livestock and poultry) equivalent to / 20 / million dollars in the first year, except for the losses of other types of animals (horses, mules, donkeys, honey apiaries), except for the cessation of poultry work, or the destruction of some of them permanently, due to the bombing and stealing, The losses of the olive seasons (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023) - the main source of livelihood - amounted to approximately /375/ million US dollars, in addition to imposing royalties and various and continuous financial fines on them (royalties of the Sultan Suleiman Shah Division militias alone, the 2023-2024 season, amounted to about 26.5 million US dollars), as well as employing and harnessing some of them without paying them wages and As an indication of the destruction of the economic structure in Afrin, only /50/ of the /850/ garment sewing workshops that fed the Syrian markets and some neighboring countries remained after the occupation and worked at their minimum levels of production, increasing to 160 workshops during the past six years; the losses in the industrial and economic field in general are large, the unemployment rate has become high and poverty is wide.

– Theft of olive oil:

"Turkish agricultural credit cooperatives", which were granted exceptional powers, issued regulations at low prices to buy olive oil from the Afrin region during the past six seasons, which is sold abroad at exorbitant prices, to generate huge profits for Turkey and its collaborators, and to finance the mercenary terrorist militias, especially there is a Turkish commercial center (based in the "Rifatia" press - Jenderes) that seized the purchase of quantities of about 80% of the total oil production, and was transported by truck through the new "Hammam" crossing to Hatay - Turkey without passing through the region Al-Hurra in the city of "Kara Khan", is not registered regularly, that is, without entering into the "import" process even though it comes from another country, so that the oil is processed and sold abroad under the title "Made in Turkey". Especially since representatives of the "cooperatives" went to America in 2022 to promote oil.

However, in the 2023-2024 season, production was low, and due to the high prices of edible oils globally, the price of olive oil in Afrin was freed to some extent, and the checkpoints of the Syrian regime impose a royalty of \$ 15 per tank (16 kg net) for shipping it to the areas under its control, except for transportation fees.

– Rejection or neglect of citizens' complaints:

Most of those who have been subjected to violations and crimes do not dare to disclose them, for fear of harsher penalties, and fair investigations and trials are not conducted on crimes and violations against civilians, and the occupation authorities do not seriously consider citizens' complaints and do not give them convincing answers to them, and do not disclose the fate of forcibly disappeared detainees, and the established courts consider the fabricated charges against the detainees and impose unfair sentences and fines on them, as most of the people of Afrin are unable to raise Complaints or lawsuits against those whom they have been criminalized by, and may even be punished again, and some are prevented from appointing lawyers on their behalf, so you see them refraining from making statements or talking about violations and crimes that affect them, but some of them are forced to give testimonies contrary to what is the reality. The "Joint Rights Restitution Committee" formed in September 2020 came from among the militia leaders to beautify the face of the occupation and to cover up these major crimes, under the pressure of thousands of published reports on violations and crimes committed, but the committee stopped working on 8/11/2022, Despite the accumulation of thousands of grievance files, after the intensification of disputes and fighting between militias and the expulsion of the "Levant Front" from Afrin.

– Severe damage to the environment and vegetation:

Before the invasion, the Turkish authorities had bulldozed large agricultural and forestry areas along the border strip, with a depth of / 200-500 / meters and a length of / 150 / km, when building a concrete wall separate, and its military vehicles during the aggression uprooted thousands of olive trees in many locations, such as ("Jabal Bilal and Jarqa, Darwish village, Jia village" - Raju district, and the villages of "Hammam, Marwaniya Fawqani and Tahtani, Anqeleh, Ashkan Gharbi" - Jindires district, and the villages of "Qarmtlaq, Jaqali" - Shih / Sheikh Al-Hadid district, and "Sirta Rez" Near the village of "Kozieh" and "Sirta Habiba" near the village of "Miska Fawqani", and between the villages of Kafr Janah and Matino - Sharran district, and in Mount Shirewa), with the intention of establishing military bases for its army; fires and wide unjust cutting- the area didn't witness such thing before- spread across common natural and artificial forests and rare and perennial trees, and also cutting hundreds of thousands of fruit trees (olive and others) unjustly and thousands of them completely, by militias and recruiters, for logging, coal manufactory and trading, where these infringements rise to the level of environmental genocide; According to agricultural experts, the total area of forests (natural / 18,500/ hectare + artificial /21,000/ hectare = 39,500 hectares) and the rate of deterioration between burning and cutting during six years exceeds 60% of them, i.e. the removal of about (/6/ million natural forest trees + /13/ million planted forest trees = /19/ million trees) in addition to millions of small-sized trees among the large ones.

In addition to overgrazing livestock herds between olive fields and agricultural lands, causing great damage, without the owners daring to prevent it.

One of the pillars of the hostile policy pursued by the Turkish occupation and its mercenaries is to strike the relationship of the Kurdish person in Afrin with his natural environment and property, thus destabilizing and weakening the roots of society.

– **Oppression of women, rape and forced marriage:**

Originally, these Salafi jihadist militias oppress women within their societies without scruples, including polygamy, the imposition of the hijab, the spread of prostitution and others, and they continue to oppress Kurdish women in Afrin according to the same mentality, despite the reluctance of most of those affected by violations and crimes to expose them or file complaints and lawsuits against the perpetrators, in addition to detaining women's freedom, there are many reports of cases of sexual harassment in all its forms, forced marriage or exploitation of minors, and cases of abduction, Rape, premeditated murder and assault on elderly women residing alone, such as what happened with the elderly "Fatima Junaid", who was assaulted and robbed on 23, December, 2022, in her home in the village of "Basoufan" by the "Sham Legion" militias. Due to the lack of security, a large proportion of girls are reluctant to attend middle and high school for fear of abuse, especially those living in villages.

– **Spreading chaos and lawlessness:**

The Ankara government did not resort to establishing security and safety in the Afrin region, and did not exercise its responsibilities in securing order, public safety and the protection of civilians, and it formed local councils that were only tools to implement its policies, and even escaped the hands of terrorist militias to commit the most terrible crimes and violations, which often fought among themselves against the background of hateful tendencies, internal liquidations, and disputes over thefts and the scope of influence, including clashes in October 2022 between the militias of the "Hamzat Division" and the "Levant Front" and the storming of the "Commission Tahrir al-Sham" terrorist attack the Afrin region from Idlib with the aim of fighting and driving out al-Shamiya. Terrorist explosions also occurred among civilians, resulting in casualties killed and wounded, as explosions with explosive devices increased, including a strong explosion on 16, September, 2023, in a residential apartment on the second floor near the "Moroteh" roundabout in the city of Afrin, which led to the death and injury of a number of gunmen, as well as targeting some militia leaders and members.

On the other hand, as a result of the exchange of shelling by Turkish forces and their militias with the areas controlled by the Syrian army, the city of Afrin and some of its villages were subjected to missile attacks that led to material damage and casualties killed and wounded among civilians, including three martyrs in the villages of Kabashin and Burj Haidar on 1, January, 2024.

– **Afrin Forcibly displaced:**

Displaced people residing in the areas of Al-Shahba, the cities of Nubl, Al-Zahra, Tal Rifaat, Deir Jammal and some villages and towns of Jabal Layloun - north of Aleppo, which are under the control of the Syrian army and within the Russian influence, live a miserable life, as their number is about /60/ thousand people, of whom /9/ thousand live in five camps, besieged from the four sides - a large prison - and prevented from movement by the Syrian government forces, opposition militias and the Turkish army, and are not covered by United Nations humanitarian relief programs, and they suffer from low Job opportunities and services such as electricity, drinking water, health, education, and others, as government forces prevent them from time to time fuel and other basic items, while their main demand is to return to their homes.

On the other hand, the cases of Turkish forces and associated militias bombing villages and towns north of Aleppo, to which the people of Afrin were displaced, are repeated, and they are still continuing, leaving material damage and victims killed and wounded, such as what happened in the Tal Rifaat massacre on 2, December, 2019.

– **Building a separation wall:**

The Turkish army built concrete walls around its headquarters and bases in the center of Afrin city and its suburbs, which are serviced by all requirements, and built walls of concrete blocks two meters high near the villages of Kemoreh, Gilbreh and Mariamin - southeast of Afrin, in a suspicious step and a prelude to the

construction of a separation wall for the area from the north of Aleppo governorate; the Afrin area is still separated from the city of Aleppo, and there is not even a humanitarian crossing between them.

During the war on Afrin, Turkey did not abide by the armistice resolution issued by the Security Council No. 2401, dated February 24, 2018, and does not abide by the contents of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), in terms of "taking appropriate steps to protect civilians, creating conditions conducive to the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their areas of origin and rehabilitating the affected areas, in accordance with international law", despite its full effective control over the area militarily, administratively and sovereignly. The area is occupied, and Turkey must shoulder its responsibilities and duties, as well as abide by international humanitarian law.

The Afrin area is under an applied siege and media blackout imposed by the Turkish occupation authorities and its mercenaries, and suffers from painful details in the daily life of its indigenous inhabitants, and it is closed to visits by the media, delegations of human rights and civil organizations interested in human rights, and parliamentary delegations, except for individual cases in harmony with the Turkish narrator.

The most serious threat to Afrin, its people and the relationship between the components of the Syrian people is the forced displacement that affected nearly half of its Kurdish population, the settlement of hundreds of thousands of recruiters from other Syrian governorates in their place, and the consolidation of their presence by building model settlement villages for them, in order to consolidate the systematic demographic change that affected the region, which constitutes a grave violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the two Additional Protocols of 1977.

Afrin residents call where ever they were is to end the Turkish occupation, get the terrorist militias out of there area and for all the displaced to return to their home, according to item 1 of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 of 14 December 1960, which stipulates that "subjecting peoples to foreign enslavement, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, contradicts the Charter of the United Nations, and hinders the cause of global peace and cooperation", the Kurds continue their just struggle by all legitimate means and means in defense of their cause and in exposing Turkey's policies hostility and exposure of violations and daily crimes committed.

They also appeal to all concerned at the Kurdish, national Syrian and international levels to work to break the silence about the bad conditions prevailing in their region, and to urge the government of Ankara to put an end to violations and crimes, end its occupation of the region, return it to Syrian sovereignty and manage its people.

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Media Office-Afrin
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Photos:

- A tank and a Turkish soldier in front of the old saraya building in Afrin 18/3/2018.

** Under the supervision of the European Organization of the Kurdish Democratic Unity Party in Syria (Yekîti).*

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