



## Afrin Under Occupation (304):

### Assault on an Elderly Woman, Extortions and Thefts Exceeding \$100 Million from the Olive Harvest, Arbitrary Arrests, and Chaos in Weapon Carrying

*Arabic to English Translation\**

As the olive harvest season approaches, under the directives of Turkish intelligence, all militias of the "Syrian National Army"—without exception—are mobilized to plunder and seize the largest possible share of the general olive harvest, which represents the primary source of livelihood for the people of Afrin. This includes the confiscation of millions of olive trees from the properties of the absent, imposing a tax of \$1-35 per tree, and large-scale theft of the fruit. These actions have been carried out in a steadily increasing manner since 2018. It is estimated that the total amount of money stolen from this season alone will exceed \$100 million, most of which ends up in the pockets of the leaders of these militias, with a portion given as gifts to officials of the Syrian National Coalition (affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood) and its interim government. In contrast, these militias do not impose such taxes or seize olive harvests or other resources in other areas under Turkish occupation (Azaz, Al-Bab, Jarablus), as the majority of the population in those areas consists of Arabs and Turkmens.

#### The following are facts about the current situation:

##### = Assault on an Elderly Woman:

On the night of October 2, 2024, after raiding her home in the center of the town of "Jalameh" – Jenderes, three young men (one from the town and two newcomers) attempted to gag and restrain the elderly Kurdish woman "**Feedan, /70/ years old – widow of the late Barakat Hamosho**, who passed away six months ago," who lives alone, with the intention of robbing her. However, she awoke, resisted them, and screamed. As a result, she was severely beaten and sustained bruises, wounds, and injuries to her face and hands. The thieves then fled. The elderly woman was able to identify one of them and filed a complaint with the "Military Police" militia, which arrested the attackers the following day. They confessed to their crime and to other thefts.

It is worth noting that four years earlier, other thieves stole /6/ million Syrian pounds and other belongings from the house while the couple was away.

##### = Olive Harvest:

While the militants and settlers are free to steal olives whenever, wherever, and however they wish, the wishes and economic interests of the militias dictate the harvesting dates for the local population, under the pretext that the olives are not yet ripe. The militias prevent the people from harvesting without their approval, after verifying the ownership of the fields, collecting extortion fees, canceling power of attorney documents, and redistributing the shares of the heirs of the deceased in order to seize the properties of the absent, without considering the two years' worth of labor and expenses.

#### Below are examples of the plundering:

- Each militia/faction prohibits the transportation of olives from fields within its sector to a press located in another faction's sector. Farmers are forced to press olives in a facility owned by the militia, if available, to ensure the collection of additional in-kind extortion fees in the form of oil, olives, and anything else that can be stolen.

- On September 25, 2024, in a widely circulated video, the owner of an olive field near the village of "**Qeebar**," east of Afrin, controlled by the "Al-Mu'tasim Brigade" militia, showed that all the olives from twenty trees had been stolen.



سرقة الزيتون من حقل قرب قرية "قيبار" شرق

مدينة عفرين

٢٠٢٤/٩/٢٥

- Earlier this month, villagers from "Seimolo – Maydono" in Raju, including "Muhammad Haidar Heiro, Fathi Haidar Heiro, Muhammad Ahmad Meho, Mustafa Ahmad Bakr, Shaban Sheikho, Muslim Othman, Alifa Ramadan Hussein, and Omar Ahmad Koto," submitted a complaint to the "head of the local council in Raju," attaching a photo of it. They reported that more than 30 tents belonging to settlers had been erected among the olive and grape trees, and that these settlers were stealing the harvest, as well as causing significant damage by allowing their livestock to graze on the land. When confronted, the settlers responded with threats. The complaint named several of the attackers, including "Hamoudeh Halabi, Bassam and his family, and the instigator Abu Ali Seireen, who forms theft gangs, as well as Abu Hussein," but to no avail.

الحكومة السورية المؤقتة  
وزارة الإدارة المحلية والخدمات  
المجلس المحلي في راجو

الرقم: ( )  
التاريخ: 2024 / 1

المجلس المحلي راجو

**السيد رئيس مجلس راجو المحلي**

نحن الموقعون انشاء اهالي قرية سملا التابعة لمنطقة راجو تحيطكم علماً بان أكثر من ثلاثون خيمة منصوبة بين املاك القرية المغروسة بالزيتون والعنب بالإضافة للزعي الجائر من الأغنام والماعز بين الأشجار مما يسبب اضرار كبيرة للأشجار بالإضافة الى ذلك تقوم أهالي الخيم بسرقة الموسم من جميع أنواعها وعندما تقوم بمخاطبتهم بما يقفون يكون الرد بالتهديد والوعيد دون أي استجابة..

علماً لدينا أسماء بعض من الذين قاموا بصليبة السرقة وفيما يلي أسمائهم..

1. حمودة حليبي 2. بسام وعقلته 3. أبو كسار 4. والمعرض الذي يقوم بتشكيل الوارش هو المدعو 1. أبو علي سيرين 2. أبو حسين

نرجو من مقامكم مخاطبة الجهات المختصة لاتخاذ الاجراء اللازم ولكم جزيل الشكر..

الموقعون على العريضة

محمد حيدر هيرو	فتحي حيدر هيرو	محمد احمد محو	مصطفى احمد بكر
شهبان شيوخو	مسلم عثمان	البقة رمضان حسين	عمر احمد كوتو

- In the village of "**Gundeh Mazen**," west of Afrin, the "Hamzatt Division" militia canceled all power of attorney documents and seized the olive fields of the absent, sending harvest teams to collect the olives without paying any portion of the two years' agricultural service costs. They also imposed a 50% tax on the production from the fields of those who returned to the village this year, and a \$2 fee per olive tree for those still residing in the area, especially since the trees are small and the location is mountainous.

- In the villages of "**Gawriko**" and "**Faqeero**" in Jenderes, the "Hamzat Division" confiscated all olive fields belonging to those forcibly displaced to other Syrian regions and began harvesting without considering the two years' expenses. They also imposed a 40% tax on the production from the fields of those living abroad, along with a \$2 fee per bearing olive tree and a \$0.50 fee per weak tree, belonging to those still present in the area. A committee was formed to implement this decision.

- In the village of "**Korzeileh**" in Sheirawa, the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade – Al-Amshat" militia continues to redistribute olive fields belonging to the absent, including the shares of heirs of the deceased, with the intention of seizing them, while imposing extortion fees on the remaining fields.

- Due to uncertainty regarding the fate of the "Northern Hawks Brigade" following Turkey's decision to dissolve it, this militia has been rushing to harvest olives in the fields they have seized in the villages they control (**Beileh, Ahmad Mesto, Qizelbasha, Serinjak, Draqlia, The Three Sheikhurzeh, Aboudan, Zarieh, and Kurdu**) in Bulbul district for the past ten days. The militia members and their loyal settlers have also been widely stealing olives from these fields in both day and night, right in front of the landowners, who are unable to stop them or file complaints.



- The large number of settlers' camps has led to the theft of over 30% of the olive harvest around **Jenderes city**, particularly by women and children. The guards do not dare stop them for fear of being falsely accused of assault, while the militias prevent landowners from harvesting until October 15, 2024.

- Recently, "**Mujib/Abu Ahmad**," a commander at the armed checkpoint of the "Al-Amshat" militia at the "Termosheh" intersection in Sheikh Al-Hadid/Shiyeh, just like last year (earned thousands of dollars from olive oil extortions and its thefts), has been tightening and pushing villagers to pay for new fees to allow them access to their olive fields. When they refused, he, along with his forces and their families, carried out large-scale thefts of olives, including from the properties of "**Idrees Hamo Rishkeh, Khaleel Noury, Fathi Habash, Muhammad Waleeko, Issam Aslan Hassan, Hikmat Muhammad Yusuf, and Haidar Jameel**." He

also assaulted citizens, including "**Hassan Ameen, Muhyiddin Hassan, and Hamouda Khawja**, a person with special needs," through beatings, torture, and threats with weapons, despite the village being under the control of the "Sultan Mohammad Al-Fateh Brigade."

**= Arbitrary Arrests:**

- At dawn on Thursday, October 10, 2024, the "Military Police" militia raided the home of engineer "**Nury Mustafa Sido**, /60/ years old, in the city of Jenderes and arrested him on charges of having connections with the former Autonomous Administration. He remains under arbitrary detention.

- About two months ago, Turkish intelligence and the "Military Police" militia arrested "**Guleen Muhammad Sheikh Abdi**, /28/ years old, from the village of "Sheikh" in Raju, at his workplace with the "Civil Police" militia in Raju. He was accused of having served in the mandatory military service under the former Autonomous Administration and was taken to the central Maratah prison in Afrin, where he remains under arbitrary detention.

**= Chaos and lawlessness:**

- On the evening of Sunday, October 6, 2024, following a brawl between two settlers from the village of "Naza" in Bulbul, both members of the "Sham Legion" militia, one of them opened fire on the other, "**Ibrahim Al-Shibli**," originally from southern Aleppo countryside, with a Kalashnikov rifle, killing him before fleeing the scene.

**The systematic starvation policies and various forms of harassment practiced by the Turkish occupation through its different tools—intelligence, institutions, militias, local councils, the interim government, and its affiliated coalition—aim to force more of Afrin's original Kurdish inhabitants to flee and to dash the hopes of those wishing to return.**

12.10.2024

**Media Office-Afrin**  
**Kurdish Democratic Unity Party in Syria (Yekiti)**

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**Images:**

- Olive theft from a field near the village of "Qeebar," east of Afrin city, September 25, 2024, from a circulated video.

- Complaint submitted by some citizens of the village "Seimolo-Maydono" in Raju, regarding olive theft and overgrazing.

- Olive theft from a field near the village of "Qizelbasha" in Bulbul.

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

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