



## Afrin Under Occupation (305):

**Olive theft and the imposition of various forms of extortion, arbitrary arrests, infighting and the expulsion of the "Northern Hawks Brigade" militia, kidnapping, and torture of a Kurdish citizen asking about his stolen car**

*Arabic to English Translation\**

The state of factionalism and chaos within what is known as the "Syrian National Army" is deeply entrenched, as is the widespread presence of armed individuals among civilians, with the random carrying and use of weapons being commonplace. The Turkish occupation authorities in their controlled areas, especially in Afrin, have failed to establish conditions of peace, security, or uphold public order. Instead, they have given free rein to militias to commit various violations and crimes, while manipulating disputes between them to maintain control and implement their own agenda.

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

**= Olive Harvest Season:**

In line with the principle of "the protector is the thief," most of the militias within the "Syrian National Army" resort to guarding olive fields in order to extract additional extortion fees and prevent landowners from harvesting their crops without prior approval from their offices. They also protect thieves during the night or divert as much produce as possible to mills under their control, preventing the transfer of olives to mills outside their sector to ensure they receive a cut of the produce and large extortion fees through their representatives stationed at the oil sorting areas in the mills. Below are further incidents:



مجموعة نساء من المستقدمين أثناء مراقبة الزيتون من حقل في عفرين.

- In the villages of "**Kumrasheh, Hassan, Qudah, Hajeeko, Darwish, Muiskeh**" - Raju, the "Hamzat Division" militia imposes a levy of \$150–250 per olive field under the pretext of guarding it from thefts, which nonetheless continue by armed groups and settlers. Additionally, they impose a 7% levy on the produce from the fields of present citizens, 40% on the fields of the absent, and 60% on the fields of widows whose sons are missing.

- In the villages of "**Sharra, Kharaby Sharro, Mateeno, Chamo, Seenko, Gubalako**" in the Sharra/Sharran subdistrict, the "Sultan Malik Shah Brigade" militias impose a 12% levy on the entire season's production in their sector and prohibits the transport of olives to other areas. They collect the levy through their

representatives in the mills and seize 40% of the yield from fields they have confiscated and handed over to others for management and cultivation.

- In the villages of **"Tilifeh, Kafrzeeteh,"** and the surrounding areas southwest of Afrin city, large-scale olive thefts occur by armed individuals and women and children of the resettled families. Meanwhile, the economic office of the "Hamzat Division" militias in Basouta town delays granting harvest permits, which are only issued after their committee inspects each field and evaluates the olive yield. If the yield is good, they impose a fee of \$2 per tree, regardless of its size, and if the yield is poor, they charge \$0.5–1 per tree. They have also canceled the power of attorney for absent citizens living in areas controlled by the Syrian army and the Syrian Democratic Forces, confiscating their fields. They impose a 30% levy on the production of fields belonging to citizens living abroad. They haven't handed over the fields belonging to the returning citizens during the past months of the current year, fields that were confiscated earlier, including 1,000 olive trees owned by the late "Shawkat Naasan" from "Tilifeh" village, despite the return of his elderly widow, "Najah Suleiman," and her son, Sheirzad, in early July of this year.

- In the villages of **"Deir Siwan, Sheeltat, Marso,"** the "Sultan Murad Brigade" militia has canceled all power of attorney and confiscated the properties of the absent. They have not returned the olive fields to citizens who returned to their villages this year and have imposed an 8% levy on the production from the fields of present citizens.

- Since October 10, 2024, groups of resettled men and women, accompanied by armed individuals, have been stealing olives from around /500/ trees belonging to residents of "Hasandeira" village – Bulbul, including trees owned by "Fawzi Sheikho, Jihad Khaleel, Ibrahim Khaleel, Mohammed Sheikho, Barazany Hameed Mustafa, and Ramzi Sheikho.

#### = Arbitrary Arrests:

- On September 28, 2024, the "Military Police" militia in Bulbul arrested **"Mohammad Ali Sido Alo, /65/ years old,"** a resident of the village of "Keila," after summoning him to their headquarters under the pretext that he had participated in night watch duties during the previous self-administration period. He was released by the court on October 2, 2024, after a financial fine was imposed on him.

- On October 14, 2024, the "Military Police" militia in Jenderes arrested **"Hussein Haj Abdo son of Khaleel, /44/ years old,"** a teacher, after raiding his home in the town of "Kafr Safra" at dawn, without providing any reasons. He remains under arbitrary detention.

#### = Chaos and Lawlessness:

On the evening of Wednesday, October 16, 2024, coinciding with an attack by the militias of the "Joint Force (comprising the **"Sultan Suleiman Shah Division – Al-Amshat" and the "Hamzat Division"**) and the **"Sultan Murad Division,"** led by commanders of Turkmen origin who are strongly loyal to Turkey, on the headquarters of the **"Northern Hawks Brigade"** militia in the village of "Hawar Kilis" in Azaz, following Turkish orders to dissolve it... The Joint Force also launched a large-scale assault on the "Northern Hawks" in the villages of "Gamrouk" – Maabatli/Mobato, and "Joreh, Sheikhezeh, Tupeleh Mahmoud, Kurdu" – Bulbul. Initially, they seized control of "Gamrouk" and "Joreh," and by Thursday morning, the ranks of the "Northern Hawks" had collapsed due to betrayal, surrender, and escape, resulting in casualties on both sides. In parallel, on Wednesday evening, the **"Al-Jabha Al-Shamiya"** militia supported the "Northern Hawks" by attacking positions and checkpoints of the "Amshat, Hamzat, and Sultan Murad" militias in the villages of "Qatma, Kafr Janna, Meiryameeneh, Deir Siwan" in the Sharra/Sharran district. This led to material damage in the mentioned villages, as well as the deaths and injuries of armed individuals and resettled civilians in camps near "Qatma and Kafr Janna." By Thursday afternoon, around /300/ families had been evacuated by the "Syrian Civil Defense," as clashes involving light, medium, and heavy weapons continued, accompanied by road closures. The "Northern Hawks" officially announced their dissolution in a formal statement. Meanwhile, fighters from the "Joint Force" looted the homes abandoned by the families of "Northern Hawks" members who had fled.



#### = Other Violations:

On the night of October 10, 2024, a patrol from the group led by "**Abu Waleed**," one of the leaders of the "Faylaq al-Majd" militia and the official in charge of the village of "**Zarko**" – Raju, raided the house of "**Kawa Ali Mamo**, /42/ years old," in the neighboring village of "Keila"– Bulbul. They kidnapped him, subjected him to beating and torture, and released him the next day in exchange for a ransom. This occurred after "Kawa" had found his Hyundai pickup truck in a certain location and raised the issue of its theft by "Abu Waleed" during the invasion of those villages in 2018. Abu Waleed had demanded approximately \$6,000 to return the vehicle, but "Kawa" refused to pay and lost his car at the time.

**Whenever a militia leaves a Kurdish village in Afrin, for any reason, and is replaced by another militia under Turkish occupation, the departing militia makes every effort to loot as much of the villagers' property as possible. Meanwhile, the incoming militia imposes new conditions to collect extortion fees and seize olive fields, disregarding any previous arrangements.**

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

#### Images:

- A group of resettled women stealing olives from a field in Afrin.
- Civilians fleeing from a camp near the villages of "Qatma" and "Kafr Janna" in the Sharra/Sharran subdistrict.

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