



Afrin Under Occupation (310):

The fall of the former regime and the ongoing Turkish occupation, victims including martyrs, the wounded, and the missing; prisoners and arbitrary detentions; widespread theft and extortion targeting returnees

*Arabic to English Translation**

Despite the fall of the former Syrian regime and the general jubilation of the Syrian people at being freed from an era of tyranny and repression, the Turkish occupation continues to weigh heavily on many areas in northern Syria. Furthermore, the Erdogan-Bahçeli alliance has openly expressed satisfaction at the sight of the Turkish flag being raised in these areas, including recently in Aleppo by one of their loyalists. Meanwhile, pro-Turkish Syrian militias persist in their violations and crimes in the Kurdish-Syrian region of Afrin, prompting us to continue monitoring, documenting, and publicly exposing these actions.



Since the battles in western rural Aleppo began at dawn on November 27, 2024, following an attack by the forces of "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)" on the "Syrian army, "militias from the "Syrian National Army" (SNA), under the supervision of the Turkish occupation forces, mobilized in the areas of Azaz, Mare', and Al-Bab to launch a military operation called "Dawn of Freedom." The target was the Shahba region and several villages in Sheirawa, northern rural Aleppo, areas under the control of the Syrian army and local Afrin Liberation Forces, densely populated at the time with tens of thousands of Afrin's displaced residents. This operation was preceded by the withdrawal of all Russian and Syrian army units from the region, as well as the evacuation of residents from the Shiite towns of Nubl and Al-Zahraa. On the morning of Sunday, December 1, 2024, the attacks were launched from three directions: west, north, and east. By midday, the Afrin Liberation Forces, unable to sustain their defense, decided to withdraw. This triggered waves of forced displacement among Afrin's displaced residents. Convoys of civilians moved southward towards the Al-Ahdath-Fafin crossing near Aleppo, but thousands of families were left stranded in the area. Pro-Turkish militias then besieged these convoys of displaced civilians, allowing them to cross into areas controlled by the Autonomous Administration in eastern Euphrates or to return gradually to Afrin, all amidst severe humanitarian suffering and heartbreaking scenes of tragedy.



عودة قسم من مهجري عفرين إلى منطقتهم
بداية كانون الأول ٢٠٢٤م



قافلة مهجري عفرين من الشهباء إلى شرق الفرات، ٢٠٢٤/١٢/١

During and after their invasion of the newly controlled areas, these militias committed, and continue to commit, violations and crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. These range from assaults, humiliation, torture, murder, and abduction to arbitrary detentions, theft of property, and more.

Based on numerous sources, testimonies, and the monitoring of events, the following incidents have been documented:

= Civilian Casualties:

ضحايا شهداء من مهجري عفرين في منطقة الشهباء ومدينة حلب، أوائل كانون الأول ٢٠٢٤				
يشار إبراهيم	شعبان أحمد محمود	عبدالرحمن شيخ موسى جمعة	حنان محمد موشو	حنان محمد ماجونو
ممدوح بكر صالح	محمد أسعد حيدر	عبدالله عبد المطلب	نار حليل علو	أحمد جعفر
يحيى الطيف رشاد	سحر	سحر	سحر	محمد مصطفى حلتان
سحر	سحر	سحر	سحر	سحر
سحر	سحر	سحر	سحر	سحر

In addition to widespread and severe violations of human rights, the militias deliberately killed unarmed civilians with live ammunition. Among the victims on December 1, 2024, were:

1. "**Hanan Mohammed Majouno** /36/ years old," from the village of "Barjikeh" – Jenderes, killed while fleeing from the Shahba region. His wife and daughters sustained severe injuries.
2. "**Hanan Mohammed Mousho** - born in 1962, " from the village of "Qurtqlaq" – Sharra/Sharran, killed in a repair garage in the village of "Al-Ahdath" – Shahba, along with four others (whose personal information remains unknown) while trying to escape. His body was recovered by the "Syrian Civil Defense" and transported to his village for burial.

3. "**Abdul Rahman Sheikh Mous Jumaa** /40/ years old, " from the village of "Z'ara" – Bulbul, killed in the town of Al-Ahdath – Shahba.

4. "**Shaban Ahmed Mahmoud** /38/ years old, " from the village of "Shingeileh" – Bulbul, killed in the town of Al-Ahdath.

5. "**Yashar Ibrahim** /25/ years old, " from Afrin, shot in the back and left to bleed for four hours without receiving medical assistance, dying while fleeing in a convoy from Shahba. He was buried on the roadside.

6. "**Ahmed Jimo Hesso** /72/ years old, " from the village of "Qeebar," killed while fleeing with his wife by car from the town of Tal Rifaat. He was buried three days later in his village, and his wife sustained severe injuries.

7. "**Nazha Khalil Alou** /42/ years old, " from the village of "Khalilka" – Bulbul, killed while traveling with her husband on a motorcycle from Shahba to Aleppo. Her two children were injured.

Additionally:

8. "**Abdo Abdulmanan Abdullah** - born in 1960" from the village of "Qatma" – Sharra/Sharran, shot in the head following a verbal altercation with the militias in the workers' housing area near the town of Al-Safira, eastern rural Aleppo, on December 3, 2024. Abdullah was a former political detainee who had spent several years imprisoned under the previous regime.

9. "**Mohammed Ahmed Khadro** /50/ years old, " from the village of "Qastal Khadriya" – Bulbul, arrested by a checkpoint manned by the "Hamzat Division" militia at the "Beileh" intersection in Bulbul on the evening of December 4, 2024, while returning from Shahba. He was taken to Bulbul center, where he was interrogated and tortured. His body was handed over to his family the next morning at a hospital in Afrin.

In Aleppo City:

Along the frontlines between "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) " and the "Autonomous Administration in the Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafieh neighborhoods" of Aleppo, cases of civilians being killed by live ammunition were reported, including:

1. "**Mamdouh Bakr Othman** /60/ years old, " a Yazidi from the village of "Qatma" – Sharra/Sharran, killed by a direct gunshot in the Midan neighborhood of Aleppo on the night of November 29–30, 2024. His taxi was stolen.

2. Engineer "**Mohammed Mustafa Hamliko** /24/ years old, " from the village of "Ma'milo" – Rajo, killed when the car he was traveling in with his parents was targeted on November 30, 2024.

3. "**Jamal Hussein Morsil** /45/ years old, "

4. And his son, "**Hussein Jamal Morsil** /24/ years old, " from the village of "Qurtqlaq" – Sharra/Sharran, were killed, and their wife and daughter were critically injured when their car was targeted on the road between Sheikhhan Roundabout and Ashrafieh Park on Saturday, November 30, 2024. Both were buried in the Shaqif Cemetery in Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, while the injured were transferred to Yassin Hospital in the area.

5. "**Hiyam Youssef Rashid** /50/ years old, "

6. And "**Anji Youssef Rashid** /14/ years old, " from the village of "Daraqleya" – Bulbul, were killed, and others in their passenger bus were injured. They had just arrived near Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood after fleeing the Shahba region on the evening of December 2, 2024.

= Civilian Deaths Under Different Circumstances:

1. "**Abdul Rahman Khalil Morshed** /59/ years old, " from the village of "Miskeh Tahtani" – Jenderes, died by a gunshot wound to the head in the town of Tel Qarah in the Shahba region on December 1, 2024. His car was stolen by militias after his death.

2. "**Saeed Abdo Na'so** /85/ years old, " from the village of "Terinda," south of Afrin, suffered a heart attack during displacement from the Shahba region on December 2, 2024.

3. "**Noah Mohammed Rasho** /4/ months old, " from the town of Bulbul, died on December 3, 2024, in a stadium in Raqqa due to cold, exhaustion, and hunger during a forced displacement journey lasting over 30 hours from the Shahba region in northern rural Aleppo to Raqqa.

4. "**Nouri Hourik Haftaro** /65/ years old, " from the village of "Haftar" – Bulbul, died on the morning of December 3, 2024, in Tabqa City due to a sudden heart attack caused by distress and the harsh displacement journey from the Shahba region.

= Prisoners:

Reports indicate inhumane treatment of prisoners, including civilians and fighters of the "Afrin Liberation Forces," among them female fighters. Videos circulating online clearly show instances of mistreatment (one such video was filmed inside a hospital in Tel Rifaat, with a journalist accompanying the armed groups). Prisoners have been forcibly disappeared, with their numbers and personal information undisclosed. Some have faced extrajudicial execution.



= Arbitrary Arrests:

Turkish-backed militias, particularly the "Military Police," have arrested dozens of Kurdish returnees to Afrin over the past two weeks. These arrests occurred at checkpoints where data on all returnees was documented or later in their homes. Most were released following a recent amnesty declared by the so-called "Syrian Interim Government," but some remain detained. For example, the couple "**Fareed Mohammed Habash** /45/ years old" and "**Medina Hussein Chuchu** /43/ years old" from the town of "Badino" were arrested by the "Military Police" branch in Bulbul on December 4, 2024, accused of links to the former Autonomous Administration in Afrin or the administration that governed the Shahba region.

Additionally, hundreds of Kurdish political detainees remain imprisoned in both well-known (e.g., Maratah, Al-Aswad – Rajo) and secret militia-run detention centers, despite the supposed amnesty. This

includes the infamous prison in Al-Rai, where hundreds have been forcibly disappeared for over five years. Meanwhile, prisoners convicted of minor offenses or criminal charges have been released at a faster pace.

= Missing Persons:

The mass panic and displacement among civilians, caused by direct attacks, shelling, and the destruction of homes in the Shahba region and parts of Sheirawa in northern rural Aleppo (such as the village of Burj al-Qas – Sheirawa), led to the scattering of thousands of families. Individuals, particularly children and the elderly, were separated, with their displacement routes varying across Afrin, Aleppo, Tabqa, Raqqa, and Kobani. Communication between families was severed in the initial days, resulting in social media platforms being flooded with pictures of missing individuals. Although many have since been found, the fate of dozens of civilians and Kurdish fighters remains unknown.

= Looting:

Following the invasion of the region, the militias immediately began looting public and private property (difficult to document comprehensively). This time, however, they avoided cameras, unlike the notorious events of March 18, 2018, in Afrin. Examples of stolen items include: Animals were taken individually or in herds, whether left in homes and barns or seized from displaced persons, for instance, (/40/ sheep belonging to citizen **Ahmed Adham Nasro** in Burj al-Qas village were stolen), cars and vehicles (a tractor with a trailer belonging to a family returning to their village of Kimar – Sheirawa was confiscated), household belongings, workshop tools and production materials: for instance, (/40/ batteries, /100/ inverters, /50/ solar panels, battery manufacturing tools, raw materials, and a small Suzuki truck were stolen from a factory owned by **Hussein Mohammed Mustafa** near Ziyara village), and food supplies looted from warehouses belonging to the Autonomous Administration.

Equipment from industrial facilities: For example, items were stolen from warehouses in the industrial area of Sheikh Najjar near Aleppo.

= Extortion by "Abu Amsha":

In addition to the reverse forced displacement and the dire conditions faced by civilians, the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade," led by "Mohammed al-Jassim/Abu Amsha," has been extorting families returning to their villages. Return is only permitted after paying a bribe of \$2,000–5,000 per family. The militia also continues to pressure families who have not yet paid the olive season extortion fees through threats, beatings, and other forms of coercion.

Following the collapse of the previous regime and Syria's transition into a new historical phase, the international community—particularly the United States and the new Damascus government—must take urgent action to end the Turkish occupation and the Syrian militias that have become mercenaries under its control. Only then can Afrin and its people hope to breathe the air of freedom and dignity once more.

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

Images:

- Victims Among Displaced Afrin Residents in the Shahba Region and Aleppo City, Early December 2024
- Humiliation and Torture of Kurdish Prisoners in the town of Tel Rifaat by militias of the "Syrian National Army."
- Return Convoys: A segment of displaced Afrin residents began returning to their region in early December 2024.
- Forced Displacement Convoy: Displaced Afrin residents were forced to evacuate from the Shahba region toward areas east of the Euphrates on December 1, 2024.
- Turkish Flag Raised in Aleppo: A pro-Turkey supporter raised the Turkish flag in Aleppo city following the withdrawal of the Syrian regime on November 29, 2024.

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