



We Call on Our People to Resist Against the Occupation

Shortly after the visit of the Turkish War Minister and the general chief of staff to Iraq and South Kurdistan, the genocidal, colonialist Turkish army has started an attack on the Gare region. This operation aims at occupying this part of the Medya Defense Zones located in South Kurdistan. In the early morning hours of February 10, many different locations came under heavy air attacks for hours. Following these air attacks soldiers landed in the area. Currently, intense fighting is taking place in Gare, between the occupation army and the Freedom Guerrilla.

The Gare region of South Kurdistan is located very far away from the Turkish border. Air attacks on Gare have been carried out from time to time in the past. Now for the first time, a ground offensive has been started to occupy the region. Without a doubt, it would be impossible to carry out such a ground offensive without the permission, approval or support of the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party). On the day the attacks started, Mesrur Barzani made accusations towards the guerrilla instead of taking a stance against the occupation. This clearly shows that he tries to legitimize the occupation. For three months, the areas controlled by the guerrilla have been encircled by KDP military forces. Thus, the current attack of the Turkish state is taking place in a context where the guerrilla forces find themselves encircled.

The occupation operation in Gare is taking place during the 22nd anniversary of the international conspiracy against our leader Abdullah Öcalan. This shows that the Turkish state intends to crush our Freedom Movement and carry out a genocide against the Kurdish people. The Turkish state has also carried out occupation attacks against Rojava in order to bring an end to the free and democratic life of the Kurdish people. It is well-known, that Turkish state representatives justified these attacks against North Syria by saying that they would not make the same mistake they had made in North Iraq. By attacking the guerrilla, the occupation operation that is currently happening far inside the South Kurdish territory constitutes an attack on the whole Kurdish Freedom Movement. It also aims at destroying the federal status of South Kurdistan whose existence is regarded as mistake by the Turkish state. The people of South Kurdistan and the whole Kurdish people have stated many times that these attacks are not only directed at the PKK and the guerrilla, but aim at occupying all of South Kurdistan. The attacks of the Turkish state against the free and democratic life and existence of the Kurdish people will continue, unless Turkey is forced to terminate its operations and attacks on all parts of Kurdistan. Whenever possible, representatives of the Turkish state and state media outlets stress that they consider Kirkuk and Mossul to belong to them and that these areas have been taken away from them in the past. After the occupation attacks on Xakurke and Heftanin, areas close to the Turkish border, this new attack on an area far inside South Kurdistan is an important step for the Turkish occupation of the Kirkuk and Mossul provinces. As seen in other areas occupied by the Turkish state, it has no intention to leave places it has occupied.

The HPG (People`s Defence Forces) have declared that the helicopters used in the occupation operation in



Gare were deployed from the south, an area controlled by the KDP. According to local sources, the current occupation operation in Gare is being coordinated from the village Bakırman close to the South Kurdish city of Akre.

The attack on Gare is not only directed against the guerrilla and the Kurdish people's freedom struggle which is led by the PKK. It is also an attack on the existence and the free and democratic life of all Kurds. It is impossible to liberate all parts of Kurdistan without understanding every attack on one part of Kurdistan as an attack on all Kurds. Failing to do so will only lead to the loss of all achievement gained until today. Therefore, our people in all parts of Kurdistan and beyond, all political forces, intellectuals, authors, artists, women and the youth need to take a clear stance against the attack on Gare and the ongoing occupation operation. As a result of this attack, a people's movement against the occupation needs to evolve in South Kurdistan. All political parties, intellectuals, artists, the youth and women need to play an active role in this movement. Our people in North Kurdistan, Rojava and East Kurdistan, as well as our people in the diaspora, need to take a clear stance, too, by organizing actions against the occupation as part of our campaign "End isolation, fascism and occupation – Time to ensure freedom". Everywhere, our people – especially the youth and women – needs to rise up and join our campaign to defeat the occupation.

Our people of South Kurdistan has always proven its patriotic and revolutionary stance against all occupation attacks. We will never forget how the people of Amediye, Derelok and Şeladize rose up against the occupiers during the occupation operation in the Zap region in 2008. Thus, they showed one of the most dignified resistances in the history of Kurdistan. The clear stance of the people of Şeladize against the military base of the occupiers has also taken its place in history as a paragon of dignity. These examples clearly show the way for the kind of actions that are necessary against the occupation today. Therefore, all cities and villages in Kurdistan – especially Dohuk and Akre – need to rise up against the occupation operation of the Turkish state in Gare. Thus, they need to make clear that it will never be possible to occupy the Medya Defense Zones and South Kurdistan. They need to make life unbearable for the occupiers in South Kurdistan.

The genocidal, colonialist Turkish state is attacking the freedom struggle and gains of the Kurdish people everywhere. With its attacks and occupation it is trying to prevent the Kurds from becoming a free and democratic part of the new balance and status in the Middle East. On this basis, the Turkish state wants to subject all the Kurds to genocide. As a result, the Kurds need to rise up everywhere against the occupying, genocidal Turkish state and defeat the attacks in order to bring an end to the occupation. They need to secure the existence of the Kurds and thus achieve a free and democratic life in all parts of Kurdistan in the 21st century.

**Co-Presidency
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