

# **An Urgent Action Letter from Organizations in Northeast Syria to the Governments of the European Union and the International Community**

## **Recommendations and Demands:**

1. Take action to halt all military acts and hostilities that the Turkish army and the armed opposition groups have embarked on in a sustainable manner, to allow a space for political solutions and to stop incitement against the population of Northeast Syria, Syrian Kurds in particular.
2. We urge the international community- especially the governments of the European Union – to back the German initiative and help in providing it with an international cover, as to guarantee the full stability of the area’s population and to spare it an imminent massacre on ethnic or religious grounds.
3. Take action to come up with stability programs, as to ensure the participation of the whole area’s population in the local governance and guarantee its being a part of the constitutional and the political negotiation process addressing Syria’s future.
4. Take action to guarantee the return of dozens of thousands of indigenous people to the areas they were displaced from during the latest military operation, and even before, especially the areas of Ras al-Ayn/Sari Kani and Tell Abiad.
5. Starting a transparent investigation into the human rights violations committed during the latest military operations and ensuring that perpetrators be held accountable.

## **Background:**

We, the undersigned organizations, strongly condemn the Turkish military operation launched against another Syrian area that is a home to millions of people — internally displaced and indigenous locals, including Arabs, Assyrians, Armenians, Chechens, Kurds and others.

We welcome the German initiative and the European and international stand in general, which recommended establishing an internationally-supervised security zone, as to guarantee the return of the indigenous people and prevent putting into force the plans aiming at the refoulement of millions of Syrians.

The military operation, launched on October 9, 2019, has effected the [displacement of more than 200,000 persons](#), of whom no less than [70,000 are children as reported by The United Nations Children's Fund](#) (UNICEF), while the number of persons in need for medical aid has amounted to 1.5 million people according to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), for its part, has documented the death of civilians, including journalists, since the beginning of the military operation, in

addition to summary executions of civilians, fighters and captives in [grave breaches](#) of human rights.

Of the [people executed](#) on the M4 Highway was the well-known Kurdish female politician, Hevrin Khalaf, who was put to death by the organization that refers to itself as Ahrar al-Sharqiya, one of the armed opposition groups affiliated with the Syrian Interim Government, operating under the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces.

The medical facilities have also had a share of the attacks, according to [the Spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), who stated that five attacks were aimed at medical facilities, one of which took place on October 11, 2019. Affected by aerial and artillery bombing, the source of which is apparently the Turkish forces and their armed allies, four medical facilities were compromised in the areas of Ras al-Ayn/Sari Kani, Ayn al-Arab/Kobani, Tell Abiad and Al-Malikiyah/ Dērîk.

The relapse of the armed conflict in the form intended by the Turkish Government will lead to other grave violations of human rights, the less severe of which is not the demographic change targeting the indigenous population, including the various ethnic groups of its spectrum, for the Turkish Government has repeatedly highlighted its [intention to resettle two million Syrian refugees at least in the areas east of the Euphrates](#). The military operation might cause [religion or ethnicity-based](#) mass pogroms, not to mention its direct impact on the political process in Syria and the civil peace in the area.

The two provinces of Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor are yet under the immediate and actual threat of the Islamic State/Daesh resurgence, which emerges at times of conflict and chaos, with the possibility of exploiting this state of mayhem by the Syrian regular army and the Iranian militias stationed near the area— a thing that brings to mind the happenings in Ghouta, Homs and Aleppo, where communal acts of revenge were taken against the locals sending massive waves of displacement out of the area.

The Signatory Organizations:

1. "Bokra Ahla" Association for Relief & Development
2. Adel Center for human rights
3. Arido Center for Civil Society
4. ASHNA for development
5. Ashti Center for Peace Building
6. Baladna Organization for Civil Society

7. Center for Peace and Civil Society
8. Dan for Relief and Development
9. DOZ International
10. Foundation of the Free Woman in Rojava
11. GAV for Relief and Development
12. Hasaka Organization for Relief and Development
13. Human Rights Organization in Jazeera
14. Jomard charity
15. Judy Charity for Development and Relief
16. Keskayi Organization
17. Kurdish Red Crescent
18. Lawir organization
19. Mezopotamya Development studies
20. Mitan Center for Civil Society Revival
21. NIP
22. Peace for Development
23. PÊL- Civil Waves
24. Sanad for peacebuilding
25. Sara organization to combat violence against women
26. Shamal charity Association
27. Shams Organisation for Rehabilitation And Development
28. Shawishka Association
29. Smart Center for Mental Health and Human Development
30. Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ)
31. The network of Leaders -female- for Peace
32. The One Body Charity
33. The syrian woman council
34. XEWN - Dream association