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7) Solidarity with Afrin

Signed by JUSO Switzerland, Young Labour UK, MJS France and JUSOS Germany

Since January 20, 2018, the Afrin region in Kurdistan has been under constant bombing by the Turkish army and air force. On March 18, the SDF (Syrian Democratic forces) withdrew from Afrin, without support and means against the air strikes. This was the only way to prevent a complete destruction of the city and the death of ten thousands of civilians. Between 150 and 200 thousand people have fled since Turkey started the attack.

Known for their unrestrained desire for freedom, peace and social justice, this Kurdish majority region has established a government based on the principles of democratic confederalism, a system to organize the communities made up from many different ethnic groups and religions in a peaceful and democratic manner. The Democratic Union Party focuses also on ecology and feminism.

In the current war crisis in Syria, the autonomous region of Afrin, as Part of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria, represents the only convincing perspective from this ugly war. After the Daesh was bravely pushed back (much celebrated by the international community), the region is now brutally attacked by the Turkish state. Fearing a united Kurdistan, Erdogan wants to stop the Kurdish movement, even beyond Turkish borders. So, it is the people of Afrin, who feel the catastrophic consequences when powerful F16 fighter jets and German built Leopard II tanks destroy everything on their way.

In total inhumanity and violation of international humanitarian law, thousands of civilians have already been killed by Erdogan's geostrategic whims. Not only has the war in Afrin destroyed one of the last regions which had not suffered from war so far, but in addition it has brought Islamic groups such as the Junūd al-Shām (formally known as Al Nusra front) and the Sultan Murad Brigade to Afrin. These Islamists have been marching alongside Turkish forces.

Now these groups assist the replacement of the minorities who fled with people of other ethnicity and or religion. The last intact villages in Afrin traditionally populated by Yazidis in Syria have been attacked and the people were forced to leave their homes in the fear of ethnic cleansing. Turkish quirks also compound the danger of major international conflict with a hypothetically direct confrontation between a NATO country and the direct Syrian authority led by Iran's regional power.

Every bombing is a shame, every war is scandalous, and every death is a scandal in regard to humanity. What has happened in Afrin was one of the darkest hours of humanity: a people burned and drowned in its own blood just because it took its own fate in hand and sought a way out of the endless war.

The European Union has done nothing effective to stop the War.

Paralyzed from the economic incentives, silence was the only impactful reaction. The so-called "Refugee Deal" between Europe and Turkey has been of high significance and was used by Turkey to blackmail an

entire continent with its own xenophobia. The deal violates human rights and had never a significant effect besides human suffering. The payments made due to fulfil the deal enabled Turkey to invest in its armed forces and the price was paid by the people of Afrin.

In response, the YES supports all actions against Turkish atrocities and demands:

To the European Union and European countries:

- To urge the international community to establish safe areas and a no-fly zone in northern Syria.
- To enact immediately a moratorium on arms and dual-use goods as well as know-how exports to the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula.
- To accept the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria as an autonomous region within Syria.
- To cancel the Refugee Agreement with Turkey.
- To, following the ruling of Belgium, reevaluate the status of the PKK as a terrorist organization.
- Not to follow suspicious Interpol notices issued by Turkey.
- Not to enforce any deportation to Turkey.

To the European people

- To solidarize with the Kurds and all other inhabitants of Afrin and condemn the Turkish military invasion.
- To call for a better right to be informed.
- To call for the release of all Turkish MPs currently in prison.

To the member organization of YES

- To carry these demands into our respective countries as much as possible