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The Dismantling of Kurdish Existence in Syria and the International Duty to Act

The military campaign launched on 6 January 2026 constitutes a deliberate and coordinated operation aimed at dismantling Kurdish self-rule in Syria. Employing a strategy best described as “negotiation–sabotage–pressure,” the Syrian Transitional Government has weaponized the rhetoric of “integration” to legitimize a sweeping offensive stretching from Aleppo to the eastern banks of the Euphrates River. The proposed framework of a so-called agreement formalizes this process of liquidation of Kurdish democracy by mandating the individual dispersal of Kurdish fighters and the transfer of sovereign control over territory and resources. The consequences have been immediate and devastating: the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, the siege of Kobanê, and systematic attacks on civilian infrastructure—all clear violations of international humanitarian law.

The ceasefire announced on 20 January—initially declared for four days and subsequently extended for an additional fifteen—does not represent a pathway to peace. Rather, it functions as a tactical instrument designed to consolidate the territorial and political gains of this eradication strategy. These truce periods have been exploited to remove international observers, complete the transfer of ISIS detainees, and reinforce military positions on the ground. Throughout this period, the Syrian Transitional Government has repeatedly and systematically violated the ceasefire’s terms. Crucially, these operations have been carried out by jihadist militias whose strategic coordination, logistical supply chains, and political cover are decisively provided by the Turkish state.

The Kurdish people—who sacrificed tens of thousands of lives in the global fight against ISIS on behalf of international security—now face abandonment in the name of geopolitical expediency and tacit international conspiracy. This assault not only targets Kurdish political existence but also risks reviving the very terror threat it once helped defeat, as evidenced by the growing instability and chaos surrounding detention facilities. The intent of the Damascus–Ankara axis is unmistakable: to manufacture the conditions for an unrestrained final offensive aimed at erasing Kurdish political and social life. What is unfolding is a calculated countdown toward a potential mass atrocity. At this critical juncture, also Christian, Yazidi, Armenian, and Assyrian communities in Northeast Syria face grave and immediate threats, including the risk of mass violence and displacement.

We therefore issue an urgent call for international action:

- 1. Enforced Demarcation and Robust Monitoring:** Immediately establish an internationally monitored protection line. Deploy a well-mandated international armed observer mission empowered to oversee ceasefire arrangements and document violations and abuses in real time.
- 2. Permanent Humanitarian Access and Binding Protection:** Open permanent, internationally guaranteed humanitarian corridors to besieged areas, including Kobanê. Humanitarian access must never be conditional, temporary, or subject to military coercion.
- 3. Constitutional Recognition and Political Guarantees:** Secure the constitutional recognition of Kurdish identity, language, self-defense, and democratic self-governance. Without binding political guarantees, any settlement will merely institutionalize dispossession, repression, and structural violence.

Global solidarity must now be translated into urgent and concrete international action. Passivity in the face of this threat constitutes complicity. As an expression of worldwide solidarity, we join the global call to take to the streets on January 31 and February 1 in defense of Rojava's democratic, multi-identity, and women's freedom-based political model.