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The Siege of Kobanê: An Ongoing Crime Against Humanity and a Global Failure

Today marks the seventeenth day of an unbroken and suffocating siege against the city of Kobanê in Rojava-Kurdistan. While the world speaks of progress and a ceasefire related to the 30 January agreement and its supposed implementation, the reality for more than half a million civilians is one of engineered deprivation: a total cutoff of electricity, running water, and communications, alongside a systematic blockade of life-saving humanitarian aid. It is not a humanitarian crisis, but a calculated crime in progress, conducted in the full view of a silent international community.

The siege exposes the fatal hypocrisy at the heart of the current political process. Turkey, which played a central role in designing the military offensive against Rojava, now enforces a cruel embargo by refusing to open its border. The Mürşitpınar crossing remains sealed, with aid convoys deliberately blocked or turned back. At the same time, Ankara cynically proposes that aid be routed through Damascus, the very authority implementing the siege on Kobanê at Turkey's direction. This two-faced policy is not a solution; it is an attempt to deceive the international community and treat global institutions as fools. It reveals a coordinated strategy to strangle Kobanê, making the population pay the price for its historic resistance that defeated ISIS.

The responsibility for this outrage lies with a clear axis: the Damascus Interim Government, which implements the siege, and the Turkish state, which directs and enables it. But the shame extends further. The US-led Global Coalition against ISIS, the European Union (EU), the UN, and global humanitarian agencies just watching what's happening: The city that broke ISIS's backbone is now being broken by hunger and cold. Their inaction violates the very principles of human rights and humanitarian law these institutions claim to uphold.

If the UN, the EU and international institutions all fulfill their fundamental duty to protect civilians, then they must at the very least remove all obstacles to popular solidarity. The Kurdish people will not abandon their responsibility. An unprecedented national unity has emerged across all parts of Kurdistan and throughout the diaspora. Our people possess both the will and the capacity to support their brothers and sisters in Kobanê.

We are therefore in our unambiguous demands to the orchestrators of this crime and their international institutions

- 1) Lift the siege and embargo on Kobanê immediately! Open all borders and access routes now!
- 2) Establish an independent, UN-mandated international mechanism to monitor, report on, and guarantee the permanent end of the siege and the safe passage of all humanitarian aid.

The people of Kobanê, who taught humanity the meaning of defiance, are watching. History will judge this moment not by the agreements signed, but by the siege that was or was not broken.

Break the Siege of Kobanê!