

Kongreya Star Committee for External Relations



Information File

THE ATTACKS ON AFRIN TARGET WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVES

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INTRODUCTION

On the night before January 20, 2018, the Turkish military and its jihadist allies jointly attacked the Afrin canton. The Turkish army calls this war of aggression “Operation Olive Branch” and claims to defend itself from attacks. International lawyers disagree and in fact, the opposite is the case. In 2017 alone [see attachment 2: chronology of Turkish attacks on Afrin 2017], the Turkish military attacked the area around the northwestern corner of Syria at least dozen times with artillery in order to provoke a war. In this sense, the beginning of the attacks on January 20 was not unexpected but rather planned long ahead of time.

With its attacks from the ground and from the air, the Turkish state violates international law and commits war crimes. Only in the first 16 days of this war of aggression, 129 civilians were killed as a result of the attacks. Most of them are children, women, and elderly people. On February 4, 2018, the number of the wounded was 310. Furthermore, nearly half of the civilian victims are Arab refugees, who had found shelter in Afrin from the attacks of the Assad regime and jihadists. The military attacks are enabled by western military technologies and equipment, especially German, British, and Italian weapons, which are being used against civilians. This makes western governments responsible and complicit in war crimes.

What kind of a dangerous undertaking has been launched in Afrin is obvious in the words of Turkish president Erdoğan:

“If God permits, starting from Manbij, we will eliminate this game along our border and completely cleanse our region from this mischief. (...) First, we will wipe out the terrorists, then we will render that place liveable.” (24.01.2018)

“We will continue our Operation Olive Branch until its goal is achieved. Afterwards, as promised, we will cleanse Manbij from the terrorists. Nobody should be bothered, because the true owners of Manbij are not these terrorists, but our Arab brothers. And then we will continue this war until we reach the Iraqi border until no terrorist is left.” (26.01.2018)

“Those who disturb our borders will pay a heavy price. This war in Afrin will continue in Idlib.” (28.01.2018)

Erdoğan not only plans ethnic cleansing and the occupation of Afrin by jihadist allies, but wants to “wipe out” all democratic structures from Rojava and northern Syria. The goal is to eliminate the de facto autonomy of the local Kurdish population. The Kurds are supposed to be deprived of any rights and returned to the conditions before the Syrian war. The Turkish state wants to obstruct the recognition of Democratic Federation of Northern Syria at all costs. That is why the attack was launched shortly before the Sochi conference which representatives of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria were expected to attend.

Democratic Confederalism, as built up in Rojava and northern Syria, proposes a unique solution model for the fundamental conflicts of the Middle East. The borders, which were drawn by foreign powers one hundred years ago, continuously reproduce crises in the region. But new border drawings would not solve the deep problems either. Democratic Confederalism however aims the egalitarian self-administration and self-determination of all ethnicities, religions, and genders. This model, based on ethnic and cultural pluralism is currently being built up in Rojava and northern Syria with the leading role of women. True change towards freedom and democracy requires women as subjects. This is the case in Afrin and in the rest of northern Syria.

The AKP government in Turkey and its pseudo-FSA allies represent male domination, Sunni Islam with hegemonic aspirations, women's oppression and sexism. This especially became clear with the abuse of the dead body of Barîn Kobanê (Emine Mustafa Omer), a 23-year old fighter of the Women's Defence Units, by the allies of NATO member Turkey. A video spread on social media shows how the jihadists cut Barîn Kobanê's breasts and afterwards lit her corpse on fire. This barbarian act more than clearly illustrates the woman-hating and inhumane character of the attackers.



Barin Kobane

They do not represent any democratic model but rather further deepen the conflict with their attacks on Afrin and their plan to completely destroy the democratic self-administration of northern Syria. As a matter of fact, for the first time in one hundred years, a viable solution for a democratic alternative in the Middle East, otherwise devastated by war and chaos. Turkey's war of aggression is targeting this democratic alternative.

With this information file, we want to provide a summary of this alternative in practice and the leading role of women in Afrin. The information file illustrates that the attacks of the Erdoğan regime and its Islamist allies target the women's revolution underway in Afrin and other parts of northern Syria. This women's revolution must be defended.

As the Kurdish women's movement, we call on you to join our demands and to use all your means to assert political and social pressure until western governments feel forced to change their approach and put an end to the Turkish attacks on Afrin.

OUR DEMANDS:

- Immediate steps by the UN, EU and NATO states to end the Turkish attacks on Afrin
- Establishment of a No Fly Zone over Afrin
- Immediate end to all arms deals and deliveries to Turkey
- Independent investigation on the Turkish war crimes in Afrin
- Official recognition of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria
- Humanitarian aid for the Afrin canton, especially for refugees and wounded people
- End to the warfare in (northern) Syria and support for a democratic solution to the conflict

Kongreya Star Committee for External Relations
February 2018

Call for Global Solidarity Campaign: Women Rise Up for Afrîn! Jin Rabin Ser Piyan ji bo Efrînê!

The Kurdish region of Afrin in the Democratic Federation of North Syria has been under heavy attack from the Turkish army and affiliated jihadist groups since 20 January 2018. Night and day, our towns and villages, refugee camps, and historic and sacred sites are being bombed by Turkish war-planes and artillery with the aim of depopulating and occupying the area. The international public has not taken any adequate action, and every day we face new war crimes and civilian casualties. Women have become targets of rape, cruel sexual assault, and mutilation of their bodies by Turkish army and affiliated gangs.

The Erdoğan regime has openly announced that the aim of its military aggression against Afrin is the annihilation the democratic autonomous self-administration of Rojava and the occupation of the territory of Northern Syria. Along with racist, religious-fundamentalist, and sexist oppression, Turkey strives to wipe out all traces of women's history and the female-centred and egalitarian culture in our region. Afrin was one of the earliest settlements in civilization, and also the centre of the agricultural revolution in the Fertile Crescent. Women played a leading role in this historical process, which has been described as the first women's revolution. Symbols of mother-goddesses like Ishtar or Astarte are a common piece of cultural heritage among the local peoples and can be found in many sites of Afrin. For example, the huge footprints in the flagstones of the 3 thousand-year-old temple of Ain Dara, situated close to Afrin city, symbolise the presence and the spirit of the goddess Ishtar. By bombing and destroying this ancient temple site, the Turkish state strives to enforce its patriarchal and fascist order.

As women from Afrin, we are determined to defend our heritage and the history of the first women's revolution in our homeland and to succeed in a second women's revolution through our resistance against occupation and oppression. Today, the ancient caves in the mountains of northern Syria have become our shelters from the bombings by those who would destroy us. Over six years, women from Afrin and all parts of Rojava have been resisting against the attacks of the Islamic State. At the same time, we have played a leading role in building up democratic structures of self-administration.

We have built up autonomous structures based on communal organising, women's councils, academies, and cooperatives, as well as women's self-defence. Through realizing that women's solidarity is one of our most effective weapons, we have developed our collective strength and consciousness. Today, tens of thousands of women have taken up arms to defend their land, their lives, and their futures in Afrin. The resistance of the Women's Defence Units (YPI) and the Women's Civil Defence Forces, Parastina Jinê, who have organised under the umbrella of the Women's Movement of Rojava, Kongreya Star, are part of a female global resistance against any form of oppression, exploitation, femicide, and fascism.

While international institutions and state governments keep silent about the abuses of international law and war crimes, we believe that women's international solidarity will be our strongest weapon in defeating fascism and patriarchy. By following in the footsteps of Ishtar and those women who created and defended communal life, we call upon women from all over the world to rise up for defending Afrin and the values of humanity!

Let's strengthen the networks and actions of women's international solidarity to spread the women's revolution worldwide! We call upon all our sisters around the world to take urgent action and join the campaign by using and spreading #WomenRiseUpForAfrin in local protests, creative actions, marches, and social media campaigns.

- Stop the Turkish invasion and aggressive occupation of Afrin – Stop genocide and femicide!
- Rise up for the protection of the people, the land, the cultural, and the historical heritage of Afrin!
- Rise up for the defence of the democratic, ecological self-administration in Rojava and North Syria!
- Defending Afrin means defending the Women's Revolution - "No pasaran" to Erdogan's Fascism!

Kongreya Star Afrin
8 February 2018

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The situation of Afrin prior to and at the beginning of the uprising

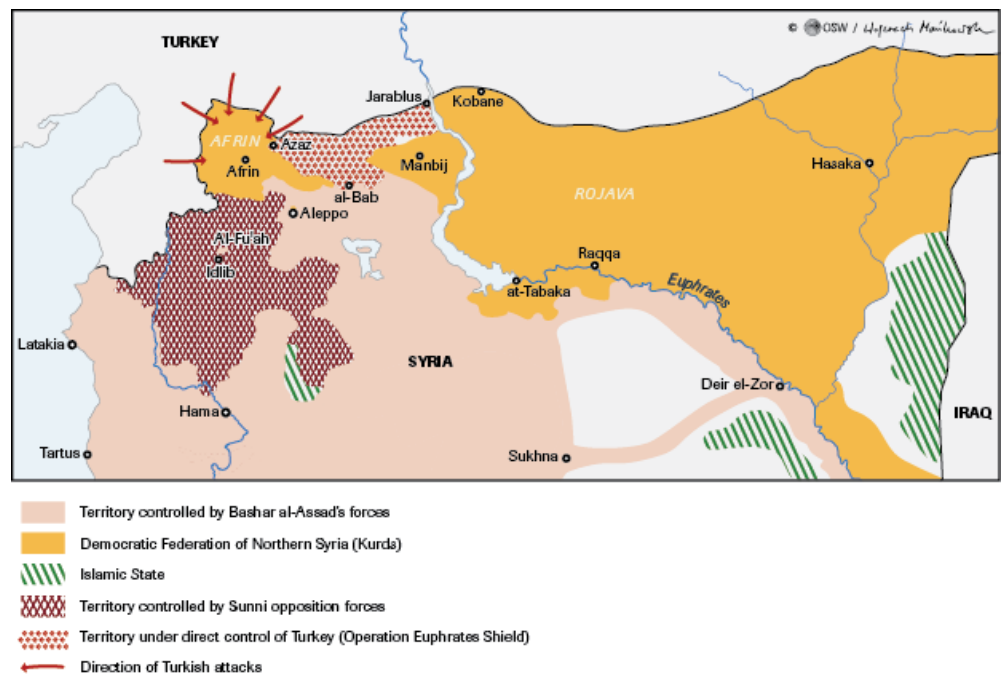
The region of Afrin is located in the northwest corner of Syria. To the north and the west, Arin borders the territory of the Turkish state. The area encompasses the region Çiyayê Kurmanca (in Arabic “Jabal al-Akrad“, in English “The Mountain of the Kurds“) and consists of seven communities: the city of Afrin at the center, Jindires, Sharran, Mobetan/Mabatli, Rajo, Bulbul, Maydana, and Shiye, with a total of 366 villages or hamlets.

During the time of the Ottoman Empire, the Afrin region was part of the former Kurdish province of Kilis, which now lies within contemporary Turkish state borders. After the border agreement between France and Turkey in 1920, Afrin, as well as Kobane and Cizîr became part of the League of Nations mandate for Syria and Lebanon, out of which, in 1946, the Syrian Republic was formed. This led to not only Kurdish villages, communities, and provinces, but also families and tribes being divided into two along the new border. As the representative of the Kurds in the region Çiyayê Kurmanca, Haji Hannan, leader of the tribe Izzeddin, submitted an application to the National Assembly in Ankara for the redrawn definition of the border. The application was rejected.

Until the 1960s, the Kurds in Afrin largely engaged in agriculture.

The Arabization project (“Arab Belt“) of the Syrian Ba’ath regime, which began in 1965, aimed to distort the ethnic demography of the Kurdish areas in favour of the Arabs, and as a result, unemployment and displacement heavily affected Afrin. In the last decades, many Kurds from Afrin fled to the metropolises of Aleppo and Damascus. Nevertheless, Kurds still constitute the majority

population of Afrin. In 2000, an estimated 450.000 people lived in the area. According to estimates, as of 2015 the population size had increased to 700.000. At the moment, there is an estimated population of 1 million.



Over the course of the Arabization project of the former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, dozens of Arab villages were built and Kurdish names of places and locations were Arabized. Thousands of Arab families from the provinces of Raqqa and Aleppo were settled in the region. Kurdish lands were expropriated. At least fifty thousand Kurds were stripped of Syrian citizenship and declared foreigners, who owned no property and lacked permission to repair or build houses.

The spark of the Syrian uprising burst into flame on 14 March 2011 in Daraa, a city in the south of the country. The revolution in Rojava started a year later, when the city of Kobane liberated itself from the Ba’ath regime on 19 July 2012. Two days after Kobane, the people of Afrin expelled the regime from their city and took over the duties of administration and provision. Parallel to these developments, defence forces were created. Only three months later, the first military attack was launched by the Islamic State on the Yazidi village of Qestel Cindo and the hill associated with it. After two days of heavy fighting, the attack was averted.

The population of Afrin had to survive the winter of 2012/2013 under an embargo, isolated from the outside world. Jihadist groups disrupted the connection to the cities of Aleppo, Azaz and Arme. To the north and west, the Turkish army had closed its borders. Thus, the provision of food and heating was obstructed. As a result, the people tried to repair the water mills that had been in use until the Syrian regime banned them in the 1970s. With old hand grain mills, flour was produced. Dried olive trees were used for heating and wood was collected in the nearby forests.

The population of Afrin survived the winter despite the difficult conditions. However, the spring brought with it attacks by jihadist groups with the support of Turkey. Already, these groups had tried to occupy Afrin and had launched massive attacks on the villages in the Sharran and Jindires communities. During one of these attacks in May 2013, Silava Efrîn became the first fighter of the YPJ (Women's Defence Units) to be killed in Rojava.

The attacks of the Al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nusra in Arabic, later changed its name into Jabhat Fateh al-Sham) were met with massive resistance and were soon defeated. But only a year later, Afrin was confronted by the occupation attempt of the Islamic State (ISIS). ISIS did not manage to take the city. In August of the same year, 2014, ISIS launched its genocidal attack on the Yazidis of Shengal (Sinjar) in Iraq, and a month later on Kobane in Rojava.

For a long time, Afrin was isolated from the other Kurdish cantons, due to the ongoing battles and jihadist occupations in the surrounding areas. Only after the liberation of Manbij in August 2016, was direct contact with Afrin enabled again. Current international news reports constantly stress that Afrin is "the last relatively stable region in Syria". However, this should not draw attention away from the countless attacks of the Turkish military and its jihadist allies over the last three years. Only in 2017, Afrin was attacked over a dozen times with artillery either directly by the Turkish army or by its Islamist allies. Moreover, even prior to the so-called "Olive Branch Operation" civilians in the border areas had been shot several times by Turkish soldiers. In the relevant report released by the Human Rights Association of Afrin, in 2016, a total of 37 civilians were killed in Turkish army attacks. Furthermore, the Turkish army has claimed to have cut down 14 thousand olive trees belonging to Kurdish peasants, for its border wall.

War on Afrin is a direct attack on the women's revolution

On the leading role of women in the construction of democratic structures in Afrin

Democratic Confederalism as a Solution and Model

Over the course of the “Arab Spring” in Syria, the Kurds in northern Syria have developed their own systems. They started with the creation of democratic self-governance structures, to liberate themselves from decades-old oppression by the Ba’ath regime. They call this the “Third Way”, which is conceptualized in Democratic Confederalism. Democratic Confederalism is a political model, which aspires to the equality of ethnicities, religions, and genders. Democratic Confederalism was developed by Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish freedom movement, who is currently imprisoned under the heaviest isolation conditions on Imrali Island, as a proposal for peaceful coexistence of the countless peoples and religions in the Middle East. The social organisation in Democratic Confederalism is self-governance, organised through communes and councils. At the beginning, the region of Rojava was divided along the three cantons, Afrin, Kobane, and Cizîr. Now, the democratic self-administration transcends Rojava and encompasses the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria, which is divided along three regions and six cantons: the region Cizîr consists of the cantons Qamişlo (al-Qamishly) and Hasake (al-Hasakah), the region Firat (Euphrates) consists of the cantons Kobane and Girê Spî (Tel Abyad) and the region Afrin consists of the cantons of Afrin and Şehba (Shahba). The region is inhabited by a mix of Kurds, Arabs, Syriacs, Assyrians, Armenians, and Turkmen. They are Muslims, Christians, Alawites, Yazidis, and Jews.

Solution from Inside, Not Outside

In order to extend their sphere of influence, the international and regional state powers sought *outside* of Syria a solution for the war. The society of Rojava however was convinced that a true solution must come from within. After the Democratic Union Party (PYD) formed a transitional government together with the Christian Union Party Suryoye and other smaller parties on 12 November 2013, Democratic Autonomy was declared in January 2014. The Democratic Self-Administration of the Afrin canton was declared on 29 January 2014, just a few days after Cizîr and Kobane.



Co-president Hevi Mustafa after the declaration of Democratic Autonomy in Afrin

40% Women's Quota and Co-presidency

Before the declaration of Democratic Autonomy in the Afrin canton, the foundation of a legislative council was prepared. This consisted of 101 members and also encompassed the representation of Alevites and Yazidis in Afrin, as well as the Arab tribes of the Emirati and Bobeni. In the 7 city districts of Afrin, as well as in the village councils, the population delegated its political representatives to the autonomous legislative council. The administration and committees are multi-ethnic and organised around the principle of gender equality. The co-president of the canton administration, Hevi Ibrahim Mustafa, is a Kurdish woman of the Alevi faith. The male co-president, Abdulhamit Mustafa, is a Muslim belonging to the Arab Emirati tribes. Before the Afrin canton moved to the co-presidency model, Hevi Ibrahim Mustafa was the head of the administration.

As a step towards gender equality, a 40% women's quota has been introduced. The current aim is to strengthen women's organisation to the extent that no quota will be needed in the future and so that equal participation and representation can be secured on all levels. For now, the co-presidency principle provides one woman and one man with equal positions in the leadership of all official boards.

Women's Movement Kongreya Star

The women in Afrin and in all of Rojava organise themselves communally and cantonally in the women's movement Kongreya Star ("Star Congress"). This organisation was formed in 2005 under the name of Yekîtiya Star ("Star Union"). Its activists were subject to massive repression, as well as imprisonment and torture by the Ba'ath regime. Despite great obstacles, their work set the foundations for women organising through the construction of women's councils (assemblies) and communes in all northern Syrian cities. For



Women in Afrin celebrate International Women's Day, 8th of March

this, they could refer to the thirty years of experience of the Kurdish women's movement from all parts of Kurdistan. At its congress in February 2016, the women's movement in northern Syria decided to organise itself confederally within the framework of a congress, due to the concern that the organisation in the form of a union no longer did justice to the movement's aims and needs. In Kongreya Star, women and women's organisations autonomously organise on communal, municipal, and cantonal levels and take the engaged responsibilities in the organisation of all of society. Due to this double engagement, the women's movement actively transforms the patriarchal society into a gender-equal one and brings the perspectives of women's liberation into all the spheres of life.

Women are the Pioneers of Societal Change

Likewise in Afrin, women's committees, centres, and academies were established. Their aim is to enable the transformation of society through the active participation of women. Women are empowered through education on topics like Democratic Autonomy, self-defence, ecology, women's history, sexism, and women's rights, as well as topics concerning health and economics. Another emphasis lies on literacy and education in the Kurdish language. The Foundation of the Free Woman in Rojava, formed in 2014, confronts women's issues in Rojava in the areas of economics, society, politics, health, culture, and education. It develops projects according to the ideas and concepts that come from women in society.



Women's commune in Afrin

No Constitution, but Social Contract Polygamy, forced marriage, and child marriage banned

All over the world, men determine the fundamental rules of social organisation. In the constitutional councils of Rojava, women play a crucial role in the development of laws. They have also played a vital role in the development of the Social Contract of Rojava and continue to aid in the development of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria. A law regarding forty various women's rights has been developed by women themselves. The Social Contract prohibits polygamy, forced marriage, and child marriage.

A crucial role for this is played by the Mala Jins ("Women's Houses"), which are education and consultancy centres where women who have faced violence and injustice can address their concerns. Many problems are solved collectively in the Mala Jin or are delegated to the courts. In the courts, too, women are represented at least with 40%. Female judges hear cases, which concern violence against women.

YPJ was formed in Afrin

Security forces cooperate with women's councils

The People's Defence Units YPG declared their formation officially in July 2012, a year after the escalation of the war in Syria. Eight months after the foundation of the YPG, the first women's defence battalion was formed – in Afrin. The official formation of the Women's Defence Units YPJ happened on 4 April 2013. Not only was the first women's battalion of Rojava formed in Afrin, the first YPJ fighter to lose her life also died in Afrin. Alongside the YPJ there are two other autonomous women's defence structures: the Civilian Defence Forces (HPC-Jin) and the women's security forces (Asayîşa Jin). HPC-Jin are the defence forces of the population and are held accountable to the local, communal administration. The women's security forces are controlled by the cantonal councils. On one hand, they defend the population from the external attacks of jihadists and the intelligence services of the Assad regime and Turkey. On the other hand, they intervene in internal conflicts which cannot be solved by the community and societal institutions themselves. For instance, in cases of domestic violence women can address the Asayîş Jin. Both of these organisations are, in turn, in strong communication with the women's councils.



Women of the HPC-Jin



Inanna Agricultural Cooperative

Cooperative Form of Production

Women work the fields together

Provision in equality

Unlike Kobane and Cizîr, Afrin is mountainous. In one valley, intensive agricultural work is ongoing. Wheat, cotton, and fruit in particular are planted. The main product is olive trees. Under the Assad regime, the people were not allowed to process their own resources, but had to sell their raw materials and produce to the state. Despite the ongoing embargo by Turkey, in the last years the people of Afrin have managed to achieve great developments for their own local economy and the

provisions for society. The basis of this economy is cooperative production, designed to abolish exploitation and competition and to guarantee society's vital needs are met through equal means. Women also organise their economy independently. Women's cooperatives like the Inanna Agricultural Cooperative, which was founded in 2016 in Afrin and produces wheat, beans, chickpeas, onions and garlic, play a leading role.

Half of the Population are IDPs

Refugee camp as target of attacks

The population of Afrin canton has more than doubled in the past few years, today reaching approximately 1 million. Over the course of the many attacks by rebels and regime forces on Aleppo, several hundreds of thousands of people, mostly those from the majority Kurdish districts Ashrafiyah and Sheikh Maqṣud, had to flee, and returned to their hometown of Afrin. On top of this wave, there have been great displacements from places like Azaz, al Bab, Tall Rifat, Manbij, and Idlib, where Arabs especially have fled from jihadist groups like Ahrar al-Sham, the (former) al Nusra Front, ISIS, or the Turkish co-founded Sultan Murad division. These IDPs found shelter not only in the cities and villages, but also in the Robar refugee camp, which was formed in 2015 by the canton administration of Afrin and has thus far provided shelter for more than one hundred thousand refugees. The refugee camp has been attacked several times by the Turkish army since 20 January 2018.

Attachment 1: Map of Afrin



NEXŞEYA KANTONA EFRÎN

Birêvebirê Sembolan	Birêvebirê Rengan		
● Navçe	Navenda Herêma Kantona Efrîn..(21 Gund.)	Navçeya Mabata..(50 Gund.)	Navçeya Bilbilê..(44 Gund.)
⦿ Herêm	Navçeya Şêrawa..(42 Gund.)	Herêma Reco..(39 Gund.)	Herêma Cindirêş..(50 Gund.)
⦿ Navenda Herêma Kantona Efrînê	Navçeya Şêra..(40 Gund.)	Navçeya Meydana..(15 Gund.)	Navçeya Şiyê..(17 Gund.)
— Rê	Navçeya Meydankî..(13 Gund.)	Navçeya Be'dîna..(10 Gund.)	

Attachment 2: Chronology of Turkish attacks on Afrin in 2017

Civaka Azad – Kurdish Centre for Public Outreach, 24.01.2018

According to the comprehensive report of the Human Rights Association Rojava of March 20, 2017, since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, the Turkish army has attacked a total of 15 villages in Afrin with artillery. At the time of publishing, the number of civilian casualties was 72. The report states that in addition, 140 civilians were wounded due to attacks by the Turkish military.

In the past year, the attacks on Afrin by the Turkish military and its allies have heavily increased. The following are some examples:

- On 19 February 2017, Turkish armed forces and allied jihadists attacked Afrin and the region of Shahba with artillery. The villages Merinaz, Ayn Daqnah, Fêlat Qadî, Tall Rifat, Kafr Naya, and Shaykh Isa sustained great damage in the course of the attacks. Turkish soldiers and their allies, who occupy the village of Mare in Azaz, attempted to capture Shaykh Isa. After the attack, clashes with the YPG occurred.
- On 21 March 2017, the Kurdish New Year, the Turkish military attacked the villages of the communities Lindires, Rajo, Shiye, and Maabatli in Afrin with artillery. 4 civilians were wounded. Furthermore, homes, schools, and public places were heavily damaged.
- According to a statement of the YPG on 3 April 2017, the Turkish army and its jihadist allies attacked Rojava 47 times in March 2017 with canons and rockets. The cantons of Afrin and Kobanê especially are said to have been the most heavily targeted areas. The YPG and YPJ claim to have reacted militarily 27 times to the Turkish attacks.
- On 1 May 2017, allies of Turkey attacked the refugee camp Robar in Afrin with artillery. As a result, 6 refugees, among them 2 children, were wounded. On the following day, refugees in the camp demonstrated against the aggression and called on international aid organisations to stop the attacks and provide protection for refugees.
- Also on 1 May 2017, the Human Rights Association in Afrin called on the UN Security Council to convene for a special session and to establish a No Fly zone over Rojava to protect civilians and refugees.
- On 30 June 2017, the Turkish army and its allies began another offensive against Afrin. As a result, the villages Bêlûniyê, Ayn Daqnah, and Minaq of the community Sharran, as well as Girê Baz and Girê Barîn of the community Lindires were targeted with cannons, DShK, and BKC machine guns. Clashes with the YPG occurred on the next day. The Turkish military tried to reach the community Bulbul in the village Girê Baliya. Clashes escalated here as well. Due to the attacks, a fire broke out in the village Maranêz of the community Sharran. Many fields were scorched. On 3 July, Turkish soldiers and their allies fired on more villages in the region. They were accompanied by surveillance aircrafts. During a DShK attack on the village Kafr Entanê in Sharran, 3 civilians were killed and 8 were wounded.
- During the attempt to cross the border to Turkey, a family from Hama, including children, was tortured by Turkish soldiers on 3 July 2017. Here, 4 members of the family Beyan Cedeane were injured. The family's father, Eziz Beyan Cedeane, told the news agency ANHA: "We had to leave our village due to the artillery fire from the regime and jihadists. During the attempt to cross the border at the Bab El-Selame post, we were captured and tortured by Turkish soldiers".
- On 28 November 2017, the National Security Council of Turkey convened, with Erdogan as the chairman. Following the session, a military operation against Afrin was hinted at. The statement states that the Turkish armed forces would "successfully continue their observation mission in the de-escalation zone" and that this "mission" was to be pursued in western Aleppo and Afrin as well. On the same day, the Turkish army put Afrin under fire for forty minutes. Additionally, armoured military vehicles were relocated to a nearby area.
- On 19 December 2017, the Turkish military used artillery against the villages Berceka Silêman, Basûr, Berfin, and Bedirxan in Afrin. As a result, clashes with the YPG occurred.