

2025

ANARCHIST
ANALYSIS

SYRIA AFTER ASSAD



Feb 17 - 24th

Shortly before March 1st, the date that was marked for the dissolution of the provisional government and the creation of a new one, the dates for the awaited “national dialog conference” had been fixed for February 25th. The preparation committee for the conference is mainly composed of HTS members loyal to al-Sharaa, including two women to make-up the obvious bias of such a committee, one of them from Turkey. All members are then Sunni Muslim, without any efforts to represent other ethnic and religious minorities in Syria such as Kurds, Druze, Christians or Shia muslims. As we mentioned before, such a conference will probably end up being a staged performance where to announce the dissolution of HTS, transferring their institutions and man-power into the a new centralized Syrian government. Such moves aims to legitimize their power grab as well as getting rid of the “terrorist” label that still hangs on them, tracing them back to their origins as a branch of al-Qaeda.

To make such a move more compelling, several senior figures of Hurras al-Din, the hardliners that stayed loyal to al-Qaeda when HTS started to act independently from it, had been target by coalition air-strikes in Idlib. This is probably the result of coordinated exchange of information between al-Sharaa provisional government and the US military apparatus. The newly proclaimed president of Syria is getting rid of his old comrades, specially of those that still to extremist to be accepted by western powers. With his help, intelligence operatives are getting their coordinates to American drones that do what they had been trained to do for decades: find, fix, finish. Don't get us wrong here, we don't complain about those theocratic fascists being blown up into pieces. We just point out how this is part of the power games of another theocratic fascist climbing up his way to presidency of the government.

In a recent article of Robin Yassim-Kassab, coauthor of the book “burning country” with Leila al-Shami, he wrote that Syria needs a strong society, not a strongman. Decades of megalomaniac dictatorship in Syria, with big statues and massive picture of Assad everywhere (first the father and later the son), contributed to promote a mentality where centralized hierarchy, represented by one strong-man, is seen as the only possible expression of national unity. The brutal years of war have been an extreme example of where this leads, with the regime loyalists putting in practice their slogan “Assad or we burn the country”. They did burn the country, but this did not stop the regime from collapsing.

On the other side of the Euphrates river, the 3 main institutions of the northeast Syria (SDF, SDC and the DAANES) announced an agreement to accept some of the conditions proposed by the provisional government in Damascus. The details of that meeting have not been shared on official channels, but it shows the disposition of joining the transitional process ongoing in Syria. This came as Turkish threats of a full invasion still hanging over the regions of the autonomous administration. As far as we know, this there is not yet any formal agreement with the provisional government of Syria. Such agreement is therefore a display of the will to prioritize negotiations and to avoid a continuation of the bloodshed.

March will therefore be a very intense month, The awaited “historical the message” of Abdullah Ocalan, promised by the delegation that visited him in Imrali prison, will probably be announced soon. 8 of March, working women's day, is also a very important date for the women's movement leading the revolutionary process. Newroz, the Kurdish new year celebrations, also take place at the end of March. For as, Anarchists in NES, it is also a very special month since is the month that 3 of our anarchist comrades fell şehid in defending this revolution. We honor them and we carry their memories in our hearts, continuing the struggle they gave their life for.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Feb 24th - Mar 9th

First of all, we want to share a self-criticism for not sharing our weekly update last week. We included some relevant events from past week in the present update. A combination of technical difficulties, shortcomings in coordination and other relevant works prevented us from curating a coherent update to share last week. We consider this task an important work to do. We value the trust you give us by following our channels, and we want to keep up with the commitments we agreed. Nevertheless, we are not professional journalists or analysts, and have limited capacities and resources. We are revolutionary anarchist militants keeping up with the duties we committed to: support, defend and expand the revolutionary developments achieved in northeastern Syria.

About the situation on the ground, as the recent escalation in Latakia region unfolds, the military forces of the transitional government are reacting as everyone expected them to do. The Salafist elements of HTS together with other Islamist militias of SNA are massacring Alawite people and inciting ethnic hate and revenge. Al-Sharaa's measured declarations to simulate control of the situation are just a performance. Nevertheless, his recent statements about conspiracies and plans to sow discord and instability in Syria, may have some foundations besides just diverting public attention. Russian elements have been negotiating with the transitional government, but they probably kept connections with what remains of the military of the ousted regime. The scale and coordination of the attacks may suggest some external support for the insurgents. The fast reaction of Russian army providing aid and humanitarian support to displaced Alawites is an indicator that they have clear interest to keep presence in the region, working to gain support from the local population. How much are they offering a solution to the problem they themselves created is a matter of speculation for now.

In any case, this escalation of tensions can lead to clashes even in other regions. Different forces in opposition the new government might find an opportunity to challenge their rule, pushing back to gain better positions in these moments of chaos. Also other Islamist groups may use this situation to incite hate and push for further escalation to advance their agendas. As we write these lines, we are following reports on attacks being repelled by security forces in Sheikh Maqsoud, the Kurdish neighborhood in the city of Aleppo.

In the geopolitical board, the "power vacuum" of Syria is clearly unleashing waves that will influence the region for decades to come. Turkey in the north and Israel in the south are trying to use this situation to expand their influence, entering in a race for hegemony in Middle east that is now being played in Syria. This creates an interesting contradiction for US, since Turkey being a NATO member will oblige them to defend Turkish forces in case of conflict with Israel. But we all know that in such a conflict US will align with Israel and not with Turkey, questioning the value of the whole NATO alliance. Such a situation still far away from taking place, but it is probably what Russia would like to see, and their presence in Syria is not over yet. How all those things will play out, especially now with a narcissitic clown in the White house, is still unknown.

But going back to the ground level, while those terrible massacres are happening on the Syrian coast and another escalation of Syrian civil war is looming over us, the celebrations of 8 of March brought the women of northeastern Syria out to the streets from Heseke to Raqqa, From Qamishlo to Deir Ezzor. Women's Protection Units (YPJ) held a military ceremony and reaffirmed its resolve to build democratic Syria with the commitment to the principle of "Woman, Life, Freedom". Women, the leading force behind revolution of northeastern Syria, are and will be in the forefront of unfolding events in Syria and elsewhere - including the resistance of Tishreen dam which, as we speak, holds strong and doesn't let Turkish army and their proxies pass to the other shore of the Euphrates.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Mar 10th - 16th

The recent agreement between Mazlum Abdi and Ahmed al-Shara, happening at the same time than the massacres against Alawite population, leaves a bitter taste. The agreement brings nothing new, nothing more than what was already discussed. It is the formalization on paper to reach common agreements for Syria. It takes a step to make sure that no national-scale decisions and talks are made without people of northeastern Syria. Still, it is hard to see the future of the revolution through the large scale moves of state-level diplomacy.

At the same time, we need to ask ourselves: what would we like to see? What is the alternative? What could be done in this situation? Is there any better way to proceed, something that aligns better with anarchists values and respects the will and the needs of the people of north-east Syria? Honestly, these are very difficult questions.

We need to reflect what all this means. What it means for the people here, wearied by war, with the Turkish threats of a full scale invasion still looming? What it means for the revolution, with the collapse of the Assad regime but with a new authoritarian government rising over the same structures of nation-state? And also what it means for us, revolutionary anarchists who committed to support and defend this revolution?

In comparison with everything around it and beyond, NE Syria is clearly the most exciting political proposal in the region. Can it survive the war, the lack of resources, the attacks from all sides, the cooptation. Can it avoid collapse and annihilation? Can people defend what they fought and died for, and live their lives in dignity? Time is desperately needed to ensure positive answers to these questions. And the moves we see in past weeks do buy the revolution some time. What we are trying to do here defies the logic of capitalist modernity, and this is not an easy thing to do. And as every revolution, whatever happens will bring lessons for the next ones to come.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Mar 17th - 23rd

As the spring arrives, the celebrations of Newroz light the fire of resistance. This is a time of hope for the Kurdish people. The message of Abdullah Öcalan sparked expectations for a peace process and a possible road map for a democratization of Turkey. This also echoes in Syria, with renewed negotiations between PYD and ENKS to make a joint Kurdish delegation to negotiate with Damascus. It seems that the years of denial of the Kurdish identity, of assimilation and occupation, may be reaching its end. The resistance of the Kurdish people against colonization, against the borders imposed by European colonizers in Middle East after the World war, against the assimilation and genocidal policies, seems to be growing ripe. But what does this mean at the end of the first quarter of the 21st century? The creation of a Kurdish state, dream of many Kurdish resistance movements from the last century, seems not possible in the current world order. In any case, the Abdullah Öcalan's proposal of Democratic Nation is also rejecting such path, deeply questioning the role of nation-states and their capacity to build a free life and a democratic society.

The negotiations with the provisional government of Damascus, when analyzed with an anarchist perspective, seem very discouraging. The new draft of the Syrian constitution is far away from the revolutionary dreams that brought us to Rojava. However, it is worth to not hurry with conclusions. Many political organizations criticized the proposed constitutional draft, with strong opposition from the institutions of the DAANES as well as from the Druze community. The current political agreements and positions will influence all involved actors. From all years of civil war in Syria it can be expected that hegemonic state forces will use all opportunities to create more strife and

chaos. It opens doors for them to step in, assert themselves as legitimate players and pursue their goals. The negotiations between SDF and the Provisional government can be considered with that reality in mind. Revolutionary Northeastern Syria asserts itself in all fields possible and shows itself as a legitimate and viable political actor. It takes the image of revolutionary system here far beyond the "allies who defeated ISIS", towards being seen as a model and a system to be implemented, or at least to be reckoned with. We also should distinguish political talks from ideological lines. ENKS-PYD agreement is a good example of that. This brings us to one of the lessons we as anarchists can find here. We observe that a revolutionary movement needs to have capacity of bringing various political actors to contribute to the liberatory changes. Skillful diplomacy of DAANES and SDF is a good example of this effort.

In the past we shared reflections on the challenges that HTS will face to assert itself as the new government of Syria. The recent wave of insurgency that shook Latakia may be the extreme example of that. The occupations of Turkey in the north and Israel in the south, the unrest in Deir Ezzor, the claims for decentralization by the Druze community in the south and the kurds in the north, are just examples of the challenges that the post-Assad Syria is facing. The DAANES is a proof of how a decentralized system in Syria is not only possible but necessary. Still, HTS will try to hold their grip on the newly captured central power in Damascus, navigating a dangerous balance of forces that can easily derail. If the diplomacy can't reach satisfactory solutions for all relevant actors, we know how easily (and how a fast) the tensions can escalate to new armed conflicts.

It is good to remember that the estimations of fighters of HTS before the offensive against the regime varied between 10.000 and 30.000 soldiers. At that time, the numbers of SNA were estimated between 30.000 and 80.000, while SDF is ranging between 100.000 and 120.000. In theory, all the main military forces in Syria agree that it is time for peace, to work together to rebuild Syria. To reach cohesive agreements means that all sides also need to make concessions. Assad is gone, and the future of Syria needs to be built on consensus and popular unity, including all the people in Syria and with the memory of all those who gave their life to make this day possible.

We also know that happy endings are just for movies. Life goes on and the struggle has to go on. We need to use the time we have to be ready for what will come tomorrow. We have a revolution to defend and we have a fight to win. We can't simply wait and expect that things will play out as we wish. We need to make sure that the achievements of the revolution and the lessons learned here help us in the next battles to come.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Mar 24th - 31st

Some thoughts, not really analysis

The celebrations of eid are an important reminder of the value of social bonds in this society, with kurdis and arab mothers and grandmothers spreading sweets and candies among kids on the streets. Every receiving guests and going to visiting their relatives and neighbors for three days. It also comes with the arrival of the spring, as well as the recent celebrations of newroz dancing around the fire. It also come together with the celebrations of Akito, the Assyrian new year, making a very lively days and cheerful days. News of agreements and peace talks combine good with the atmosphere of this festivity, combining well with hopes of peaceful times and the end of bloodshed in Syria.

For us it's also an important time to join the local rhythm of this society, to visit friends and neighbors and receive the guests that come to visit us, putting in practice the lessons of hospitality and cultural fluency we learned over the years living and taking part of this revolutionary society. And yes, it's true that there is a religious component in these celebrations, as Christmas does in christian countries, but we also learned to not focus on that aspect and to value these days for the human and social aspect they bring. Social relations are the key to sustain the networks of mutual aid that are foundational in our anarchist values, and every opportunity to strengthen these bonds of friendship and solidarity should be cherished and celebrated.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Apr 7th - Apr 13th

We started writing these updates four months ago in anticipation of the regime's downfall. Those were very eventful days and they brought with them a redistribution of forces in the region, heightened conflicts, uncertainty and hope. But, as is usually the case in the volatile world of fast information, the situation in Syria fades into the background amid other, sometimes more colourful and dramatic, world events. In this sense, working within the media landscape is always quite contradictory: stabilising the situation does not play into the hands of the main goal of the media - to draw attention to the problem. As a reader of these updates, this we're sure is not an unfamiliar dynamic.

And yet stabilisation is imaginary. Syria is still a bone of contention between Turkey and Israel, who each have their own interests and defend them in different ways, but with the same outcome: destruction of infrastructure and loss of life - but still with tacit or loud encouragement from Western countries. Northeast Syria has to balance on the thin rope of diplomacy to move forward with its revolutionary goals.

The 10 March agreements are constantly called into question by the contradictions that characterise the HTS government: yes, we are now talking about Afrin passing into the hands of the new Syrian government and even have a Kurdish representative in the governor's office. But what does this mean in the context of the composition of the new Syrian government, which is notorious for including representatives with Turkish citizenship or years of residence in Turkey?

When the hot phase of any physical conflict subsides, it's easy to lose sight of reality and become entangled in endless diplomatic intricacies. Yet life on the ground continues, and no situation is ever truly final. While it would be misleading to suggest that everything is just beginning, given that the groundwork was laid centuries ago, a new round of tensions is certainly on the horizon. Whether the next hotspot erupts between Turkey and Israel, the US and Iran, amid a further transformation within HTS, or from an entirely unforeseen threat remains uncertain. What is clear is that, sooner or later, we will find ourselves drawn back into the heart of conflict.

Beneath these recurring crises lie the long-term challenges of rival empires vying for influence over Syria and the persistent upheavals spawned by the crisis of capitalism. However, recognizing these complex truths is also an opportunity: by understanding the past and the systemic roots of our current challenges, we empower ourselves to work toward transformative change. Every era of hardship has spurred new movements and ideas and more importantly; an ability to see and find each other. Not by ignoring the systems of oppression but by linking arms to challenge it.

Rather than resigning to an inescapable cycle, let us choose to engage, dream, and collaborate on building a more just and liveable future. History shows that even in the darkest times the seeds of

life are sown. And while each generation has had their version of what felt like the end, our task now as always is to nurture them, together.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Apr 14th - 20th

Operations in Al Hawl camp highlight the global consequences of colonization in so-called Middle east and Asia. Emergence of modern radical Islamist movements is directly connected to military and political strategy of global state powers in recent decades.

ISIS is no exception. Its criticisms of capitalism and western imperialism came with a brutal program of rape and genocide in war-torn Syria and Iraq. There was not much else that could be done than defeating ISIS militarily, and SDF succeeded in that. However, military victory did not resolve the problems that gave birth to ISIS in the first place. In his Manifesto for Democratic Civilization, Abdullah Öcalan observed:

"Even if we could win multiple victories with armies as mighty as those of Alexander, it would most certainly not be the victory of freedom. Military victories cannot bring freedom; they bring slavery; they can only be valued when won in defense of self, friends, and comrades. On the contrary, I find defending myself against such victories as necessary as defending myself against power itself. If I had my own armies, I would consider defending myself against their victories as the greatest struggle."

We can see this reflection in the current situation of ISIS in Syria. Incredibly valuable and necessary military defeat of ISIS did not erase the ideas on which the Caliphate stood. Today, Al Hawl camp shows us the value of continued struggle in the social sphere of education, rehabilitation and reconciliation. The same reflection can bring us to think about the defense of the revolution in the current political turmoil of Syria and its surroundings: it is not the military capacity which is the greatest or most important strength of this revolution. Its ideas are that strength.

And still, war continues to loom over Syria. With US troops reducing their numbers and possibly withdrawing in the future, ISIS doubling down on underground activities, Israel and Turkey dividing spheres of influence, rising tensions in the overall region and a fragile pause in fighting in the Northeast of Syria, the search for a political solution and way forward can crash against many dead ends. Nevertheless, current agreements, meetings and other developments give the self-defense forces of the revolution a much-needed break. Another round of escalation might not be too far away.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Apr 21st - 27th

The complicated tangle of overlapping interests in Syria and the region are continuing to change, as various states and bodies seek to press their advantage after the fall of Assad. The new regime in Syria is seeking to consolidate its position, amid the contradictory demands of states near and far. Iran is trying to salvage some of their tattered influence in Syria and Lebanon, but are under great pressure from the US, who simultaneously make heavy demands and not-so-discreetly threaten war.

Israel is trying to prevent the emergence of a strong Syria, or the growth of Turkish influence. Turkey is trying to reach its fingers into every aspect of the newly emerging state.

The US is trying to mediate the conflicting interests of Turkey and Israel, aiming to avoid open conflict between them, while seeking to find an arrangement of the new Syria that suits them. The US seems to be supporting a large role for Turkey in the rebuilding of Syria, while trying to ease Israel's concerns about their perceived threats. This is reflected in the Americans' demands of the Syrian regime in exchange for sanctions relief, notably in the banning of all Palestinian factions in the country. While the new government sees this as an infringement on Syrian sovereignty, their arrest of Palestinian militia leaders suggests an amount of willingness to accommodate these demands.

In the face of all of this, al Sharaa is seeking new relations with many countries around the world, trying to get support from anyone who will give it. Their vision of sovereignty is heavily based on a strongly centralized model, and for all their claims that the new Syria will guarantee the rights of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or confession, we know that the strongest guarantees of the rights and existence of any community are their autonomy and capacity for self-defense. The presence of DAANES and SDF at the negotiation tables today gives proof to that truth, as it is only through their assertion through self-defense and self-organization that they forced other parties to acknowledge the peoples of North East Syria and engage with them.

Of course, it is a well known tactic of imperial powers to divide their targets, to use minorities in order to divide and weaken a country, making it susceptible to their influence and aggression. Various countries in the region see a partition of Syria to their benefit, and are doing what they can to that end. The proposals of SDF and the Kurdish Liberation Movement in NES represent an alternative to such divisive tactics of imperialists and aggressors.

A truly pluralistic and confederal Syria, wherein each people takes its place with its own colour in a confederal unity, offers a hopeful path. It can bring an end to the sectarian strife so often fueled and weaponized by those powers who see in Syria only pawns for their geopolitical games and resources to plunder. It remains to be seen if al Jolani's new regime will recognize the truth of this, or will sacrifice the Syrian peoples to foreign interests in order to secure his power.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

Apr 28th - May 4th

The clashes in Suweida and the attacks on druze regions, south of Damascus, are a trigger warning for all minorities in Syria. The recent massacres against Alawites are still very present for many, especially for those who oppose the power grab of al-Shara. Maybe because of that, the central government seems to be reacting much faster than they did in the coastal regions, with rapid deployment of security forces to prevent a spiral of violence going out of control.

Kurdish areas are closely following the events, knowing that if this can happen to the Alawites and the Druze, the Kurds may be next. These incidents may affect the negotiations about integration of SDF in the new Syrian army, because if the transitional government can't prevent attacks on minorities, autonomous means of self-defense are the only way to ensure security. The tensions are also to be noticed in Tishreen dam, where military presence is building up in both sides of the river. The Israeli attacks are using the incidents in Druze regions as an excuse to promote their agenda, destroying military infrastructure and justifying their armed operations in Syria. Turkey is among the strongest voices against the Israeli attacks, fueling tensions between the two major competing powers for influence in the region.

For someone with a hammer, everything looks like a nail. Syria has been drowning in war for over a decade, with military force being the dominant force that shaped the present. It is not easy to escape that spiral of violence, and even after the regime has fallen, demilitarization of a conflict is a very complicated process.

Looking at the rest of the world, at how many states are racing to increase their military budgets to unseen levels, it is more clear every day that we are moving globally towards war. This is not something we wanted to see, but we also have a responsibility to understand what is happening around us and react to it. We need to be ready for what is coming, and start working today to build the means of resistance that we will need tomorrow. When the war starts, it is often too late, and only those who are ready to face the challenges that arise can bring their proposals on the table.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

May 5th - 11th

The resistance in Tishreen declared victory over the attacks of Turkish proxies, concluding almost 4 months of civilian vigil. People from all territories of the DAANES, from Kobane to Deir Ezzor, joined this popular initiative to defend the dam and stop the enemy advance. The combination of military defense and civilian resistance is a clear example of how the revolutionary principles of this revolution are put in practice. It shows the will and determination of the people of North-East Syria, ready to fight to protect their land and defend the achievements of the revolution. It also shows the value of diversity of tactics, how different elements can combine and support each other if they share common revolutionary aims.

The appointment of Abu Hatem Shaqra as leader of the 86th division is a bold decision that will have serious implications. The Damascus government making such appointment is an attempt to exercise power and demonstrate authority over North-East Syria, questioning SDF and the inhabitants of North eastern Syria. It is a direct and conscious provocation from a newly born authoritarian regime, that will for sure undermine the already challenging negotiation for integration of SDF in the new Syrian army. Abu Hatem Shaqra's connection to the Turkish secret services is beyond question: he was the commander of a Turkish backed group (Ahrar al-Sharqiya) and joined several meetings organized by the MIT during the Afrin war. For Turkey, positioning SNA commanders like Abu Hatem Shaqra or Fahim Issa (nominated at the head of the ministry of defense of Syria a month ago) in the higher ranks of the new Syrian Army is a way to ensure influence and to guarantee the alignment of the new Syrian army with Turkish interests. His appointment also questions the US, which has his name on a terrorist list and already made statements condemning such decision.

The visit of al-Sharaa in France may seem a contradictory event, specially when UN and many French politicians opposed such a visit. The French president made special permission for him, allowing the head of the transitional government to visit Europe for the first time. For al-Sharaa, this trip is another step towards legitimacy, probably hoping that other European states will follow the French example, also gathering support for the EU to lift economic sanctions on Syria. The French president emphasized their wish for the Syrian transitional government to strengthen collaboration with SDF, knowing that many international ISIS fighters in NES prisons have French nationality. Discussions about the new Syrian government taking control of ISIS prisons, as Turkey already proposed, necessarily rings the alarms for many countries. Intelligence services all over the world are worried about the future of those experienced salafist militants, especially if the current Islamist government takes control of those prisons. Even if we can't be sure about it, this was probably one of the main reasons that motivated French state to invite al-Sharaa.

News about the recent congress of PKK are also raising questions about what implications will it have not only for Syria, but for all parts of Kurdistan. As for now not much information is available on what agreements were reached in the congress, but it is expected that official statements will soon be published.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

May 12th - 19th

For more than six and a half months we have been reporting about the ongoing situation on Syria, with special focus on the development of the revolutionary process of north-East Syria. The region has been experiencing deep political changes and transformations, that we try to analyze combining the information that gets published with our experiences and sources on the ground.

We reached a point where this task is getting heavier for us, not being able to fully grasp the meaning of the unfolding events. In these circumstances, we consider it appropriate to re-evaluate our tasks and our role as anarchists in north-east Syria. We want to provide accurate evaluations, in line with our political perspectives and coherent with the principles of critical solidarity that characterize our vision of internationalism.

The implications of what we are witnessing stretches beyond what we expected. We need to be careful about what we share with you all, and we will need some time to reflect what is happening in the new Syria that is being made, what implications does it have for Kurdistan and for Middle East and how this will affect the rest of the world. Overall, we need to reflect what lessons we, as well as other revolutionary movements, can learn from this situation.

Revolutionary greetings ♥

Oct 13th - 19th

The new phase of withdrawing PKK fighters from Turkey is the next step in the new strategy of the Apoist movement in the process of 'Peace and Democratic Society.' The direction taken at the beginning of this year is continuing. We cannot call this a surprise. According to the 'Manifesto of Peace and Democratic Society,' the Kurd's struggle for recognition of their existence as a people has succeeded, and it is time to take the next step — the struggle for freedom. This refers not only to the freedom of the Kurdish people, but to universal freedom, because A. Öcalan and Apoist movement understand that the freedom of only one group of people in a limited territory is not a solution to the problem. The process of disarming the PKK and democratically integrating the regions of Kurdistan is, according to the manifesto, the path to this universal freedom, which, as Öcalan put it, cannot be achieved at gunpoint. The PKK has indeed achieved its stated goal, and the Marxist-Leninist party form no longer fits the new paradigm and is only a hindrance to bringing the structures into line with the ideology.

What does this mean for North-East Syria? Disarmament does not apply to the SDF, and armed defense continues. The region is still under threat from several sides, and autonomy must be defended. Despite hopes for further peace processes, the Apoist movement does not deny the need for armed self-defense, so the revolutionary project of Rojava will not be left defenseless. The SDF maintains its positions on the ground, and talk of disarming the forces has provoked a fairly unequivocal reaction in NE Syria, because Turkey has not yet taken any steps towards a peaceful resolution of this military conflict, and the situation in Syria remains unstable.

We are at a very important point: the fifty-year history of the PKK is coming to an end. This shows us that revolution and revolutionary movements are not something that can take only one form. But

despite all these changes and flexibility in the choice of methods, the revolutionary movement here does not lose its direction and values. Freedom and equality are still the main guiding principles of the struggle.

Revolutionary greetings ♥

Oct 20th - 26th

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Revolutionary greetings ♥

Oct 27th - Nov 2nd

November 1st is the International Day of Solidarity with Kobane. The battle for Kobane is one of the most important episodes in the history of north-eastern Syria, which remains in people's hearts as a great victory that drove ISIS out of the region and advanced the revolution. This year, the defense of the Tishreen Dam became a similarly symbolic event. The slogan 'No pasaran!' became a reality and a victory cry.

Such events bring a lot of inspiration and unity. Seeing this struggle, participating in it, immersing oneself in the history and spirit of the people, one can feel the real power of the popular revolution: it is not in every part of the world that people can find such political self-awareness and understanding of their own agency. And it is at moments like these that it becomes especially clear what we are fighting for.

Last winter brought many changes, new opportunities and dangers. Without the instability that followed the fall of the regime, there would have been no Turkish attack on Tishreen, no withdrawal

of Assad's army from the SDF territories, and many other things that we have written about throughout this year. From the outset, the new government of Jolani has been trying to play up the image of 'soft Islamism,' presenting it to the West as an alternative for the Middle East that fits in with European standards. Jolani himself continues to pursue the course he set from the start of obtaining opportunities to expand and maintain power in exchange for his former colleagues in the Al-Nusra Front, who have become inconvenient and too radical. Recall that the HTS campaign began with the extradition of some militants in Idlib to the United States. The same can be seen today in the show trials of militants who participated in the massacre in Latakia, which are, in essence, a parody of justice.

This picture is well complemented by ongoing Jolani's attempts to create a political party. The Syrian government now needs not only to maintain the military junta's power, but also to acquire a solid political foundation if it wants to remain at the helm of the state for a longer time. With the support of Western countries, which it is working hard to obtain, this does not seem impossible. However, north-eastern Syria is an obstacle to the development of such a scenario. The existence of such an alternative within the country, where people can be politically conscious and are familiar with a non-state system. The provocations taking place in the Deir ez-Zor and Tishreen areas require great caution on the part of the SDF, because any wrong move now could be used as a reason to escalate the conflict.

In the coming weeks and months, we still face serious challenges. The slogan 'No pasaran!' expresses the ideological line of self-defense and points to the battles that might have to be fought. Be as it may, there is a wealth of experience in revolution and defense, and not only here. Throughout Syria, the legacy of hundreds of thousands who rose up against the previous regime is still alive, and it will certainly play a role in the new Syria that is taking shape before our very eyes.

Revolutionary greetings ♥

Nov 10th - 16th

Syria is joining the coalition, which since the active war with ISIS has included some of the world's hegemonic forces: the United States and a number of European countries led by France. We see this as another step by Jolani towards creating a strong political foundation to remain in power. We have already written that the new Syrian government has begun work in the political sphere, creating a political party. They understand well that the military junta's lifespan is not long and that they need to become competitive in this field and gain the support of the population, not just former or current jihadists. The extent to which this is successful can be seen in the reaction of the Syrian people to the increase in electricity tariffs.

Economic issues are critically important here. The economic situation in Syria, including the north-eastern autonomous region, is not improving significantly even after the easing of sanctions. Poverty is one of the most serious problems, and the new government is exacerbating the situation by increasing taxes and tariffs. How successful it will be in securing the support that Jolani so desperately needs in such a situation is a very big question.

For almost a year after the seizure of power, the Syrian people have been protesting against various aspects of the new regime. The consequences of such expressions of dissent often end in massacres, as was the case in Latakia and Suwayda. Nevertheless, the example of north-eastern Syria is still a possible alternative which, in contrast to the dictatorial but relatively stable regime of Assad and then the jihadist chaos, presents itself as the best solution for the regions.

While advocating for the integrity of the Syrian nation-state, Jolani was unable to implement this vision, and Syria is now divided into four regions, in three of which the new government is not accepted by the majority of the population. Whether this is a sign of subsequent federalisation and the strengthening of autonomy in other areas of Syria is an important question.

Turning specifically to north-eastern Syria, we can say that the Syrian regime is still not engaging in open confrontation. At the moment, there are minor provocations and blockades of logistics routes, i.e. attempts to exert economic pressure. After the fall of the Assad regime, new opportunities certainly opened up, but North-East Syria was not and has not become so dependent on Damascus in this regard. This covert economic blockade is noticeable but does not cause major problems because, after more than a decade of revolution, the region has gained some economic stability and immunity to such changes.

There is very little time left until the end of 2025. These weeks may reveal the results of this turbulent year's diplomacy and hint at possible future events in the coming winter. Stay tuned and follow the developments of the revolution with us.

Revolutionary greetings ♥

Nov 17th - 23rd

One of the drone operators fighting for the Syrian government was recorded with an ISIS patch on his plate carrier. SDF released the statement pointing out the danger of involving those fighters in government forces, shedding light on the legitimization of jihadist fighters by the state military apparatus. The credibility and veracity of these claims are contested by some US media, who argue that some fighters who are not connected to ISIS also sometimes wear the black and white patch. While we don't see much point in debating those media, we would like to share perspective on the history of disinformation politics led by the US. Historically, the american imperialist state has demonstrated its capacity to fabricate "truth" from thin air to oppose revolutionary movements around the world.

In "Understanding Power," Noam Chomsky discusses the example of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, detailing the extensive campaign led by US entities to discredit the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Mainstream media outlets propagated misleading information about the FSLN's governance, questioned the political rights of opposition groups and the existence of press freedoms, even denied that legitimate elections had occurred. The guerillas defending Nicaragua against US proxies - the Contras - were branded "Extremists Out of Control" and accused of committing atrocities.

This strategic disinformation was aimed at justifying the US-backed Contras' so-called "war for democracy" portraying them as defenders against a supposed communist threat.

Of course, none of those allegations were true; the states of Latin America described by the american press at the time as "democratic", states like El Salvador and

Guatemala, were in fact authoritarian regimes backed by the US to suppress popular revolutionary movements. As Chomsky explained in his book: "In El Salvador and Guatemala, the governments are run by the military for the benefit of the local oligarchies - the landowners, rich businessmen, and rising professionals - and those people are tied up with the United States, so therefore those countries are 'democracies.' It doesn't matter if they blow up the independent press, kill off the political opposition, slaughter tens of thousands of people, and never run anything remotely like a free election, all of that is totally irrelevant. They're 'democracies,' because the right people are running them; if the right people aren't running them, then they're not 'democracies.'"

US politics may have evolved and changed since the times of the Sandinistas, but the essence of their strategy remains the same: elevating an authoritarian ruler while creating a narrative that positions him as a "champion of democracy." The many civilians massacred by Jolani's forces in Latakia and Suweida, the number of New Syrian Army fighters who cut their teeth in jihadist groups including ISIS, and the consequences of the Syrian Transitional Government's policies on the Syrian people are inconsequential. The only thing holding significance here is the alignment of the Syrian government with US interests; only then will the facade of "democracy" be stamped onto their Islamist regime.

It is in this context that the revolution in NES decided to take the path of political struggle, aiming for unity in Syria and calling for an end to the bloodshed. While this proves to be a long and difficult path, it is based on the belief that another reality, free from authoritarian regimes supported by the imperialist powers of the world, is possible. No guarantees offered by those states could ever answer the need of the revolution to defend itself.

Long live the revolution!

Nov 24th - 30th

The 10 March deadline for the ceasefire is drawing ever closer, but the stalled negotiations do not inspire confidence that the tensions between the New Syrian Government and the Autonomous Administration of the Syrian Democratic Forces will be resolved through diplomatic means. The people are protesting, the DAANES consequentially rejects the idea of a unified Arab Syria proposed by Jolani, and the government itself is not ready for the ideas of federalisation and coexistence of peoples and cultures on the basis of equality and women's liberation.

The hegemonic force's strategy for peaceful resolution of the 'Kurdish problem' is clearly ineffective in Syria. The peace talks that began in early 2025 may have seemed naive and untrustworthy, but they gave the SDF enough time to analyse the situation and plan their steps, and they significantly reduced Jolani's ability to act. The Syrian government has been backed into a corner: it must behave appropriately in order not to lose the recognition of the world's leading powers. The global neoliberal system dictates its own rules, according to which open support for radical jihadism is unacceptable, which significantly limits Jolani's options, leaving him with only minor armed provocations against the SDF and vague statements. Meanwhile these peoples in Syria who currently don't have the tools for independent self-defense, face brutal attacks of government fighters. Ongoing lack of autonomy and self-defense for Druze and Alawite peoples leads to their systematic murder.

Against this backdrop, the northwest appears to be a much more stable region of Syria than any other. Of course, the situation here is also diverse, but in general, the Autonomous Administration and other self-governing bodies manage to ensure conditions for the continuation of revolutionary changes, despite constant military tension, threats of invasion from Turkey, the Syrian government and ISIS, and economic difficulties.

And, of course, we cannot fail to mention an important date this week — 27 November, the day the PKK was founded. All year long, history has been unfolding before our eyes: the dissolution of the party that made the revolution in North-East Syria possible, the adjustment of Öcalan's paradigm, the guerrillas' exit from the mountains of North Kurdistan. Here we would like to note how the ability to critically assess reality and change can help in the realisation of a revolutionary project. The history of the PKK is long and has its dark pages, but as anarchists, we cannot help but respect this ability to acknowledge mistakes, to shift from the Marxist-Leninist paradigm towards

libertarian socialism and democratic confederalism, and to understand the party as a tool for achieving revolutionary change, rather than an end in itself.

On this day, celebrations were held throughout north-eastern Syria. For the people here, the PKK is not just an organization, it is a symbol of liberation and unity among peoples. With the dissolution of the PKK, the banner of freedom is finally passing from the party that became a symbol into the hands of a huge number of revolutionaries in this region and around the world.

Revolutionary greetings! ♥

8/12/2025

A year after Assad

For a year now, we have been publishing regular reports on the situation in Syria and our assessment of it. Even when you are in the region, it is often difficult to untangle the web of events unfolding there — a year ago, we called it 4D chess. And that is still how it feels today: Syria is the object of interest for many countries of various stripes, each of which is trying to grab its piece of influence, taking advantage of the turbulent situation caused by the fall of Assad's dictatorial regime.

The balance of power in the region shifted rapidly, with Russia and Iran's influence virtually disappearing immediately after Damascus was captured by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham militants. Now that Syria is ruled by former Al-Nusra militants led by Jolani, the United States has become much more involved in all matters of the state. This is particularly evident when it comes to negotiations: America has taken on the role of 'facilitator' in the dialogue between Damascus and north-eastern Syria. Turkey was initially at the center of events, sponsoring the march on Damascus and, taking advantage of the opportunity, directing SNA attacks on the autonomous region.

Syria under Jolani has already suffered enormous losses. Thousands of civilians killed in massacres involving government forces, first on the coast in Latakia and then in the south in Suwayda, were not victims of circumstances, but of the consistent policy of fundamentalists. The new regime did not keep us waiting; it showed its true colors at the very beginning of its formation, but stubbornly continues to publicly adhere to the image of 'moderate Islam' that sells well in Western countries.

For north-eastern Syria and the Kurdish liberation movement, this year was historic in its own way. The main event was the dissolution of the PKK, which was accompanied by the withdrawal of guerrillas from the mountains of Bakur. The disarmament ceremony — literally the destruction of weapons — evoked many emotions. It became a symbol of the conclusion of an entire era of revolutionary struggle, not only for Kurdistan but for the whole world. After the announcement of the dissolution, we took a break from publishing analyses and focused directly on the events in order to better understand the situation and avoid jumping to conclusions. This turned out to be for the best: we had the opportunity to study the ideological and strategic aspects of this decision in greater depth and to truly understand the position of the Kurdish liberation movement on these issues, rather than simply broadcasting our assumptions.

Another important topic this year was the negotiations with the new Syrian government and the so-called integration of the SDF into the state's armed forces. Nobody fully understands how this will work in practice, but the strategic component of this decision is clear. The democratic integration that the Apoist movement talks about is one of the programmatic steps proposed by Abdullah Öcalan in his 'Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society.' In this sense, the SDF is quite consistently following the path it has set out. Such integration does not imply assimilation — autonomy remains autonomy, revolution remains revolution — but it can also provide more opportunities to spread the ideas of democratic confederalism beyond the borders of north-east Syria, and the region itself can overcome the blockade under which it has been since the beginning of the revolution. This is also ideologically consistent for the Apoists: a revolution cannot be built in isolation, freedom on a separate piece of land is not freedom. Everyone must be free.

For now, it does not appear that the agreements reached on 10 March will end with a return to the previous level of military tension, but people here are prepared for any developments. One thing is clear: sooner or later, war will break out again in this region if no other solutions for the coexistence of peoples and states are found. Democratic autonomy has an answer to these questions. Only time will tell how interested the states will be in resolving problems in a way that is goes against state logic.

We are still writing about events in Syria from the ground. For us, this is not only an interesting experiment, a slice of history that can help people outside these territories to better understand what is happening and see events from a different perspective. For us it is a struggle full of contradictions and problems. On every step of this path we face many questions and doubts. Revolution is never perfect. Nevertheless, we decided to be part of it and accept all its risks, challenges and consequences. Thank you for staying with us!

Warmest revolutionary greetings! ♥

**From your anarchist
comrades in NES**

