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Remembering *Srebrenica, Vukovar, Rwanda, Halabja, Shengal...*? Probably we never forgave ourselves for that. If we do not want a repeat in *Kobanê*, we must act now.

Is it not our responsibility to support the Kurdish resistance in *Kobanê*?

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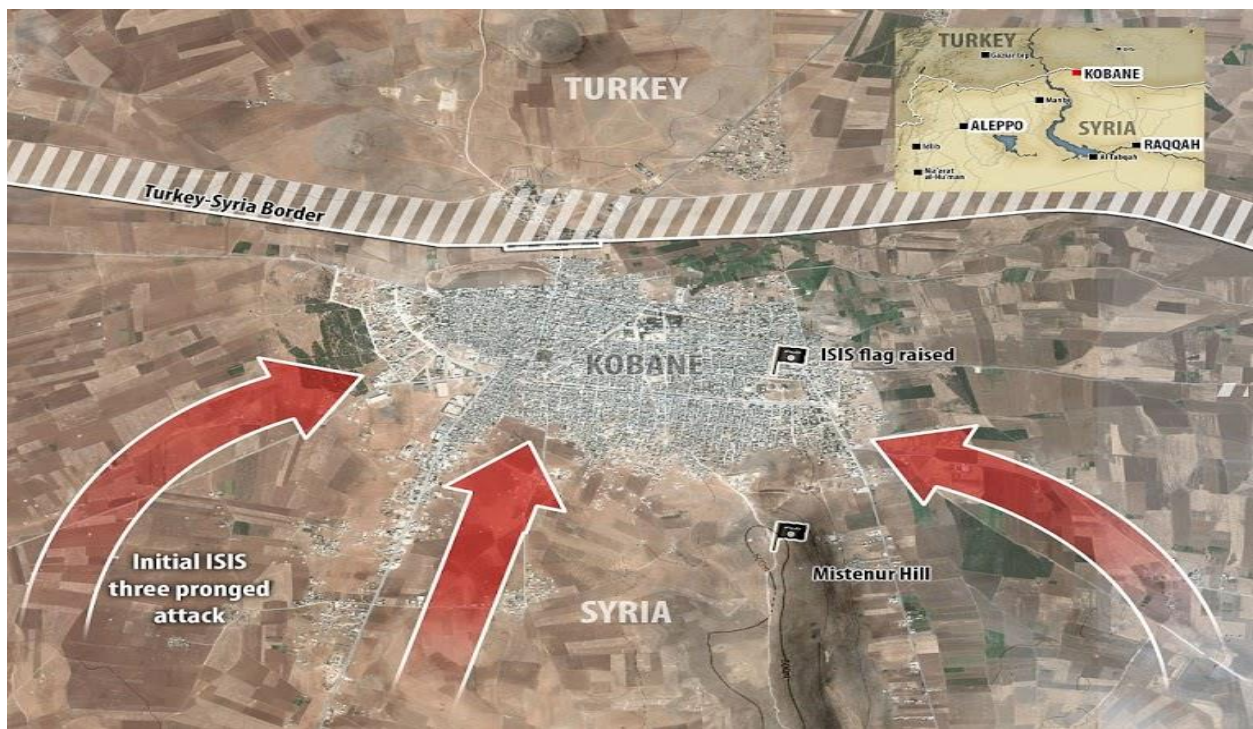
1. Introduction

In this dossier we wish to share with you important information about the ongoing war in Western Kurdistan (Rojava) Syria. As you will gather from this information there is a great war happening in the Middle East and especially throughout Kurdistan. The report also shows that the terrorists of ISIS are carrying out a whole scale massacre and an act of genocide against the Kurdish people in Kobanê canton in Rojava. The current attack by ISIS that started on 15 September 2014 against *Kobanê-Canton*, is in cooperation with Turkish state. Kurds are engaged in a legitimate war of self-defense to put an end to this dirty war against humanity. They are fighting ISIS with limited arms and military technology and only have their willpower and the support of the people. The tragedy is that Kurds have been left alone in this war which threatens all of humanity. Despite this the Kurds are resolute in resisting.

2. Kobanê – a city under siege and why?

The Kurdish region of *Kobanê* has been besieged for the last year by ISIS terrorists from three sides and from the Turkish border to the north. Since 15 September 2014 *Kobanê* has been under brutal attacks by large ISIS forces with heavy artillery and tanks. YPG and YPJ (*Peoples Defence Units/Women's Defence Units*) units have resisted for close to four weeks, despite being outgunned and cut off. For the YPG and YPJ it has been an existential struggle to keep control over one of their three non-contiguous enclaves in northern Syria and defend the civilian population from indiscriminate and hateful attacks by ISIS.

Kobanê region is one of three non-contiguous Kurdish enclaves in Rojava (*Kurdish regions of Syria*). Kurds in Rojava have together with other ethnic and religious group in the regions established their own cantonal administration in *Afrin*, *Kobanê* and *Cizire*.



Kobanê's autonomy was declared in November 2013 under a democratic constitution with the participation of all religious and ethnic groups. ***The creation of grassroots-democratic self-governance structures in Rojava pose a democratic alternative for the entire Middle East, beyond nationalist, religious fundamentalist and patriarchal. This Democratic-Model in Rojava*** is a thorn in the side of terror groups such as Al Qaeda, Jubhat al Nusra, and ISIS, as well as to regional forces. ISIS is attacking *Kobanê* because of these achievements in West Kurdistan (Rojava).

During the last four weeks, the situation in the region has only deteriorated. ISIS forces have broadcasted statements on how they will massacre and kill Kurds when they seize the city, referring to them as “*infidels*”, “*secular*” and “*non-believers*”. Furthermore, the statements say that they have promised to rename the city ‘*Ayn Al-Islam*’ and erase every sign of its past history and culture. *Kobanê* is a fertile agricultural area in the ancient region of “*Upper Mesopotamia*”, known for its traditional and cultural heritage in 400 villages in the areas surrounding the city. Kurds living in the countryside of *Kobanê* have been forced from their homes and more than 370 villages have been ethnically cleansed of their Kurdish population.

ISIS is advancing into the city of *Kobanê* and heavy street fighting is currently ongoing between the YPG/YPJ and the terrorists of ISIS. ***There are still thousands of civilians inside the city and they are under threat of imminent massacre by ISIS***, as the group is trying to take control of the only remaining crossing-point between *Kobanê* and Turkey.

- *The international coalition forces have conducted airstrikes in Kobanê the last weeks to halt the ISIS attacks. The airstrikes must, however, be coordinated with local YPG forces on the ground that are fighting ISIS street by street.*
- *There is also a dire need for opening a supply corridor to Kobanê from Turkey, to break the siege and supply the city logistically and medically. ISIS has continued to reinforce its frontlines around Kobanê with new fighters, ammunition and heavy weapons.*
- *The world must act now to support the resistance in Kobanê before a new massacre against the Kurdish people is committed.*
- *The canton administrations in Syria should be recognized in the same way as the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq. The resistance of the YPG/YPJ should be supported.*
- *The measures taken in Iraq against ISIS should also be implemented in Syria.*
- *Urgent humanitarian aid should be given to the people who are fleeing from ISIS atrocities.*

3. A short balance sheet on the attack of ISIS in *Kobanê* since 15 September

When the ISIS attack on Kobanê started on 15th September, the regional powers as well as Turkey and other backers of IS expected another *Sinjar* or *Mosul* and hoped that the city would fall within hours or days. However, the heroic resistance of the YPG and YPJ fighters of *Kobanê*, with limited resources and old weapons, have fought these terrorist for the last 30 days without surrender or any hesitancy. The YPJ women fighters especially have attracted global attention for fighting shoulder to shoulder with men. The morale and fighting skills of the YPG/YPJ have boosted the morale of Kurds all over Kurdistan and across the world. The name of Kobanê and its fighters is on the tongues of all Kurds as well as the world these days.

3.1 ISIS concentrated all its forces against *Kobanê*

ISIS has stopped its attacks in other regions of Syria and concentrated all of its forces against *Kobanê*. IS is attacking *Kobanê* with forces they have gathered from Iraq, *Al Raqqa*, *Tel Hems*, *Manbej*, *Jarabulus*, *Deir al-Zor*, *Tel Abyad* and other Syrian areas. After the YPG/YPJ starts with a new offensive IS terrorists are flooding from *Tel Abyad* and *Jarabulus* areas and bringing more heavy weaponry and ammunition that aims to take over *Kobanê* city. Next to the heavy weapons, tanks and artillery, ISIS is using more and more car bombs.

During the first days of the clashes the YPG/YPJ were taking preventative measures against the threat of genocide by evacuating villages for the safety of the civilians. Step by step ISIS was attacking Kurdish villages in the East, West and South side of *Kobanê*. The very heavy clashes irrupted in villages West of *Kobanê*: *Zerik*, *Gire Zagros*, *Jib Alferec*, *Derbazin*, *Boraz*, *Degirmen*, *Ewene* and *Qilhayde*; East of *Kobanê*: *Korik*, *Metini*, *Idaniye*, *Bekhdik*, *Qilqilik* and *Ebu Sirre* and South of *Kobanê*: *Qerarishik*, *Bokhaze*, *Berkhbatan*, *Torman*, *Qamche*, *Kunafar*, *Zerik*, *Ochkardesh*, *Chelebiye*, *Piling*, *Kharbistan*, *Goraniye*, *M.khabur*.



(Source: BBC)

3.2 Turkish state was supplying munitions to ISIS by train

The Turkish state is directly involved in the war by supplying munitions and logistic 'assistance' to ISIS by train. Local sources in *Girê Spî (Tel-Abyad)* ensured that consignments had been delivered by train on the line between Turkish Kurdistan and Syrian Kurdistan to a military base used by the gangs opposite the village of *Silîb Qeran*.



4. *Kobanê*'s resistance becomes a national resistance

Millions of Kurds in North Kurdistan (Turkey) and in Europe have supported the heroic resistance of *Kobanê*. Even thousands of the democratic forces, groups and parties in the respective countries did also participate in the demonstrations in solidarity with **the resistance in *Kobanê* and the YPG/YPJ fighters**. It was followed by protests, demonstrations, rallies in South and East Kurdistan.

4.1 Mass demonstration in Europe

London; Hundreds of Kurdish people have organised a demo at the Heathrow airport in protest at the travel of people freely to join to IS in Syria and Iraq via Turkey. The demo, which started at the 2.nd Terminal of the airport, aimed to halt the flights to Turkey.

Germany; Rallies and demos in many cities across Germany continue. While people marched to Turkish embassies, the sit-down action continues. Kurdish people in almost all German cities have marched to the USA embassy following meetings at the regional parliaments. Gathering in front of the *Federal Parliament, American, Russian and French embassies*, the protestors demanded urgent action primarily by *Germany* and the *European Union*.

In not only England and Germany, in all other European countries like *Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, France, Italy, Belgium, Netherland, Switzerland, Balkan states, Austria*. Even in *Russia, India, Afghanistan, South-Africa, US* and in many cities in *South-America*, Kurds and Kurdish friends went on the street to support the *Kobanê* resistance against ISIS.



4.2 Kurdistan Region/Iraqi Kurdistan

In the second week of the *Kobanê* resistance a widely organized hunger strike was held in *Sulaymaniyah*. On two occasions big marches were held in *Sulaymaniyah*.

On 6 October 35 Kurdish, Assyrian, Armenian and Turkmen political parties founded a campaign to urge the Kurdish government to support *Kobanê*.

On 8th of October a hunger strike was started in front of the Kurdish Parliament in *Erbil*. A solidarity march with *Kobanê* took place on 9 October, organised by 35 *Kurdish, Assyrian, Armenian, Turkmen* political parties in *Erbil*.

The Federal Kurdistan Regional Parliament has condemned on 12 October the violent treatment meted out to protesters in Turkey involved in solidarity actions with *Kobanê* and called on the Turkish authorities to listen to the demands of the protesters.

Tens of thousands of people in *Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Dokan, Kelar, Halabja, Kirkuk, Ranya, Germiyan* held rallies for *Kobanê*.

4.3 East Kurdistan/Iran

In East Kurdistan the silence was broken. Despite the danger of the Iranian regime thousands of Kurds took to the streets and shouted slogans in favour of the YPG and YPJ. It is known that political involvement or activity by Kurds in Iran can be punished with the death penalty. Despite this threat, the Kurds stood by *Kobanê*. In Kurdish cities like *Mahabad*, *Urmiye*, *Sine*, *Ciwanroyê*, *Bokan*, *Kirmanşah*, *Merîwan*, *Pîranşar*, *Serdeşt*, *Baneh*, *Saqiz*, *Paweh*, *Tebriz* as well as the Iranian capital *Tehran* thousands of people shouted for *Kobanê*'s victory and condemn ISIS.



In Tehran a few hundred Kurds protested at the international inaction in front of the UN Building. Hundreds of Kurdish students held a protest march near the *Tebriz University*. After the protests and rallies many of the people were arrested.

4.4 North Kurdistan/Turkey

Millions of Kurds in Turkey protest against ISIS attacks in *Kobanê*. But the Turkish government policies attack those protestors with their paramilitary forces. The Turkish police forces shouting "*Long Live ISIS*".

The Turkish Interior Minister *Efkan Ala* has held a press conference and announced the balance sheet of protest actions across Turkey since 6 October, which have been held in solidarity with the *Kobanê* resistance and in protest at the close relations of the AKP government with ISIS.

Ala said 33 people had lost their lives, and 351 others were injured. While *Ala* admitted that 35 provinces have been impacted by the actions, he called the protestors "*a marginal group*".



4.4.1 The balance sheet after the attack from Turkish police forces:

| | <u>VICTIM</u> | <u>CAUSE OF DEATH</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>PLACE</u> |
|----|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 | Hakan Buksur (25) | Tear gas bomb from the police | 7th October | Muş/Varto |
| 2 | Hamdi Caner (55) | Gun fire from the police | 7th October | Van |
| 3 | Kerem Karaaslan (22) | Gun fire from paramilitarian forces | 7th October | Mardin |
| 4 | Sinan Toprak (16) | Gun fire from paramilitarian forces | 7th October | Mardin |
| 5 | Bilal Gezer (29) | Gun fire from paramilitarian forces | 7th October | Mardin |
| 6 | Yusuf Çelik (17) | Gun fire from village guards of AKP | 7th October | Siirt |
| 7 | Mehdi Erdoğan (35) | Gun fire from village guards of AKP | 7th October | Siirt |
| 8 | Mahsum Çoban (21) | Gun fire from paramilitarian forces | 7th-8th October | Diyarbakır |
| 9 | Emrah Demir (23) | Gun fire from paramilitarian forces | 7th October | Batman |
| 10 | Eshan Akdoğan | Gun fire from unknown | 7th-8th October | Mardin |
| 11 | Davut Nas (19) | Gun fire from the police | 8th October | Siirt |
| 12 | Kamil Tas (28) | Gun fire from unknown | 8th-9th October | Siirt |
| 13 | Ahmet Albay (65) | Gun fire from ISIS | 8th October | Adana |
| 14 | Necmettin Çelik (45) | Gun fire from village guards of AKP | 9th October | Siirt |
| 15 | Abdülkerim Seyhan (27) | Gun fire from Turkish soldiers | 9th October | Mardin |
| 16 | Beşir Remezan Arif (8) | Gun fire from Turkish soldiers | 9th October | Nusaybin |
| 17 | Yunus Aktaş | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Van |
| 18 | Erhan Şenyuza | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |
| 19 | Ali Bozan | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |

| | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|------------|
| 20 | Yunus Bulut | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |
| 21 | Murat Karaca | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |
| 22 | Necmettin Demir | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |
| 23 | Kendal Serhat | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Bingöl |
| 24 | Sülayman Balcı (15) | Attack from rasist islamists | 9th October | Gaziantep |
| 25 | Sevgi Alıcı (16) | Attack from rasist islamists | 9th October | Gaziantep |
| 26 | Ömer Uçeker (27) | Attack from rasist islamists | 9th October | Gaziantep |
| 27 | "name still unknown" | Attack from rasist islamists | 9th October 9th - 10th | Gaziantep |
| 28 | Murat Dağ | Gun fire from the police | October 9th - 10th | Diyarbakır |
| 29 | Mert Değirmenci (18) | Attack from rasist islamists Attack from rasist islamists | October 9th - 10th | İstanbul |
| 30 | Mesut Menekşe (42) | - tear gas | October | Diyarbakır |
| 31 | Sahan Akdoğan (27) | Attack from rasist islamists | 9th October | Gaziantep |
| 32 | Uğur Özbay (19) | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Diyarbakır |
| 33 | Baver Şeyhanlıoğulları (18) | Gun fire from the police | 9th October | Diyarbakır |

5. Statement of UN Special Envoy



UN Special Envoy for Syria, *Staffan de Mistura*, called on the international community and Turkey in Geneva on 10 October 2014 to take decisive action to protect civilians and prevent the city from falling under ISIS control. *De Mistura* compared the situation in *Kobanê* to the Siege of *Srebrenica* and said:

“You remember Srebrenica? We do. We never forgot. And probably we never forgave ourselves for that. I was in the area. I was not in Srebrenica but I belonged to the generation of UN secretariat staff who felt terrible when they realized they were focusing on Dubrovnik, on Sarajevo, and Srebrenica fell. You remember Vukovar, you remember Rwanda. We have been telling ourselves, based on the principles that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has been more and more emphasising, i.e. Human Rights Up Front, that when there is an imminent threat to civilians we cannot, we should not be silent. There is a lot of political reasons, strategic reasons that may indicate that it is difficult to do something about it. But the Secretary-General has clearly made a statement saying anyone who can do anything should be. Please take action to protect the civilians, in this case of Kobanê –Ayn al-Arab. Do we have an international scenario to justify any type of action? Well resolution 2170 speaks very clearly. Everyone who can should be doing what he can in order to control and hopefully stop this atrocious terrorist movement, especially when they are clearly indicating where they are going. There is humanitarian law. There is Srebrenica. There are the images that we don't want to see, we cannot see, and I hope you will not be seeing of people beheaded, of the defenders and civilians. This should in theory produce enough traction.”

UNSG *Ban Ki Moon* and the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights have also expressed grave concerns for the threat of massacres against Kurds in *Kobanê*.

6. Statement of EU



"We are deeply concerned by the security and humanitarian situation in Kobanê and the rest of the Syrian Kurdish self-proclaimed autonomous region after three weeks of siege and fierce fighting against ISIL. The people of Kobanê have demonstrated to the international community their resolve to use all means to protect their fundamental rights and values and to resist oppression.

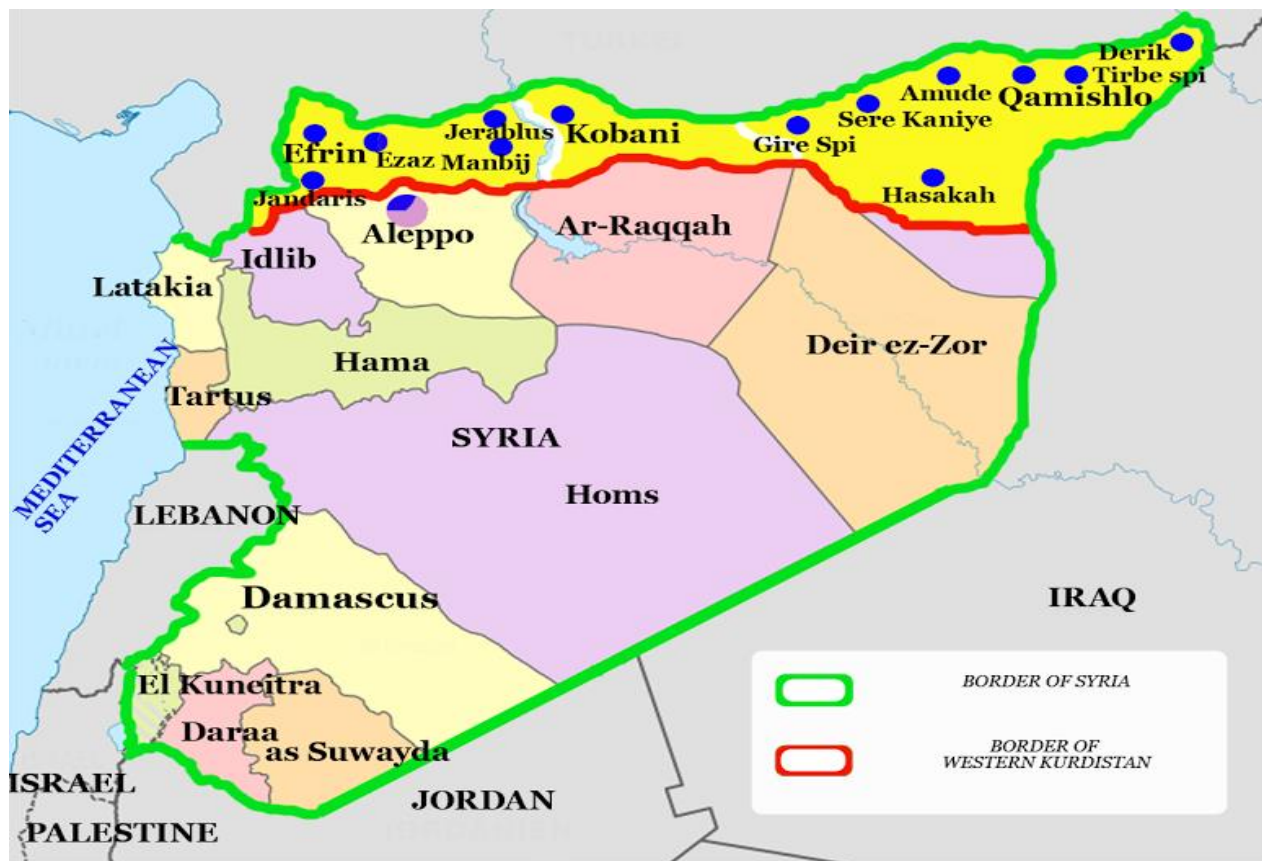
We strongly condemn ISIL and its offensive in Kobanê and remain committed to play our role to the full in the fight against ISIL and in solidarity with all people suffering from ISIL actions. The EU, Turkey and all other regional and international partners need to work together more, to isolate and contain the threat of ISIL. The EU continues to fully support the diplomatic efforts of the UN's Special Envoy for Syria Staffan De Mistura towards a political solution to the Syrian crisis.

We are also very concerned by the recent related violence in Turkey and by the loss of life. We call on all sides to commit to dialogue to resolve differences, and reiterate the EU's strong support for the Government's Kurdish solution process. The EU is seized of the urgency of the situation and is working on the details of a significant further package of additional support."

7. The town that shakes the world has resisted and proved that it will not fall

7.1 The town that shakes the world

A Kurdish town on the border between Turkey and Syria, *Kobanê*, turned out to be today's *Stalingrad*, an encircled city in the Soviet Union during the WWII which resisted and became a turning point in the war. *Kobanê* has been under siege on three sides by the ISIS and Kurdish fighters (YPG/YPJ) have fought it in the radius of 30 km for more than three weeks. In the last week the fighting became constant close quarter combat in the town supported by Coalition airstrikes. Despite the expectations of many, including US Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman *Gen. Martin Dempsey* who said that he was *'fearful that Kobanê will fall'*, *Kobanê* has resisted and proved that it will not fall.



The people of *Kobanê* and the Kurdish fighters did not only prove their resistance capabilities, but also became a major symbol and stimulus for mass demonstrations all around the world. Tens of thousands of Kurds took to the streets and organized various demonstrations, from marches to the forming of human chains on the border of Turkey in support of the resistance in *Kobanê*. Mass mobilization was the biggest those organized when the Kurdish leader *Abdullah Öcalan* was kidnapped in *Kenya* in 1999. As a result, on the basis of *Kobanê* resistance, the *Rojava revolution* became one of the main issues on the international press and at a more general level, the Kurds have been depicted as the only secular and capable force is fighting ISIS.

7.2 Turkey's policy on the Middle East, ISIS and on the Kurds

However, Turkey under the Islamist government of *AKP* which has seen the jihadists as an opportunity rather than a threat, played a very obstructive role at the regional as well as the international level. This obstructive role has two aspects on which Turkey's policy on the Middle East and on the Kurds have been based. First, under the *AKP* government led by ambitious and reckless *R.T. Erdogan*, Turkey has tried to undertake an imperial role in the Middle East inspired by its Ottoman heritage which has been, at least at the beginning, promoted by the Western world. But later it turned out to be very much biased in favor of Sunni Islamism and the west and Turkey diverged from each other on this matter. At the end, U.S. Vice President *Joe Biden* made it public that Turkey, with some other countries in the region, had strengthened the ISIS and *Erdogan* admitted this as a mistake, although *Biden* later apologized for this comment, the damage had already been done.

Second, Turkey's denials policy on the Kurdish issue has become a main drawback for its ambitions in the region. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, one of Turkey's main concerns was to prevent the Kurdish self-rule in Syria. In doing this, the strengthening of the Islamic jihadism, including ISIS, seemed to be a very feasible option for Turkey which also aimed at using this as a leverage against the Kurdish movement in Turkey. As a matter of fact, from the beginning, Turkey's attempts to influence and direct the Syrian opposition have been directed by this quest of finding a leverage. In sum, Turkey was, and still is, very enthusiastic to destroy the self-ruling experience in Rojava. Therefore, it closed the border, savagely attacked demonstrators on the border as well as launched an undeclared war against the demonstrators all around the country.

However, as happened many times in the past, Turkey ignored the outburst of Kurdish fury based on the *Kobanê* resistance. In just three days in the first week of October, there have been protests and riots in all Kurdish cities as well as in big Turkish ones, more than thirty people have been killed, six Kurdish provinces, including the biggest *Diyarbakır*, have been placed under curfew. And the ongoing 'peace process' has almost come to an end. Turkey has seen that its stability and security are fragile. Meanwhile Turkey's reluctance to do more to fight ISIS in collaboration with the newly emerged international coalition led to a situation in which the 'US and Turkey stuck in diplomatic stand-off over their policies on Syria'. Turkey's longstanding demands for a no-fly zone against the Syrian regime and the creation of a buffer zone have not been met by the US. The coalition forces under the leadership of the US envisages a strategy in Syria based on defensive airstrikes aimed at diminishing ISIS's ability to sustain itself.



In the words of a journalist who asked Pentagon's spokesperson, 'surprisingly getting longer and longer fighting' in *Kobanê*, however, seems to change many things. Turkey's expectation or more truly wish, for the fall of *Kobanê* did not happen and Pentagon also had to move from 'largely defensive airstrikes to a little bit more offensive and more tactical ones'. It appears that not only the Kurds but the coalition also needs a success in Syria.

The *Obama* administration which is very much committed to have a success against ISIS without sending troops should prove that the airstrikes are working. And the *Kobanê* resistance lasting almost one month provides the best option for this success.

7.3 At the moment, there are three main actors in the *Kobanê* resistance

The resistance of Kurdish fighters (YPG/YPJ) and of the people of *Kobanê*, the demonstrations in all parts of Kurdistan, the Diaspora and Turkey, and last but not least, the coalition airstrikes.

The first two factors triggered the last one and the US started to look at the *Kobanê* resistance as a contingency to lead a success in Syria. Of course, this can change the position of the Kurds vis-à-vis the international community as well as Turkey.



It seems that *Kobanê* resistance will confirm the old saying: ‘not every contender can win but every winner is a contender’.

These actions are urgently needed:

- *The international response to the threat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, cannot be addressed selectively, since actions in Iraq directly impact the situation on the ground in Syria. Airstrikes in Iraq have resulted in ISIS refocusing on its military campaigns in Syria, where it can operate freely across northern Syria.*
- *Action against ISIS in Kobanê is a matter of urgency, with increasing indications of imminent war crimes and acts of genocide.*
- *The international community must also ensure the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2170, of sanctions against ISIS by all member states. This is critical in the light of ISIS continued cross-border access at the Syrian-Turkish border, using locations within Turkish territory to facilitate its operations in Kobanê and the rest of northern Syria.*
- *The international community must fulfill its responsibility in protecting the civilian population of Kobanê and preventing yet another human tragedy. If no action is taken, the situation can only escalate and the world might witness a new genocide.*

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