



STOP THE MASSACRE IN SUR!

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Across 58 separate curfews imposed in several neighborhoods of the 21 districts of 7 Kurdish provinces, 290 citizens have so far lost their lives. The curfew and blockade in the Sur district of Diyarbakir, declared by Diyarbakir Governorship with absolutely no legal and constitutional basis on 2 December 2015, enters its 91st day today. Twenty-four local citizens have lost their lives during this curfew. The number of losses includes only those who could be identified.

For centuries, Sur district has been the cultural, social, economic and historical heart of Diyarbakir. The curfew imposed in the district amounts to a military blockade, and is in clear violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms and state responsibilities stipulated in the Constitution, such as the right to life, right to health, right to education and right to travel. The economic, social and cultural life in Sur has come to a halt, with no electricity and water at homes and no basic services such as pharmacies and bakeries in the streets. Under these grave circumstances—and all under the gaze of the world—children, women and the elderly are losing their lives one by one. Even iconic and sacred public places, considered to be humanity's common cultural and religious heritage, are brought to ruins during the curfew jointly enforced by military, police and paramilitary forces. Tanks and heavy artillery have damaged Diyarbakir's city walls, officially listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Five-hundred-year old Kurşunlu Mosque, historic Hasırlı Mosque, 1700 year-old Saint Mary Church, historic Surp Giragos Church and Protestant churches are among the historical places that were destroyed and rendered unusable by curfew enforcement.

One hundred and seventy-eight bodies have so far been collected from the "Savage Basements" in the Cizre district of Sirnak. Yet, the family members who were asked to identify the deceased report that the bodies were burnt beyond recognition. Furthermore, bodies have been intentionally transported to various other cities in Turkey for autopsy procedures, which in turn have aggravated the suffering of the family members.

We have no other choice but to prevent the occurrence of yet another similar atrocity in Sur. The curfew in Sur has to be immediately lifted. This is the only way to prevent the recurrence of the Cizre Massacre, which, with its all cruelty, happened right in front of the world's indifferent eyes. The military blockade must be lifted so that people whose lives are in danger can be safely evacuated. All that is happening in Sur at the moment, and all that will happen in the coming days, is a matter of humanity and human dignity.

International public and political actors are necessarily implicated in the sustainability of the stability of Turkey and the region. In the face of recently unfolding events in Turkey, it has become an urgent need to have a clear stance along the axes of freedom, peace and democracy.

We call upon all national and international democratic institutions and platforms to express a solid reaction against the current political and humanitarian crisis in Sur and act in solidarity with the people of Sur.

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