



International Coordination of Revolutionary Parties & Organizations

**ICOR – Main coordinator**

**19. März 2018**

## **Efrîn – Newsletter No. 2**

Dear Comrades,

Below is further information about the further development of solidarity with Efrîn and against the fascist Turkish aggression.

**1. The fascist Turkish armed forces and the fascist gangs in Islamist guise allied with them have occupied Efrîn – the worldwide day of action of ICOR and ILPS must be made a global day of action that is impossible to overlook.**

Owing to the superiority of the Turkish army, the YPG/YPJ forces have had to withdraw. The population was evacuated. About half of the city has been captured by the Turkish military. 500 civilians lost their lives, 1,030 were wounded and 820 QSD (SDF) fighters have fallen. SDF forces have declared that they now will wage guerilla warfare in and around Efrîn.

Since January 20, 2018, the fascist Turkish regime has been conducting a war of aggression against the Canton Efrîn of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria/Rojava in the northwest section of Syria. NATO member Turkey is carrying out its attack in league with fascist militias in Islamist guise that pose as “Free Syrian Army”. In fact, this is a coalition of various gangs from Al-Qaida, Al Nusra and the IS. The fighters of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), with the Kurdish People’s and Women’s Defense Units (YPG und YPJ) as core, and the popular masses have been putting up heroic resistance for eight weeks against the army of Turkey, the second largest of NATO, with its numerical and military-technical superiority.

In the Efrîn city center there were big demonstrations and mobilizations with vehicle convoys. On the Eighth of March thousands of women marched through the besieged city to strengthen the resistance and denounce the violence of the Erdogan regime against women. The masses in Efrîn are offering valiant resistance.

In South Kurdistan/Iraq, too, hundreds of thousands took to the streets. Armed units of the SDF that were engaged in the struggle against the fascist IS in other parts of Syria rushed to Efrîn to strengthen the resistance there. The fighters of the International Freedom Battalion are an important part of the resistance. The MLKP informs us that in this heroic struggle their comrades Ruhat Aşkara, Erdal Demirhan and Sedat Akyüz also have fallen. We mourn with them and the families of all the freedom fighters killed in action and the civilians who gave their lives to resist.

The Kurdish umbrella association KCDK-E has addressed an urgent call to the public, writing: *“Russia supported and endorsed the attack of the Turkish state on Efrîn by withdrawing the Russian soldiers from Efrîn and the surrounding area. The USA declared that the cooperation with the Kurds against the IS only concerns the eastern bank of the Euphrates and that it would not interfere in the occupation of Efrîn. The USA thus also has*

*declared its approval of the Turkish occupation. From the beginning the United Nations ignored the massacres of the civilian population, the bombing of villages and the destruction of homes, which were intended to trigger off a refugee movement, and thus have made themselves accomplices to these crimes. Two meetings of the UN Security Council took place to protect civilians in the war in Syria. Neither meeting adopted an explicit resolution on Efrîn and the civilian population there. The Turkish state not only gets political support from the UN, the USA and the EU. For the attack on Efrîn, NATO weapons, US aircraft and German Leopard tanks are being used.”*

The Turkish army and the fascist gangs are suffering heavy losses. Instead of the planned three-day blitzkrieg it took them 58 days to reach Efrîn! The freedom fighters espouse a just cause and have great morale, which already played a decisive role in winning the battle for Kobane. It is encouraging and a growing real force that millions of people the world over take to the streets in solidarity with Efrîn and international solidarity grows with every passing day. Many ICOR member organizations are wholeheartedly active. In Germany, 20,000 people demonstrated in Hannover on 17 March despite massive obstruction by the police.

## **2. Worldwide day of action for solidarity with Efrîn on 21 March**

**The current developments underscore the importance of the worldwide day of action for solidarity with Efrîn on 21 March with an anti-imperialist thrust, for which the ICOR is calling jointly with the ILPS.** March 21st also marks the New Year's Day traditionally celebrated by the Kurdish people and other peoples of the Middle East, which furthermore is a symbol of resistance against oppression and for freedom and democracy. With the day of action, the ICOR meets its obligations from the Solidarity Pact with the Kurdish liberation struggle in the face of the acute intensification of the imperialist war for the division of Syria and the attack of the fascist Turkish Erdogan regime on the democratic Canton of Efrîn in Northern Syria. The cooperation with the ILPS, the Kurdish liberation movement and allies in the different countries is at the same time a significant step in the cooperation of the anti-imperialist forces of the world, also with an eye to developing the "Initiative for an anti-imperialist, antifascist united front" in the spirit of the Closing Resolution of the Third ICOR World Conference.

**3.** The explicit goal of the fascist aggression according to Erdogan is the liquidation of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria and the achievements of the democratic Rojava revolution.

It is cynical when in this situation revisionist and Trotskyite forces stab the liberation struggle in the back claiming that the liberation struggle in Rojava splits the unity of Syria. This only serves to defend the reactionary Assad regime and Russian imperialism. Nilüfer Koç, Co-chairwoman of the Kurdistan National Congress (KNK), declared in March 2018: *“The Democratic Federation of Northern Syria (DFNS), an alliance of Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, Chechens, Turkmens and the religious communities of the Yazidis, Christians, Alevis and Muslims, is an obstacle to the partitioning of Syria because it stands for the unity of Syria and fights for a radical transformation of the present repressive Baath regime. The Democratic Federation of Northern Syria fights for the unity and not the division of Syria.”*

The defense of Efrîn must be an anti-imperialist struggle. That makes it all the more important to create a bond of proletarian internationalism also with the Turkish and Arab workers and oppressed who are of the Islamic faith, and to take action against any form of chauvinist splitting. The resolution of the Second Middle East Conference of the ICOR states: *“A closer cooperation between the Kurdish and the Palestinian liberation struggles and further revolutionary forces can give important impulses for combining progressive and*

revolutionary forces. ... the democratic revolution [is] ... a signal ... how the **struggle for democracy and freedom can gain a positive perspective.**" Currently, reactionary attacks and threats of the Zionist regime in Israel and of US imperialism against Palestine, Lebanon and Syria are increasing and already have led to direct military confrontations. In the light of the downing of an Israeli warplane that bombed Damascus on 10 February, Maher Al-Taher/PFLP declared: "Tel Aviv will no longer be able to isolate Gaza, Lebanon or Syria. ... The joint axis of resistance has made the strategic decision that the Israeli attack on one front will be met with a concentrated campaign on all fronts."

Sincere anti-imperialist forces also have questions concerning the military cooperation of the SDF with the US military. N. Koç stated about this: "Russia demanded from the political leadership of the DFNS that the Canton Efrîn be handed over to the Syrian regime. ... The Canton Cizîrê, too, was not liberated for the USA, but for the Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, Yazidi, Christians, Chechens, Turkmens. Because the YPG/YPJ and the Syrian Democratic Forces (QSD) are comprised of women and men from these peoples and are not paid mercenaries or tools of foreign powers. ... The cooperation of YPG/YPJ and QSD with Russia and the USA concerned military cooperation for jointly combating the IS.... This means: neither is Cizîrê a US colony, nor is Efrîn a Russian colony. ... The two superpowers [may] see things differently, but decisive is how the citizens of the DFNS see things. ... The resistance in Efrîn speaks for itself: Efrîn will not become the neocolony of any power, whatever it costs."

The battle for Kobane already showed that international solidarity is a strong weapon. It is directed against the international counterrevolution and against all imperialists. The democratic revolution in Rojava is a thorn in the side of all of them. The struggle in Efrîn today is the struggle of all people who stand up for peace, freedom, democracy and socialism.

**4.** The developments in Efrîn show that no help can be expected from any imperialist power for the Kurdish population and the entire people of Syria. More than seven million people had to flee from Syria and half a million were killed. The reactionary Assad regime and all imperialist and reactionary powers involved there share the responsibility for that. They all want to repartition Syria on the backs of the peoples. The USA as main warmonger wants to aggressively extend its influence there together with NATO. Other imperialists and regional powers like Russia, Turkey, Iran, Israel or Saudi Arabia want to maintain and expand their influence.

This is a dangerous development because now the various imperialist and reactionary powers like the USA, Russia, Israel, Iran or Turkey have gone over to intervening directly with their military. This exacerbates the general danger of war tremendously. It is cynical when the Western imperialists cry crocodile tears over the civilian victims in East Ghouta/Damascus (Syria) and attack the Assad regime and Russia for war crimes and the use of poison gas, but have nothing to say about the terrorizing of the civilian population by the Islamist-fascist gangs they have bred. At the same time they are silent about the fascist aggression of NATO member Turkey in Efrîn. The ICOR categorically rejects any imperialist intervention in any region of Syria. It advocates a worldwide peace movement and the struggle of the masses against military aggressions by any imperialist power without exception. The ICOR rejects the use of lethal chemical, biological and nuclear weapons against the peoples and demands the ban and destruction of these weapons. The interests of the Kurdish people and the peoples of the Middle East can be achieved only in the anti-imperialist struggle and in the victory over imperialism.

**The present development helps to make the character of imperialism clearer. Imperialist wars and the danger of war will be eliminated only by overcoming the**

**imperialist world system in a revolutionary way. Only the struggle for a socialist future offers a way out.**

**To this end the ICOR and all its member organizations must be strengthened further.**