



TÜRKİYE BÜYÜK MİLLET MECLİSİ

Leyla ZANA

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To: European Parliament Sakharov Prize Laureates

For information of Members of Sakharov Prize Network and European Parliament Human Rights Action Unit

Re: Human tragedy in Kurdish Region

Honorable Laureate,

I am writing you to express my deepest concern about human tragedy recently occurred in the Middle East in general, in South Kurdistan and South West Kurdistan in particular, which also has been brought to the attention of world public opinion.

As it is known, over 200.000 people have died, millions of people have been displaced or forced to flee in Syria's conflict since 2011 and this brutality continues to grow exponentially.

Moreover, insatibility and chaos in Syria put pressure on all of the countries in the Middle East. This instability has lastly spread from Syria to Iraq and increased the dimension of human tragedy.

Unfortunately, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated terrorist groups have benefited from this chaos and situation of

brutality and did not refrain from using their extremist ideologies to the local people in places where they entered by barbarous methods.

Kurds, Turkmens, Arabs, Assyrian-Syriacs, Chaldeans, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Yazidis and other communities, who have lived together for thousands of years, are now dragged to an irretrievable catastrophe as a result of attacks, which recognizes no boundaries, carried out by terrorist groups.

Without doubt, the eventual aim of these attacks is to destroy regional peace and the culture of coexistence.

It wounds the conscience of humanity that the international community, which did not remain silent to the anti-democratic and inhuman practices in Iraq and Afghanistan, has not yet adopted a definite position against these terrorist groups maintaining its senseless silence.

The Kurds, who have organised and protected themselves on the basis of self defence since the beginning of the conflicts in Syria, have always become the target of these groups.

The bigoted and reactionary terrorist group named The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which has carried out massacres in Kobanê (Ayn al Arab), Shingal (Sinjar), Tal Afar, Mosul, Kirkuk and other areas, is trying to exterminate ancient cultures and religious communities trampling all humanitarian values.

The gains achieved by Kurds, whose legitimate rights have been denied by the victorious states' policies after World War I, as a result of a hundred years of struggle are to be destroyed once again with the latest attacks.

Attacks directed against civilian populations, massacres being conducted without regard for children, women, or the aged, reminiscent of the medieval practices such as enslavement and looting shows that the target of this brutality is not only Kurds but all humanity.

There is not any difference between school girls kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria and Yazidi women kidnapped and enslaved in Shingal (Sinjar).

These inhuman practices are clear examples of that these terrorist groups, who want to burry the light under darkness, pose threat to all of the world without regard for geography or culture.

Dear Laureate,

The expectation of the thousands of vulnerable people, who have taken shelter in the mountains, from sensible national and international institutions is to take urgent action as soon as possible in order to prevent new Halabjas. Creation of a collective stance, which will protect human dignity and prevent human rights violations, is the common duty of all humanity.

According to international humanitarian law, systematic attacks, destruction and inhuman practices directed against any people because of their ethnic and religious affiliations constitute crime against humanity. Therefore, all mankind should struggle against this crime.

I believe that you will fulfil requirements of your historical responsibility in the face of these crimes against humanity. My hope and expectation from you is, firstly, to deliver urgent humanitarian assistance to Yazidis and other minority communities who live in Shingal (Sinjar) region where became target of attacks and to make efforts, enhancing cooperation with legitimate governments of Kurdish regions, in order to protect rights to life of all ethnic and religious groups who have been subjected to attacks.

This effort is a necessary step for establishment of regional peace, security and stability. It is humanity that will win.

Respectfully yours,

Leyla Zana

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Zana', written in a cursive style.