



Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Josep Borrell Fontelles

Vice-President and High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Re: Turkish airstrikes on the Kurdistan

Brussels, 15/12/2022

Dear President von der Leyen,

Dear High Representative / Vice-President Borrell,

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, deplore that since November 20, Turkish warplanes have been bombing hospitals, schools and other civilian targets in Kobane and nearby territories belonging to the Autonomous Region of North and East Syria (Rojava). There have also been attacks in southern Kurdistan (Bashur, in northern Iraq).

Without any evidence, the Turkish state has deliberately blamed the People's Protection Units (YPG), the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) for the terrorist attack in Istanbul. On November 13, despite not being supported by the evidence and the fact that the Kurdish liberation movement has rejected this accusation from the outset, making it clear that they condemn any form of attack on the civilian population. However, it is known that Erdogan's autocratic regime has never needed an excuse to repress and to suppress and disable their progressive forces. The Turkish state has been bombing and annexing part of Rojava since 2018, in addition to the reports from the Kurdish circles that affirm chemical weapons are used against the population and that of Bashur since spring of this year.

We are witnessing a new military aggression against the Kurds, which only wants to distract attention from the various problems in Turkey after almost two decades of rule by Erdogan, who is aware of the unresolved national question and is politically instrumentalising the alleged "fight against terror" to consolidate its power.

All this is happening under the connivance of the EU and its member states, who show themselves to be complicit in Turkish reactionary autocratic regime etc. through the figure of Erdogan by looking the other way. The bloody attacks on the Kurdish population, the multiple violations of human rights, and the geostrategic blackmail of the Turkish regime, take place under European silence. In the militaristic rearmament that is sweeping Europe, Turkish autocracy sets its own conditions for the future entry of Sweden and Finland into NATO, which, together with the tightening of anti-terrorist laws, means that many Kurdish refugees in Sweden and Finland can be extradited on terrorism charges.

Erdogan's objective is the political persecution of the Kurdish people and any hint of plurality and freedoms in Turkey. Therefore, we denounce his autocratic regime and demand an immediate ceasefire on the population in Rojava and Bashur.

The EU has to act immediately effectively, otherwise, in addition to being an accomplice, it will be responsible for the consequences of the terrorism of the Turkish state against the Kurdish people and the other peoples of northern and eastern Syria. Violating human rights and terrorisation entire populations must have a real political and economic cost.

Therefore, we demand the European Commission and the EEAS to call the Turkish government:

- To put an end of the military aggression and the bombardments in Rojava and Bashur;
- To respect the right of self-determination of the Kurdish people and the sovereignty of Iraq and Syria;
- That any improvement of official relations between Turkey and the EU must be conditioned and placed under the strict observance of international law, the respect for the sovereignty of other states and the principles of the rule of law.

All diplomatic, political and economic measures aimed at getting Turkey to respect its legal obligations and to end the political persecution of the Kurdish people should focus on the regime and those responsible in its administration.

Sincerely yours,

Oezlem Demirel, The Left

Miguel Urbán Crespo, The Left

Francois Alfonsi, Verts/ALE

Clare Daly, The Left

Claude Gruffat, Verts/ALE

José Gusmão, The Left

Dietmar Köster, S&D

Stelios Kouloglou, The Left

Marisa Matias, The Left

Ana Miranda, Verts/ALE

Javier Nart, Renew

María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, The Left

Andreas Schieder, S&D

Idoia Villanueva, The Left

Nikolaj Villumsen, The Left

Mick Wallace, The Left