

Friends and comrades,

The women's revolution in Rojava is under attack.

Right now, the fascist Syrian Transitional Government — backed by Western powers — is waging a genocidal campaign against indigenous peoples of the region of North and East Syria: the Kurds, the Armenians, and the Assyrians. But let us be clear: this is not only a physical attack. It is an attack on an idea.

It is an attack on the ideology of the Kurdistan Freedom Movement — an ideology rooted in social ecology, grassroots democracy, and women's liberation. An ideology that dares to imagine a society beyond patriarchy, beyond domination, beyond the state.

Rojava — also known as West Kurdistan — is part of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria. Today, the people there are in full-scale mass mobilization, defending themselves against a violent and coordinated assault by the Syrian Transitional Government and its allies.

Attacks on Kurdish people and other ethnic and religious minorities have been escalating since this government seized power last winter. We all remember the images — the videos — of Druze and Alevite communities being massacred in recent months. And now, the violence has turned openly and brutally toward the Kurds.

On January 6th, the escalation reached a new level. Kurdish neighborhoods in Aleppo were attacked with extreme brutality. Civilians were murdered. Women's bodies were humiliated and abused. Hundreds of people were displaced, disappeared, or killed. After days of fierce resistance — despite years of siege — the remaining residents were forced to flee to other parts of the Autonomous Administration simply to survive.

From there, the fascist forces moved north, attacking Raqqa and Tabqa. Key infrastructure was destroyed. In an attempt to prevent further bloodshed, the Syrian Democratic Forces withdrew, believing a ceasefire could be reached. Instead, ISIS prisons fell into fascist hands, leading to a mass escape of ISIS fighters.

We all remember what ISIS did. And yet, the Western states — including the US-led international coalition — refused to respond to calls for support. Once again, the defense of humanity was left to the fighters of the Syrian Democratic Forces alone.

Kobane stands as a symbol to the world — a city where democracy once defeated fascism. Eleven years ago, Kobane was besieged by ISIS. After immense sacrifice and thousands of martyrs, it was liberated on January 26th, 2015.

Today, Kobane is besieged again.

There is no electricity. No water. Little internet. Food is scarce. Babies and small children have already died from the cold. And now the enemy is not only ISIS or the Turkish state — it is NATO-trained and NATO-armed fascist militias folded into the new Syrian Arab Army, chaired by al-Sharaa, a man who helped build both al-Qaeda and ISIS in Syria.

The enemy may appear as many, but the violence comes from one shared mentality: domination, patriarchy, fascism, and the state.

The women's revolution threatens their power — and that is why it is under attack.

This same mentality drives the genocide in Gaza, the massacres of indigenous peoples worldwide, and imperialist wars across the globe. What is happening in Rojava is not isolated. It is part of a global system of violence.

These attacks are not only military — they are ideological. Under pressure, the US is attempting to liberalize and hollow out the revolution, strengthening nationalist forces. Kurds are pitted against Arabs. Coexistence is undermined. Division along ethnic lines is deliberately stoked to weaken unity, force capitulation, or justify ethnic cleansing.

This is not new. It is a 200-year-old imperialist strategy of divide and rule.

And the British state is deeply involved.

Britain helped carve up the Middle East, drawing borders to serve its interests — and it continues this project today. Last October, the British government quietly removed HTS from its list of proscribed terrorist organizations. After al-Sharaa took power, Britain rushed to normalize diplomatic relations, sending delegations to Damascus and announcing financial support.

Behind the scenes, Britain had long been cultivating ties through the NGO Inter-Mediate, funded by the Foreign Office and founded by Jonathan Powell — Tony Blair's former right-hand man. Powell stepped down just before HTS took Damascus and was immediately appointed as Keir Starmer's National Security Advisor.

This is no coincidence.

Fascist regimes are profitable. They need weapons, surveillance, and intelligence — and imperialist states exchange these for oil, minerals, and control. Just three months after al-Sharaa's installation, the UK lifted sanctions on major Syrian oil companies and banks. As attacks on the Autonomous Administration intensified, support poured in from the US, EU, and Israel — including a €620 million EU package pledged this January, alongside advanced weaponry supplied by Turkey, the US, and the UK.

So let us be clear about the fight we are in.

This is not simply a struggle against extremism. It is a struggle against imperialism, patriarchy, genocide, and exploitation. What is happening in Rojava is inseparable from Sudan, Congo, Palestine, Venezuela, Ukraine — from every place torn apart by imperialist proxy wars for land and resources.

Imperialist patriarchy is globally organized.

Our resistance must be global too.

To have hope in this moment, we must be internationalists. The future of Rojava is tied to our future. If imperial powers can install fascists in Syria today, they will wage war on people everywhere tomorrow.

The people of Rojava are fighting for all of us.

And we must fight for them.

Tonight, at 5pm, we will gather at the Kurdish Community Center. We will watch a documentary about the resistance in Rojava, and we will stand together in solidarity.

Tomorrow at 2 there will be a demonstration here in Leeds, let's stand side by side!

I hope to see you there.