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Forty nine Syrian Organizations Condemn Turkey's Intentional Interruption of Water in Northeastern Syria

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Repeated cuts of the Alok Station's water place the life of about 600,000 persons within the range of imminent danger and hamper efforts at combating Covid-19

On March 21, 2020, the Turkish forces, in control of the Alok Water Station, have once again interrupted water supplies, usually provided to about 600,000 persons who live in areas in Northeastern Syria—the most recent cut in a series, since the last had happened on February 24, 2020.

The water station, located in the eastern countryside of the city of Ras al-Ayn/Sari Kani, is the major source used by the residents of the following areas, al-Hasakah, Tal Tmer, al-Hawl and al-Arishah camps, among others. The repeated interruption of potable water service is coercing the residents to rely on unsafe water resources, which in turn puts their lives on the line despite the local efforts at combating the novel coronavirus— Covid-19.

This is not the first time that residents of these areas are deprived of access to the Alok Station's water, for the shelling, conducted by the Turkish forces and which corresponded to the military operations in October 2020, has rendered the station out of service, as the water stopped being pumped after the station's building and the cables providing it with power were a target of several mortars.

The Alok Water Station, where water is stored and pumped, contains 30 wells, with a capacity to provide about 175,000 square meters of water a day. Denying hundreds of thousands of people access to water is denying them a basic source of protection against Covid-19, given that handwashing is a fundamental means in shielding oneself of the virus.

Through this statement, the signatory organizations condemn the repeated and intentional interruption of the Alok Station's water services ordained by the Turkish Government and stress that this intentional denial of water that the residents of these areas are suffering is a blatant violation of the International Humanitarian Law and is a war crime. This deprivation is also a breach of the right of Northeastern Syria's population to safe and potable water. The signatories, thus, call on the United Nations/UN, the World Health Organization/WHO, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund/UNICEF, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs/UNOCHA, as well as the U.S. Government and the European Union to:

1. Impose pressure on the Turkish Government to allow providing water to areas deprived of it immediately and urgently and to guarantee that no further water interruption is to happen under any pretext;
2. To neutralize the Alok Water Station of the political and military conflicts and to assign its administration to an independent specialized civilian team, under international supervision and surveillance, as well as prevent the Turkish forces from using the station for blackmail;
3. To make sure that all the residents in Northeastern Syria will have equal access to water resources without discrimination of any kind.

Signatory Organizations:

1. ADEL Center for Human Rights
2. AFRIN Post – Media Network
3. AL- HASAKA Organization for Relief and Development
4. AL-SHAM Center for Democratic Studies for Human Rights
5. Analysis and Strategic Study Organization (ASO)
6. ARAS Charity Association
7. ASHNA for Development
8. Balsam Center for Health Education
9. Basmet Amal
10. BUKRA AHLA Association for Development and Relief
11. Civil Society Platform in North East Syria
12. Civil Youth Community in Hassakeh
13. DOZ International
14. Espoir Afrin Association
15. EZDINA Foundation
16. GAV for Relief and Development
17. HEVY For Relief And Development
18. Human Rights Organizations in AL Jazeera
19. Human Rights Organizations in Farat
20. Jomard Charity
21. JUDY Association for Development and Relief
22. Kurdish Committee for Human Rights - Observer
23. Kurdish Legal Committee
24. MITAN Center to Revive Civil Society
25. Peace Leaders Network
26. PÊL- Civil Waves
27. Qanadil Alamal Association
28. ROJ KAR for Relief and Development
29. Rojava Organizations for Relief and Development
30. SARA Organization To Combat Violence Against Women
31. Shamal Charity Association
32. Shams Organization for Rehabilitation and Development
33. SHAR for Development
34. SHARE for Community Development
35. SILAVA Center for Civil Activities
36. SOZ Association for Relief and Development
37. SWAAEID for Development
38. Syriac Cross Organization for Relief & Development
39. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights
40. Syrians for Truth and Justice-STJ
41. Tal Abyad Civil Society Forum
42. TEVNA KURDI

43. The Alliance Syrian Women to activate Security Council Resolution 1325 in Syria
44. The Syria Campaign
45. The Syrian Institution for Care of Widows and Orphans Rights (IC.W.O.SY)
46. The Syrian Woman Council
47. Türkmen Derneği
48. Violations Documentation Center in Northeast Syria - VDC-NES
49. XUNAV Association for Relief and Development



History

Syrians for Truth and Justice was conceived during the participation of its co-founder in the Middle-East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program, who was driven by a will to contribute to Syria's future. Starting as a humble project to tell the stories of Syrians experiencing enforced disappearances and torture, it grew into an established organisation committed to unveiling human rights violations of all sorts.

Convinced that the diversity that has historically defined Syria is a wealth, our team of researchers and volunteers works with dedication at uncovering human rights violations committed in Syria, in order to promote inclusiveness and ensure that all Syrians are represented, and their rights fulfilled.