

# Democratic Union Party (PYD) representative to Germany on the Afrin Crisis

by Duygu Yildiz - 28/01/2018 16:29



Amid the Afrin crisis, Dersim Dersime, Democratic Union Party (PYD) representative to Germany, give an interview to the Region about Turkey's so-called 'Operation Olive Branch'.

On the 19th of January, the Turkish military alongside Turkey-backed Free Syrian Army (FSA) rebel groups in Syria, initiated an operation to attack the enclave of Afrin which is currently under the control of Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

To do so, Russian forces had to withdraw from the territory that they once protected. 'Erdogan is not committing this crime alone. Of course, there are certain forces behind Erdogan, who have been silently approving his actions for many years,' Dersime, Democratic Union Party (PYD) representative to Germany, told to The Region.

'Countries like Germany, Russia and the United States shut their eyes to Erdogan if it is in their interests, and sometimes it seems as if they are against him,' Dersime stressed.

Rebels courted by Ankara in Idlib and the former 'Euphrates Shield' operation had to be transported by an entourage organised by Ankara into Afrin. For many Syrian Kurdish political representatives, the Afrin attack cannot be dissociated from Kobane resistance against Islamic State (IS). Dersime believes that Erdogan and his supporters want to avenge Kobane resistance.

Turkey is especially worried that the Kurds of Syria have constructed a political system that could potentially spill over and further embolden existing projects started by the Kurds of Turkey.

This 'democratic nation' model allocates political power to all minorities in the region by direct democratic councils confederated on the village, town, city, and cantonal levels.

'It is not only Kurds that are part of these bodies,' Dersime told The Region, 'there are Arabs, Yazidis and many other from different ethnicities and religions, who escaped from the unprecedented violence of the IS.'

An enormous problem for Syria's Kurds, particularly the PYD, is how many barriers have been placed in front of them to prevent them from sharing the diplomatic stage with international actors. Dersime thinks all the protests against the offensive on Afrin, from Melbourne to Ottawa, are of great importance.

Feeling abandoned, Dersime also promises that there is no reason for despair. 'People who live on these lands are united, and we will fight against Turkey's attacks' he concludes.