

A show of solidarity: thousands from across northern Syria converge in Afrin

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On Tuesday, thousands of solidarity activists from all across the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria defied a threat of bombardment by the Turkish State to stand in solidarity with the resistance in Afrin.

The rallies are being covered live by Ronahi TV.

"We say no to an Ottoman occupation, we say to all peoples' of the region, we are one hand in the fight against terror, the terror of Erdogan, and the terror of Daesh. We don't do this for any, except for our children," said one Assyrian representative from Deir Ez-Zor in the rally.

The march is said to have started with an expanding caravan that began in Shengal (Sinjar), over 641 Kilometers away from Afrin. From Shengal, the marchers advanced to the Cizire canton, before meeting with others and marching to Kobane. From Kobane, they were to rendezvous with another delegation awaiting them in Manbij before making their way to Afrin.

An ANF news correspondent spoke to a lady from Seriyekaniye, who claimed to have not slept for two nights to make sure that she would arrive in Afrin as quickly as possible.

The Caravan made up of thousands of people eventually arrived at Afrin city centre to join a large rally organised by locals and members of the Autonomous administration.

Notable figures working within the political institutions of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria then went on the stage to commemorate the resistance of Afrin.

A representative from the Autonomous Administration in Deir Ez-Zor, a woman of Arab descent, was one of the many voices that demanded the Turkish State to cease its operations in Afrin.

"We in Deir Ez-Zor are with the people of Afrin. Deir Ez-Zor is Afrin. We demand Erdogan to leave this country." she said.

Especially noteworthy was the multi-ethnic composition of the protests. Various flags waved, and chants in different languages were to be heard as Arab, Assyrian, and Kurdish woman took to the stage. At one point, an Arab tribal elder adorned with a traditional robe and equipped with a walking stick demanded that the whole country stand with "the people of Afrin". At another point in the rally, an Assyrian man condemned the "Ottomanism" which he believed inspired the latest operations.

"We from Shaddadi, we who received your help to liberate men and women from Daesh, We say now to you, we from Hassakah are your family." Another Arab tribal elder passionately told the crowd.

At a time when many civilians have felt no recourse but to flee from areas bombarded by foreign states in Syria, the people of Afrin have defied the threat of attacks by the Turkish State and its affiliated FSA forces. "Usually in war, civilians try to escape the conditions they face and find a safe place, but yesterday almost 100,000 people arrived in Afrin", a Kurdish activist based in Europe told The Region, "People are coming into a war zone to protest against the actions of the Turkish State, to my knowledge this is unprecedented in history," he concluded.