

Turkish forces operating human trafficking ring in Afrin

by Meghan Bodette - 01/10/2018 15:29



Turkish forces in Afrin are operating a human trafficking ring in Afrin, according to images published by a pro-Free Syrian Army Telegram channel.

The channel threatened to reveal the information earlier last week due to a dispute with Turkish personnel in Afrin over an imprisoned pro-FSA media worker. Their conditions were not met, and photos of Turkish personnel and their ID cards, as well as photos of trafficked women, were published on Sunday.

According to a message posted to the channel, there are videos implicating more Turkish personnel involved in the ring that have not been published at this time.



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Handwritten red text in Urdu script: "پہلو" (Pehlu) written vertically across the license.

OLIS KIMLIK KARTI

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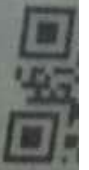
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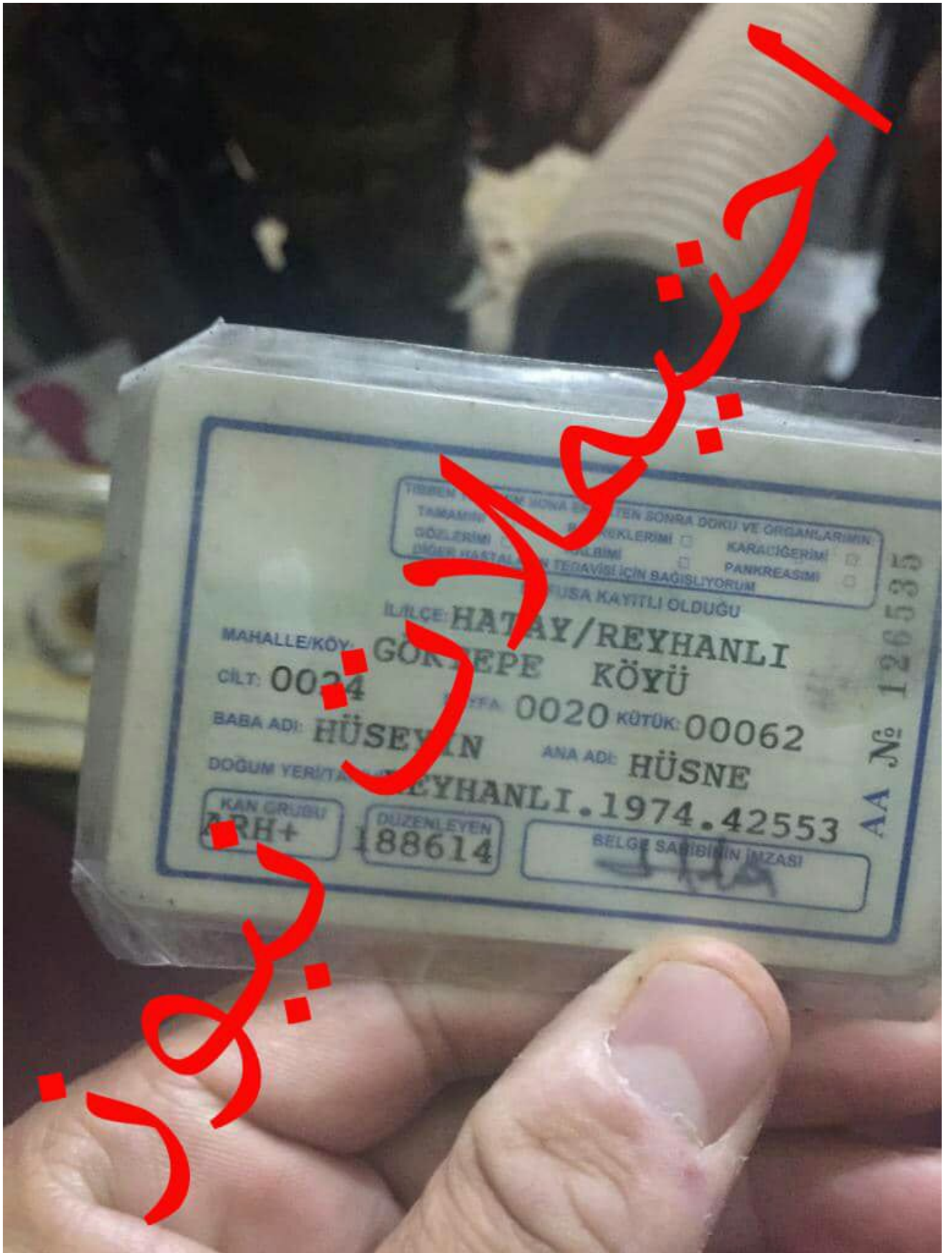
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Local sources claim that at least 200 women and girls have been kidnapped by Olive Branch forces since the region was fully occupied, though the number is difficult to verify and may be higher. While some kidnapped individuals have been returned to

their families on ransom, the fate of many is unknown. Many individuals with knowledge of the situation in Afrin warned that such trafficking rings could be active. "Committing rape, sexual slavery, [or] enforced prostitution" is a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. While the United Nations has issued a preliminary report including descriptions of war crimes in Afrin, no international body has made serious efforts to investigate the scope, scale, and level of Turkish government involvement in atrocities committed there.

Kurdish activists warned that violence against women would be a significant consequence of Turkey's invasion of Afrin. Operation Olive Branch included former members of ISIS and of other Islamist militias that committed systematic sexual violence against women and girls. In a graphic video that circulated on social media in February, FSA militiamen boasted and cheered as they mutilated the body of a Kurdish YPJ fighter.