

NATO and Turkish state terrorism

by Rebwar Rashed - 25/11/2018 15:51



Going through the Brussels airport, one quickly sees photographs of the NATO headquarters, which are located in that city. The right side of the photo shows the flags of NATO member states, including Turkey.

The photo reads: “Welcome to Brussels, home of NATO. Working for peace, security and freedom.”

As a Kurd who loves the freedom and liberty of my nation, I cannot help but to think about that second phrase: “peace, security and freedom”.

Turkey was founded on October 23rd, 1923, and became a member of NATO on February 18th, 1952. The history of Turkey between 1923 and 1952 is the history of a war of extermination against the Kurdish people— not only in the part of Kurdistan that became a part of Turkey under the Lausanne Treaty, but also against Kurdish people outside of Turkish territory.

Turkey’s colonial war against the Kurdish people has been, and still is, based on the total denial of their existence: from the prohibition of the Kurdish language, culture,

and national heritage to confiscation of land and property, deportation, displacement, arbitrary killings and imprisonment, persecutions and daily harassment.

France and the United Kingdom, as the architects of the Sykes–Picot Agreement and stakeholders in other international agreements that created the modern Middle East, know the situation of Kurds and other minorities in the region well.

Between 1952 and now, for about 66 years, the NATO countries have always had detailed information about Turkish military activities against the Kurds. Turkey has committed atrocities against defenseless Kurdish civilians using NATO military technology, sophisticated Western weapons, shared military intelligence, and NATO economic, political and diplomatic support. The colonial war against Kurdistan has always been bloody and disproportionate. In 1984, the PKK decided to wage an armed resistance in response, albeit on a limited traditional scale.

For the last 66 years, Turkey has been lying to the democratic world. Turkey has tried every possible way to separate the Kurdish issue as a whole from the PKK's leadership of the Kurdish national liberation movement— as though these are two separate issues.

Unfortunately, NATO has assisted Turkey in every field of warfare against Kurdish people, despite its detailed comprehensive knowledge about the Kurdish agony and its struggle for self-defense against an uncivilized, powerful state enjoying tremendous outside support. Turkey has not only waged a traditional colonial war, but also has practiced state terrorism and used fascist paramilitaries and Islamist proxies. Turkey has used internationally prohibited weapons and terrorist methods in schools, villages, towns, cities, and inside prisons. This racist war of extermination has been constitutionally, structurally and institutionally interwoven. The army, the police, the paramilitary forces, the so-called “village guards,” and other “civilian forces” have been protected by all means. MIT, Turkey's national intelligence agency, has been deliberately fabricating scenarios against innocent people in order to intimidate them. Kurdish people in Turkey have not been treated as second-class citizens, but rather as a subject to be eliminated in a harsh systematic preplanned assimilation policy in order to die out or, if very lucky, be a “Turk”.

Turkish interventions in Iraq and Syria, undertaken only to kill innocent people, contravene Articles 1 and 2 of the NATO charter.

The reality of Turkish policy makes the articles of NATO have nothing to do with “safeguarding the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law”. It is not an agreement between “democratic” states. Turkey is not representing Kurdish

people, as it is a colonial state. NATO members are non-homogeneous. There are many democracies, as there are states with national issues still to be solved, and there is also Turkey, which has continuously committed crimes against humanity.

Thus, it is not sustainable or possible to insist that NATO is “determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.”

The North Atlantic Treaty did not take Kurdish people or others, like Armenians, into consideration when it granted Turkey membership. Kurdish people are a colonized people represented politically and militarily by non-state actors. NATO is breaching its own articles by supporting Turkey’s war against Kurdish people. Turkey has interfered in Iraqi, Iranian and Syrian internal affairs to attack Kurdish political aspirations. Almost every provision of the NATO charter is about defending each other’s territorial integrity, but doesn’t mention anything about when a NATO member harasses, interferes with, or occupies another non-NATO country, as Turkey does.

The charter seems to need serious reform, as there is nothing in it regarding penalties if a member of NATO supports terrorism, organizes and directs jihadist proxies that other NATO states have sworn to fight, or practices state terrorism, as in case of Turkey.

The EU and NATO exist as a result of the aftermath of the Second World War, when Nazism and fascism attempted to exterminate the Jewish people and install their own reign of terror across Europe. The same Western democracies that make up these institutions support Turkey today, even though there is much evidence that Turkey has committed the same sort of atrocities as Nazi Germany once did— genocide, ethnic cleansing, torture, and enforced disappearances.

Erdogan’s totalitarian rule at home, his expansionist Neo-Ottoman foreign policy, and his determination to support Islamic terrorism in Iraq and Syria are undermining regional security and stability. Turkey is not only behaving in ways that contravene NATO’s charter, but is also challenging the stated values of the EU and the US. Today, we see a NATO state that antagonizes the moral and political principles of the alliance and its members. Judging by those principles alone, Turkey has no place in the alliance.

NATO— and for that matter, the EU and the US— must find the political courage to stop Erdogan from inflicting further harm on our region, and lay ground for a peaceful political solution of the Kurdish question and for reconciliation between all the peoples of Turkey.