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ROJAVA: THREATS OF A NEW TURKISH INVASION RAISE TENSION AGAIN, RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN REINFORCEMENTS

On 1^{er} June, President Erdoğan, facing increasingly unfavourable polls in Turkey, renewed his threat of a new military operation against Rojava before the Parliament. He repeated his desire to establish a so-called “security zone” 30 km deep along the Turkish-Syrian border, which would complement the territories already invaded by Ankara in recent years. He specifically named the towns of Tell Rifaat

and Manbij, west of the Euphrates, where thousands of displaced Kurds from Afrin are already living, as targets for “cleansing” (AFP). Another likely target is Kobanê, a city with high symbolic value for the Kurds. The Turkish media started the psychological war by hammering the imminence of the operation...

The US Secretary of State immediately reacted by reiterating the US opposition to such an operation, which would “undermine

regional stability”. Alongside NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Anthony Blinken hammered home the point: “We oppose any escalation in northern Syria and support maintaining the current ceasefire lines” (AFP). The next day, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova expressed a similar position: “We hope that Ankara will refrain from actions that could lead to a dangerous deterioration of an already difficult situation in Syria”. For Moscow, any operation car-

ried out *“without the consent of the legitimate government of the Syrian Arab Republic [...] would constitute a direct violation of Syria’s sovereignty and territorial integrity”* (Al-Jazeera).

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) warned that a Turkish attack would force them to suspend operations against ISIS in order to defend themselves, and on the 21st, the administration of al-Hol camp warned against the risk of escape of thousands of jihadists still held there... Moscow called for the deployment of Syrian troops to the area targeted by Ankara, but on the 5th, SDF commander Mazloum Abdi responded by telling *Reuters* that his forces were ready to coordinate with Syrian troops to oppose the Turks and their proxies, but that sending ground reinforcements was not necessary, if the Syrian army *“[used] its air defence systems against Turkish planes”*. Abdi added, in an apparent warning to Damascus: *“Our priority is to defend Syrian territory, and no one should think of taking advantage of this situation to make gains on the ground”*.

On the 8th, the US Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East, Barbara Leaf, told in a parliamentary hearing: *“We are making absolutely relentless efforts towards the Turkish government to get them to abandon this reckless venture”*, but refused to rule out that Ankara would overrule... There is some hope, however, because, as Christopher Phillips notes in *Middle-East Eye*, *“Turkey’s previous invasions and operations against the YPG were only made possible by the approval of Moscow or Washington”*, both of which *“control Syrian airspace”*, and this time, *“both are opposed to further attacks”*. Phillips adds, however, that Ankara can now put pressure on both Moscow and Washington thanks to a new element: the Ukrainian conflict...

On 14 and 15 June, the 18th so-

called *“Astana meetings”* between Iran, Russia, Turkey and the Syrian opposition were held in Kazakhstan. According to the Turkish Foreign Minister, all participants *“reaffirmed that all attempts to create illegitimate autonomy initiatives under the pretext of fighting terrorism are unacceptable”*, and *“condemned the actions of countries that support terrorist entities, including illegitimate autonomy initiatives in northeast Syria”*. But at the same time, the Russian President’s Special Representative for Syria, Alexander Lavrentyev, used a new argument against a Turkish operation: the attack would *“encourage separatist sentiments in the so-called Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria (AANES), which is not in the interests of Turkey, Russia, Iraq, and Iran”* (Kurdistan-24).

On the ground, reinforcements have been sent one after the other. Moscow opened the ball on the 3rd by reinforcing its *Al-Sai’diyah* base in Manbij (SOHR). On the 16th, Turkey in turn sent a convoy of tank trucks, armoured vehicles and troop transport trucks to the province of Aleppo. The next day, tanks carrying American flags entered areas where the Syrian *“National Army”* and Turkish forces are deployed... On the 27th, a second Turkish convoy of mine-clearing, armoured vehicles and troop carriers arrived (SOHR)...

By the end of the month, despite rising tensions, Ankara had not launched any general offensive against the AANES. However, military harassment continued almost daily along the entire frontline between the SDF and Turkish forces, from Manbij in the west (Aleppo province) to Hasakah in the East, including the Christian town of Tell Tamer, and the strategic east-west M4 highway...

Turkish pressure was exerted all

month in northern Aleppo province, from Afrin to the Euphrates. On 1st June, for the third time in 15 days, a Turkish drone struck a clinic in Tell Rifaat, a town 25 km north of Aleppo held by the AANES, where there is also a Russian base, without causing any casualties. The next day, fighters from the Manbij Military Council foiled an infiltration attempt by the pro-Turkish *“National Army”* before launching a counter-attack on a Turkish base. Between Aleppo and Afrin, Turkish artillery injured a 13-year-old boy and killed dozens of sheep. Firing intensified on the 3rd, with around 60 rounds hitting five Kurdish-held areas without injury, and on the 4th, with more than 100 rounds hitting ten different areas. On the 7th, the outskirts of Manbij were hit again, while a member of the pro-Turkish faction *“Samarkand”* was killed by a missile launched by the Al-Bab Military Council (a SDF force seeking to retake this city from the Turks). On the 11th, Turkish shelling caused fires in villages near Manbij, and on the 15th, more than 30 rockets hit the city and its surroundings while its Military Council managed to shoot down a Turkish drone. The Turks targeted Tell Rifaat again on the 17th, and artillery exchanges continued in northern Aleppo province until the 22nd. On the 27th, an *Ahrar Al-Sham* member involved in an infiltration attempt was killed between Jerablous and Manbij. On the 29th, intense Turkish artillery bombardment, around 150 rockets, targeting Kurdish and regime positions, set fire to farmland without causing casualties. The area around the Russian post of Kashtaa’ar was also targeted. On the 30th, further fire was directed at four villages near Manbij.

Further East, the province of Raqqa was also targeted. On the

1st of the month, Turkish artillery hit the area around Kobanê and the former anti-ISIS coalition base in the city without causing any casualties. After ten days of tense calm, after heavy artillery fire on the 13th, firing on the Tell Abyad and Ain-Issa region became almost daily again. On the 23rd, a “kamikaze” drone targeted a house in Al-Saffawiyah, near Ayn Issa, without causing any casualties, and the next day, a cement factory was hit in Tell Abyad.

Another area that was continuously hit is the Hasaka region, at the eastern end of the country, and in particular Tall Tamr. From the 2nd, an intense artillery bombardment on the outskirts of this town held by the SDF and where Syrian soldiers are present caused a massive exodus of civilians, including the inhabitants of Zarkan. Russian helicopters flew over the area, where at least one civilian was injured. On the 4th, new Turkish fire damaged the power plant, causing a blackout, and wounded 6 regime soldiers. Then a precarious calm punctuated by regular Russian helicopter overflights was established until the 17th. The Turkish artillery then resumed its firing, which continued on the 18th and intensified on the 22nd, without causing any casualties, but causing a new power cut. The 27th and 28th were marked by two drone attacks on a SDF post in Tall Tamr, and then on SDF vehicles near Dêrîk, in which at least one fighter was killed and others injured. The SOHR has counted 33 Turkish drone attacks against the AANES since January, killing 21 people, including 6 women and 2 children, and wounding more than 62... The AANES had already published on the 21st its own count for the first two weeks of June, listing “982 heavy artillery shells and internationally banned cluster munitions”.

Turkey is also continuing its “water war” against the Kurds.

For the second year in a row, Ankara is withholding water from the Euphrates in its dams, whose flow has fallen below 200 m³ /s while the Syrian-Turkish agreement provides for a minimum of 500 m³ /s... Furthermore, pro-Turkish groups have dammed the Khabur River. AANES has provided irrigation assistance and subsidised seeds and fuel to farmers, and in Raqqa, the Directorate of Agriculture has called on them to cultivate 25% of their land with yellow corn. Ankara’s deleterious activities come at a time when drought and rising temperatures linked to climate change are already hitting northeast Syria particularly hard, turning wheat fields into fodder for sheep, while the conflict in Ukraine is disrupting wheat imports (*AFP*). Turning water into a weapon that indiscriminately targets the entire population is a crime against humanity, but the SOHR’s repeated warnings to the international community of an impending humanitarian catastrophe do not seem to interest anyone...

In Afrin, the month was dominated by the conflict between the inhabitants and the private Turkish electricity company STE, which is supposed to provide energy to the region. After raising its tariffs and declaring a daily 10-hour power cut, all in violation of agreements with the local administration, STE refused to discuss its shortcomings and modus operandi, triggering almost daily protests. Further protests took place in Al-Bab and Azaz where other Turkish electricity companies brought in by the occupiers took similar decisions. In Afrin, after a peaceful sit-in in front of STE’s offices, angry protesters eventually forced their way into the building and ransacked it on the 3rd. The same events took place in Al-Bab with the *AK Energy* office, which had doubled its tariffs. The protests against the energy shortage gradually spread

to all Turkish-occupied areas of Aleppo province. In Marae’, demonstrators set fire to the local council building while chanting slogans calling for the Turks to leave. In Jindires, the guards of the Governor’s HQ and the “military police” opened fire to disperse the protesters, injuring at least 2 civilians. Interestingly, the next day, when one of the two wounded died, it emerged that he was a member of the pro-Turkish *Jayish Al-Sharqiyyah* faction from Deir Ezzor who had come to the demonstration unarmed.

On the other hand, the daily exactions of the pro-Turkish factions to which Ankara has delegated the control of its occupation zones continue. These include the sale of stolen houses and the illegal felling of fruit trees, such as on the 23rd in Jindires, where after a quarrel a member of *Al-Sharqiyyah* called in some 20 armed men to evict a Kurdish family from their home (*ARK News*). On the 20th, in the countryside of Afrin, a civilian from the Raju district was run over and killed by a Turkish armoured vehicle – an incident that is becoming increasingly frequent due to the excessive speed of drivers (*WKI*). The situation was further aggravated by the fratricidal factional fighting that began on the 7th and only subsided on the 19th with the conclusion of a truce after Turkish mediation (*Reuters*).

The *jandarma* (Turkish gendarmes) guarding the border also continue their exactions: on the 24th, they severely tortured 3 young Syrians trying to enter Turkey near Amouda, and on the 30th, in the same region, opened fire on a broken-down civilian vehicle.

Regarding the fight against ISIS, the coalition announced on the 16th that it had captured in a helicopter operation an important leader of the organisation in

Syria, an “*experienced bomb maker*”. His identity was not initially revealed, but in response to a question from AFP, he was later identified as Hani Ahmed Al-Kurdi, a former ISIS leader in Raqqa. He was hiding in Al-Humayrah, a village in Aleppo province just 4 km from the Turkish border and in an area under the control of Turkish soldiers and their Syrian auxiliaries... (AFP)

The jihadists remain dangerous. Early on the 20th, they ambushed a regime military bus near Raqqa on the road to Homs, killing 15 fighters and wounding several others. Then a new attack killed 9 on the 23rd, several fighters wounded on the 20th died, and with another attack east of Damascus, there was a total of 30 victims in 4 days (AFP).

In Al-Hol camp, where 56,000 people are still living, 94% of them women and children and just under 50% Iraqis, the situation is still deteriorating. 106 people, including many women, have been murdered there in 18 months, 5 since the beginning of June. On the 24th, the Kurdish

Asayish (Security) launched its nth sweep, resulting in 3 arrests. As the countries of origin of nationals interned in AANES camps are still reluctant to take back their citizens, repatriations continue to be carried out in small batches. Earlier this month, AANES handed over 153 Iraqi internees to their government (WKI), and another 150 families, about 600 people, are expected to follow in early July (*Rûdaw*). Hundreds of Syrian families have been able to return to their region of origin following local mediation, but these former detainees are having difficulty reintegrating, as the population is suspicious of them (AFP). On the 21st, a Belgian mission repatriated 16 children and 6 mothers from the Roj camp, who had travelled via Erbil, in Iraqi Kurdistan, to return to Belgium by military plane. The 6 women, who had already been sentenced to prison terms, were imprisoned.

Unlike Belgium or Germany, France, which has some 80 wives of jihadists and 200 children in Syrian camps, has so far maintained a piecemeal return policy, for which it is increasingly criticised. Since 2016, 126 French

children have returned from Syria or Iraq, most of them infants. The Collective regrouping most of the families of those interned in Syria denounces the non-respect of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Paris is a signatory. On 14 December 2021, a 28-year-old French woman died of diabetes in Syria, leaving a 6-year-old girl orphan. On 23 December, another French woman interned in Roj with her 4 children, suffering from cancer and in a life-threatening condition, launched a heart-rending appeal to the French presidential couple to obtain her repatriation (AFP). After the repatriation of the 16 Belgian children, the lawyer of the collective, Marie Dosé, again denounced the French position, recalling the living conditions of the camps, described as catastrophic by the UN: “*Repatriations must be done quickly. It is over 40 degrees in the Roj camp where the children are in their third, fourth or fifth summer for some. France is the only European country to have been condemned by the International Committee on the Rights of the Child*”, she points out.

TURKEY:

LARGE-SCALE ATTACK ON PRESS FREEDOM; PINAR SELEK SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT, LIKE KAVALA, ON AN EMPTY FILE...

On the 9th of this month, the Turkish President officially announced his 3rd candidacy for the presidential election. The debate quickly started as to whether the Constitution allows him to do so. Indeed, a constitutional amendment adopted in 2007 stipulates that the president’s term of office is five years and limits their number to two. This amendment remained in place at the time of the 2017 referendum that endorsed the shift to a presidential system. Mr Erdoğan could, however, circumvent it by asking parliament to call early elections,

which requires three-fifths of the vote, or 360. This would require the support of the opposition, with the presidential AKP party and its far-right MHP allies together holding only 333 seats...

It is too early to predict what Mr Erdoğan plans to do, but what is clear is that as Turkey sinks into economic crisis, the polls are increasingly unfavourable to him. According to the latest figures from the *MetroPOLL* polling institute, the AKP now has the support of only 26.5% of voters. Yet Mr Erdoğan continues to refuse to raise interest rates, preferring to

sack anyone who opposes his personal view of the economy...

The official statistics institute TÜİK put the inflation rate for May at 73.5%, the highest in 23 years, while the Turkish lira still fell 16.75% against the dollar. The previous head of the TÜİK was sacked in late January after publishing an inflation rate that was deemed too high. However, the independent economic research group ENAG came up with a rate twice as high: 160.8%! The sanction was not long in coming: Istanbul’s Yeditepe University launched an investigation against

the teacher who heads ENAG, Veysel Ulusoy, who could lose his job for “publishing figures that harm the university’s reputation” (France-24).

One of the consequences of the crisis is the hardening towards the more than three million Syrian refugees in the country. The opposition, and in particular the Kemalist CHP, is calling for their departure and accusing Erdoğan of laxity, but even more worrying for the president, his own electoral base is on the same position. This is an unexpected backlash for a politician who has never hesitated to use the refugees as an instrument in relation to the European Union... From welcoming them in the name of Sunni solidarity, he has now switched to “voluntary return” to Syria (France-24).

The repression of civil society is still intensifying.

On 1st June, the trial of the country’s main feminist association, *Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız*, whose name (“We will stop the feminicides”) indicates its aim, founded in 2010 after one of these murders, was due to begin. But the hearing was finally postponed to 5 October. The origin of the case: complaints, some dating back more than 6 years, accuse the NGO of “destroying the family under the pretext of defending women’s rights”, and caused the opening in April of dissolution proceedings for “activities against the law and morality”. The disappearance of the organisation, which recorded 423 feminicides in 2021, and 160 since January, would mark a new setback in Turkey after the country’s withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in 2021 (*Le Figaro*).

On 26 September, police in Istanbul prevented hundreds of people from taking part in the Pride March, banned by local authorities, and arrested dozens.

This annual parade on Istiklal Avenue has long gathered thousands of participants, but conservative circles are hostile to it, and the AKP government’s repression is getting tougher every year (*Reuters*).

Furthermore, control of the media has become vital for the government. At the end of May, the law penalising the dissemination of “fake news” was submitted to parliament. Under the guise of fighting disinformation, it actually aims to do the opposite: allow the government to impose its own! The president of the Turkish Journalists’ Association, Nazim Bilgin, described it as a “law of censorship” (*AFP*).

Adopted in record time by two parliamentary committees, this “disinformation law” is due to be put to a vote soon. It will punish journalists guilty of “spreading misleading information” with one to three years in prison and deprive them of their press card. It will also oblige social networks and websites to hand over to the courts their users’ personal information. This law will extend the one adopted in 2020 to oblige international platforms such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* to appoint a legal representative in the country, which made them more vulnerable to sanctions if they did not remove within 48 hours content that displeased the authorities.

It is a sad irony that journalists who want to do their job by reporting on events often get into more trouble with the law than the perpetrators of the events reported. Such is the case with Berivan Altan, a reporter for *Mezopotamya* Agency, who reported on an incident in the Elmadağ neighbourhood of Ankara in an article entitled “Racist attack on Kurdish family in Ankara: women and children evicted from neighbourhood”. *Mezopotamya* reported that the Ankara prosecutor immediately opened an investigation against

her for “provoking hatred and animosity”, and summoned her for questioning on the 3rd, asking her who had asked her to write her article... (*Bianet*)

Solidarity among journalists is also becoming a crime. The co-chairwoman of the “Tigris-Euphrates” journalists’ association DFG (*Dicle Fırat Gazeteciler Derneği*) and editor-in-chief of *Mezopotamya*, Dicle Müftüoğlu, was arrested in Diyarbakir on the 3rd after a police raid on her home and placed in police custody for 3 days for sending money to the jailed journalists Nedim Türfent and Ziya Ataman. She was released on the 6th after making a video statement to the Van Prosecutor’s Office, where she was later transferred and placed under judicial supervision, before being released on parole (*Bianet*).

On 8 August, Diyarbakir police arrested 22 journalists or employees of media and production companies close to the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party, “pro-Kurdish”), including Serdar Altan, co-chair of DFG. They were charged with “belonging to the press wing” of the PKK and taken into custody. They were placed in solitary confinement, denied access to a lawyer and claimed that the authorities were preparing fabricated evidence against them (*Kurdistan au Féminin*). On the 16th, 16 of them were charged with “membership of a terrorist organisation”, the others were released under judicial supervision.

The 22 detainees are: Serdar Altan, co-chairman of DFG, Mehmet Ali Ertaş, editor-in-chief of *Xwebûn* newspaper, Safiye Alagaş and Gülşen Koçuk, director and editor-in-chief of *JinNews* women’s agency respectively, Aziz Oruç, editor-in-chief of *Mezopotamya*, journalists Ömer Çelik, Suat Doğuhan, Ramazan Geciken, Esmer Tunç, Neşe Toprak, Zeynel Abidin Bulut, Mazlum Doğan Güler, Mehmet Şahin, Elif Üngür, İbrahim Koyuncu, Remziye Temel,

Mehmet Yalçın, Abdurrahman Öncü, Lezgin Akdeniz and Kadir Bayram and citizens Feynaz Koçuk and Ihsan Ergülen (*Kurdistan Women*).

Erol Onderoğlu, *RSF's* representative in Turkey, who has had his own run-in with the courts, described the indictment as a “pre-electoral manoeuvre”: a year before the next presidential election, the government is seeking to “deprive [the Kurdish political class] of a means of expression” (AFP).

Solidarity was organised to oppose these intimidation attempts. On the 14th, the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), representing more than 320,000 journalists in 45 countries, which was holding its general assembly in Izmir, elected a president, Croatian Maja Sever, and for the first time a Turkish vice-president, the Executive Director of the Turkish Journalists Union (TGS) Mustafa Kuleli. The General Assembly unanimously adopted the motion presented by the Turkish trade union DİSK-Press on solidarity with Kurdish journalists and against the new “Disinformation Law” introduced by the AKP (*Bianet*). On the 19th, the EFJ issued a statement calling for the immediate release of 16 Turkish journalists “imprisoned for doing their job” (*RojInfo*). On the 22nd, hundreds of journalists and media workers gathered in Ankara in front of the Atatürk statue in the Ulus district to call for the withdrawal of the bill. In a symbolic gesture of protest, they placed pens and pencils in front of the statue. A second demonstration of support was held on the 24th in Istanbul, organised by the DFG and the Mesopotamia Women Journalists Platform (MKGP). Members of DİSK-Press and the Media and Legal Studies Association (MLSA), as well as HDP MP Musa Piroğlu, were present. Diren Yurtsever of the

Mezopotamya Agency said, “*The ruling power, which seeks to strengthen its power through elections and warmongering, wants to intimidate the media that it cannot control*”. Speaking after her, Candan Yıldız of DİSK-Press said that these arrests are not only the problem of Kurds, just as the “censorship law” is not only the problem of journalists. Piroğlu intervened in the same sense: “*If the press is silenced, then the people are silenced and blindfolded*”.

It should be noted that, among the Kurdish journalists arrested, Elif Ungur was blamed for her report on the Kurdish singer Nudem Durak, who was arrested in 2015 and sentenced to 19 years in prison for singing in Kurdish... (*L'Humanité*). The government also wants to intimidate journalists trying to report on the war it is waging against Kurdish culture... In order to flatter the most conservative fringes of the electorate, the government has launched a vast campaign of bans on Kurdish artists as well as on women wearing “inappropriate” or “immoral” clothing or with feminist lyrics. Belonging to all these categories is a guarantee of a ban! Thus, AFP notes, the Kurdish-born artist Aynur Dogan, as well as Niyazi Koyuncu, who sings in the languages of the Black Sea, or Metin and Kemal Kahraman, musicians of Zaza origin, whereas they sing in Turkish, have had their concerts cancelled. All were deemed “inappropriate” by the AKP municipalities of the cities where they were to perform. The singer Melek Mosso, for her part, was unable to perform as planned in Isparta, as an Islamist group took exception to her outfit and her tattooed shoulders, but above all to her calls for women to dress and express themselves freely...

Here too, resistance is being organised. At the beginning of June, the CHP municipality of

Istanbul authorised a concert by Melek Mosso, which attracted an “impressive crowd” (AFP). On the 15th, the legendary musician Ciwan Haco called for unity among all Kurdish artists and intellectuals, after condemning Turkey’s hostility towards the Kurdish language: “*No state bans a language. This ban no longer exists on earth. There is hostility to the language only in Turkey*”... (*Kurdistan au Féminin*) On the 21st, seizing the opportunity of the Music Day to express themselves, a group of Kurdish musicians from the Istanbul *Mesopotamia Cultural Centre* (MKM) organised an impromptu protest concert on İstiklal Avenue to denounce the bans on concerts and plays. They performed several songs in Kurdish, including Aram Tigran’s famous *Zîmanê Kurdî* (“Kurdish Language”), before a brief speech.

On the 22nd, the administrator (*kayyım*) appointed for Batman by the state after the invalidation of the two elected co-mayors ordered the destruction of the bust of the poet Cegerxwîn in a city park. This decision provoked a demonstration in which the two dismissed HDP mayors, Songül Korkmaz and Mehmet Demir, participated. Denouncing the administrator’s “*fascist conception of the nation-state*”, Korkmaz recalled that, unlike the AKP, the HDP considers multilingualism and cultural diversity as riches... Cegerxwîn, a Kurdish poet from Syria, died in 1984; his statue had been installed in the park in 2007.

While seeking to silence journalists and attacking Kurdish artists, the government continues to repress HDP cadres and members. The most minimal pretexts are used to criminalise membership or support for this party, as in the case of the pregnant woman accompanied by a child in Van, both of whom were

imprisoned on the evening of the 15th for their T-shirts bearing the photo of the former HDP co-chairman Selahattin Demirtaş, who has been imprisoned since November 2016. Six witnesses who dared to protest were also apprehended. HDP MP Murat Sarıışaç shared a video of the altercation between the police and the witnesses on *Twitter* (SCF Stockholm).

On the morning of the 16th, Istanbul police launched simultaneous raids on the homes of 10 HDP cadres, including the provincial and district co-chairs. *Mezopotamya* Agency reported that the list of those arrested includes provincial co-chair Besra İşsever, Üsküdar district co-chair Aysel Özbey and journalist Saliha Aras, in addition to Erkan Tarım, Mümin Odabaş, Harun Bağatur, Enes Özdaş and Ercan Özer. Provincial co-chairman Ferhat Encü, called the operation a “political massacre”, saying that the authorities are trying to “*dissolve the HDP [...] through the judicial system*”. Most of those arrested had taken part on the 12th in Bursa in a rally calling for an end to prison confinement for Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been imprisoned on the island of İmralı since 1999 (SCF Stockholm).

On the 19th, CHP MP Sezgin Tanrikulu published his report on human rights violations in May. According to this document, the right to life of 207 citizens was violated during this month. 697 citizens who participated in demonstrations were imprisoned during this period, of which 4 died in prison, 1 in police custody, and 38 in violence against women. Tanrikulu also released frightening figures regarding torture: 316 people, including two children, were tortured in detention, and 53 in prisons (*Duvar*).

On the 27th, police launched new raids at dawn on the homes of 38 HDP members and several locations in Mersin, Diyarbakir, Van, Mardin and Adana, including the premises of the Binevş Cultural Centre and Art Association in the latter city. 36 people were apprehended, including the provincial co-chairs for Adana, Helin Kaya and Mehmet Karakiş, and the deputy mayor of Seyhan municipality, Funda Buyruk. Witnesses described very violent raids, during which their doors were broken down and they were beaten and sometimes stripped for a search.

The continuing deterioration of the rule of law in Turkey continues to provoke international reactions. On 7 July, the European Parliament adopted a resolution by 448 votes (67 against, 107 abstentions) deploring “*the decline in fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law*” in Turkey and pointing to the “*lack of political will to carry out the necessary reforms*” in this area. Even a non-binding resolution of this kind is too much for the Turkish Foreign Ministry, which immediately reacted by calling the report “*superficial*” and “*biased*” and accusing the European Parliament of “*tolerating*” within it “*members of terrorist organisations*”.

The Pinar Selek case confirms, if it were needed after the conviction of Osman Kavala, that Turkish “justice” does not need evidence or even rationality to convict dissidents. On the evening of the 21st, Turkish sociologist Pinar Selek, who has been living in exile since 2008 and now teaches at the University of Nice, was told by her lawyers that she had been sentenced by the Turkish Supreme Court to life in prison! As with Kavala, the case is totally fabricated. This sentence comes after five acquittals, and 24 years after an explo-

sion that killed seven people and injured 121 in the Istanbul spice bazaar... in 1998. At the time, the 27-year-old daughter of a prominent lawyer, feminist and committed to the rights of transsexuals, writer and anti-militarist, was also conducting research on the Kurdish community. Arrested two days after the explosion, she was tortured by the police who wanted the names of her Kurdish contacts. She was not asked a single question about the explosion. She never gave up any names, and from trial to trial, from acquittal to acquittal, from appeal by the prosecutor to appeal by the prosecutor, the judicial harassment never stopped. Yet several expert reports have established that the explosion was due to a gas leak in a pizza oven... Selek’s conviction is based entirely on the testimony of a man who, after having declared that he had committed the attack with her, then reversed his statement, which had been extorted under torture, and was himself definitively acquitted... The sociologist has decided to take her case to the Turkish Constitutional Court, or even to the European Court of Human Rights (*Nice-Matin, Le Point*).

On the 17th, *Amnesty International* granted the convicts of the Gezi trial the status of prisoners of conscience. At the Cannes Film Festival, the premiere of Emin Alper’s political thriller *Kurak günler* (*Burning days*) took place with one empty seat: that of associate producer Çiğdem Mater, also a journalist, who had just been sentenced to 18 years in prison for her association with Osman Kavala in the *Anadolu Kultur* association. One of the charges against Mater was that she had tried to raise funds for a documentary on the Gezi Park movement that was never made. The prosecution did not provide any evidence to support the charges against the accused (*Politico*)... Let us recall that on

April 25, the 13th Istanbul Criminal Court sentenced Osman Kavala to aggravated life

imprisonment and Mücella Yapıcı, Çiğdem Mater, Hakan Altınay, Mine Özerden, Can

Atalay, Tayfun Kahraman, Yiğit Ali Ekmekçi to 18 years in prison.

IRAQ: PRO-IRANIANS VICTORS OF THE POLITICAL DEADLOCK... FOR NOW; TURKISH OPERATION IN KURDISTAN CONTINUES

Faced with the persistent political impasse that has left Iraq without a new president or government for the past eight months, the unpredictable Shiite leader Moqtada Al-Sadr has once again struck one of the blows of which he has the secret: on 9 June, in a televised speech, he asked the 73 deputies of his political current to prepare “*their letters of resignation*” so as not to “*obstruct*” the formation of a new government. This surprise decision seals Sadr’s failure to obtain the “majority government” he wanted to set up, thus breaking with nearly 20 years of “consensus government” (AFP). It is also the failure of the inter-communal alliance built around Sadr’s supporters with the party of Sunni Parliament Speaker Mohammed al-Halboussi and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Massoud Barzani.

The deadlock was largely due to the fact that neither Sadr’s alliance (155 deputies out of 329) nor his pro-Iranian opponents of the Shiite “Coordination Framework”, allied to the other Kurdish party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), had the number of seats that would have allowed them to pass the hurdle of nominating the President. They have failed three times since the beginning of the year.

Already on the 12th, the president of the parliament, Mohammed al-Halboussi, announced on Twitter that after receiving the letters of resignation of the 73 elected members of Moqtada Sadr, he had had to “reluctantly” accept their resignations. On the 21st, a Lebanese source close to the Shiite party

Hezbollah told the newspaper *Asharq Al-Awsat* that Iran had put so much pressure on Sadr to reach an agreement with the “Coordination Framework” that the Shiite leader chose to resign rather than give in. Iran denied any pressure, as did Sadr himself the next day (*Rûdaw*). But the Iranian media close to the government vented their anger against Sadr, vituperating him as a “breaker of unity”.

On the 23rd, the parliament replaced the resigning members in a swearing-in ceremony welcoming 64 new MPs. The seats left vacant were allocated, as provided for in the constitution, to the candidates who came second in the legislative elections, of whom about 40 belong to the Coordination Framework. Thus, according to AFP’s calculations, this coalition would be the great beneficiary of the mass resignation, acquiring about 130 seats out of 329, which would make it the most important force in the assembly (AFP). However, this does not mean the definitive victory of the pro-Iranians, as a government without the Sadrists could quickly find itself confronted with new street protests, like the ones that had in the autumn of 2019 provoked the call for early elections... This may be Sadr’s calculation to finally participate in the next government.

For *Middle East Eye*, the series of attacks launched since the beginning of the year against the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), dominated by the KDP, can be explained in the context of the struggle for power between Sadr and his pro-Iranian opponents. Let us recall the phases:

February, Supreme Court ruling against the KRG’s oil law, March, Iranian missile strike on Erbil, followed by other attacks culminating in the burning of KDP offices in Baghdad at the end of March, and then, at the beginning of April, a new strike aimed at a Kurdish refinery... According to sources close to the KDP, the lack of clear support from Sadr in the face of these attacks led the KDP to gradually distance itself from the Shiite leader, which could have contributed to Sadr’s decision to throw in the towel...

The Shiite news agency *Ahl ul-Bayt* (ABNA) considers the KDP to be the main loser in this sequence of events, although the Coordination Framework cannot claim victory either: Sadr’s former allies, the KDP and Halboussi’s Sunni party, still have a sufficient blocking minority to prevent or at least complicate his accession to power. ABNA concludes that a phase of discussions will have to begin. The KDP, quick to draw conclusions from the new situation, seems to have anticipated it: immediately after Sadr’s collective resignation request, the Kurdish party appointed a “Negotiation Committee” comprising Fuad Hussein, Benkin Rikani and Shakhawan Abdullah – all of whom known to have relatively good relations with the “Framework”. Shakhawan is also the leader of the KDP deputies in Parliament, and the Kurdish party did participate in the new parliamentary session. After the session, *Fatah* coalition spokesman Ahmad al-Asadi said that “*the national unity government will address all issues related to the Kurdistan Autonomous Region*”.

Regardless of how the situation develops at the national level, it has already had intra-Kurdish consequences: while talks between the KDP and PUK about a single candidate for president had been stalled for weeks, they seem to have finally started again. On the 25th, PUK MP Karwan Yarwais told *Rûdaw* that “*There is a strong chance that the PUK and the KDP will reach an agreement*”, adding that presenting a single candidate for the presidency would be in the interest of the Kurds...

Time will tell whether Erbil-Baghdad relations can be eased, but during this month several events have shown that tensions remain high, both nationally and locally. Already, on 31 May, the Kirkuk Criminal Court sentenced *in absentia* the former President of the Provincial Council, Rebwar Talabani, to 6 years in prison for “*deliberate damage to public property*”, on a complaint from the Attorney General. Evicted from his post in October 2017 after helping to organise the Kurdistan independence referendum, Talabani is now an adviser to the Kurdistan Prime minister. He said he had not been officially informed of the verdict, which he rejected as “*political*”. On the 10th, the same court sentenced 4 former members of the Provincial Council to 15 years in prison in the same terms: they are accused of having kept their official vehicles after the end of their mandate. All of them in a joint letter also described the verdict as “*political*”, recalling that they had “*proved that their vehicles were taken from them by the Hashd al-Shaabi [Iranian-backed militia] on 16 October 2017*” [when the latter had regained military control of the city]. It is paradoxical, to say the least, to accuse them in this case! Tensions also remain over the issue of the management of Kurdistan’s oil resources. On 6 June, the Iraqi Finance Minister threatened not to send its budget

to the Region if an agreement was not reached on this issue (NRT). But the President of the Kurdistan Judicial Council, Abdul Jabar Hassan, defended the validity of the KRG oil law, questioning the very constitutionality of the current Supreme Court: “*Article 92-2 of the Iraqi Constitution requires the Iraqi Council of Representatives [Parliament] to pass a law to establish an Iraqi Federal Supreme Court [he said]. No such law has been enacted to date*”. On the 21st, after new statements by the Minister threatening to open proceedings against oil companies operating in Kurdistan, the KRG filed criminal charges against him for pressuring the companies and threatening to ban them from working in Iraq.

On the 8th, the day before the Shiite leader asked his deputies to resign, a drone attack wounded three people on the road from Erbil to Pirmam, a very sensitive area for the KRG since it is not far from the official residence of the President of the Region in Macif-Salahaddin... The attack, which was not immediately claimed, took place near a building under construction that is to house the future US consulate, and a few hundred meters from the UAE consulate.

The resignation of the Sadrist deputies did not put an end to the recurrent attacks against Kurdistan. On the evening of the 22nd, a *Katyusha* rocket fell near the Khor Mor gas complex in Chemchemal. This area, halfway between Kirkuk and Sulaimaniyeh, is located on the border of Sulaimaniyeh province, very close to the disputed territories. The targeted installation belongs to *Dana Gas*, an energy company from the same UAE... According to the anti-terrorist services of the province, “*There was no material damage or injuries*”. Again, there were no claims of responsibility. At almost the same time, at least two rockets targeted

peshmerga positions in Nineveh province (AFP). On the 24th, a second rocket attack targeted Khor Mor again, without causing any casualties or material damage, although a fire broke out. Following these attacks, the Peshmerga and the Iraqi army were placed on high alert against each other, as the Kurds feared that the Iraqi army would take advantage of the attacks to occupy the fields, which they have been asking for control for a long time. On the 26th, *Dana Gas* preferred to suspend its operations there and bring back all its foreign staff to Suleimaniyeh (WKI).

Another factor of tension is the Turkish anti-PKK military operation. Initiated in April with a wave of bombings, it is now continuing on the ground, looking more and more like a real invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan. The pro-AKP Turkish newspaper *Yeni Safak* assumed this from the outset, speaking of controlling certain zones permanently by “*setting up barracks [...] in order to prevent the PKK from crossing the border*” (*Courrier International*). But the real objective seems to go far beyond this defensive aspect. Securing control of important areas in the Zap and Metina regions would allow Turkish forces to advance towards the Qandil Mountains, a PKK sanctuary, to crush it.

But so far, the advance has proved difficult, with ground troops advancing only “*step by step in this area of steep terrain*”, hence the use of chemical weapons, as denounced by a media close to the PKK, *Medya Haber*: “*Despite the intense bombardment, the guerrillas are holding out in the tunnels dug in the mountains; the Turkish army has therefore resorted to chemical weapons to dislodge the fighters, as it had already done once last year. As a result of the gas, eight guerrillas were martyred in the Ciyares area and five in the Kurojahro area*”. On 24 June, *Hawar News* also pointed to the

inaction of the UN as encouraging Turkey to continue its use of prohibited weapons, and on 25 June, *Firat News* (ANF) broadcast images showing their use in tunnels used by PKK fighters and quoted a statement issued on 13 June by the PKK's armed wing. According to the latter, the Turkish army has used chemical weapons at least 779 times in two months in Iraqi Kurdistan, an average of 13 attacks per day.

While the Turkish army benefits from the political rivalry between the PKK and the KDP, so far the latter's forces have not intervened directly in the fighting. However, this possibility worries the PKK, whose representative was quoted by the *Firat News* agency at the beginning of June telling: *"If the KDP forces decide, as they seem to be tempted to do, to attack our forces in the Metina region, then they must know that we will declare war on them and that the fighting will spread to the whole territory"* (*Courrier International*).

Turkey also continues to target Sinjar, a strategic crossing point between Qandil and Rojava, which it regularly strikes with drones and aircraft. On the 13th, an air strike hit a building of the Municipal Council of Sinuni, killing a 12-year-old child and injuring 6 people. Another security source mentioned "two dead", assuring that the victims were both civilians – the young child and his grandfather (*RojInfo*) – killed in a base of the *Ezidikhan*, a protection force of the Yazidi minority, close to the PKK. According to Turkish state television TRT, the strike, using "armed drones", hit a building where "high-level PKK cadres" were holding a meeting, and "neutralised" six of them. Asked by AFP, the Turkish Defence Ministry refused to confirm the information. Last month, because of fighting between the Iraqi army and Yezidis close to the PKK, more than 10,000 people had to

flee Sinjar (AFP). The conflict is centred around the local "autonomous administration" established by the pro-PKK Yezidis on the model of Rojava, and which neither Baghdad nor Erbil recognise.

On the 17th, on the Iranian border, a Turkish drone targeted a civilian vehicle carrying 5 people, including 2 women, between Khanaqin and Kalar. Four of the passengers were killed, the 5th seriously injured (a later AFP report mentions 3 dead and one injured). Ankara claimed to have targeted PKK members, but it later turned out that they were Syrian Kurds, including Farhad Shabli, Deputy Vice-President of the Executive Council of the Rojava Autonomous Administration (AANES). Denouncing the attack, Syrian Kurdish officials said that Mr Shabli had come to the Kurdistan Region for medical treatment (AFP).

On the 20th, a Turkish drone struck Sindjar again, targeting an Autonomous Administration building evacuated a few hours earlier (WKI). On the 22nd, the co-chairman of the Sinuni People's Assembly, Xwedêda Ilyas, told *RojNews* that the Yezidis would not give in: *"Our will is stronger than their attacks, we will continue our activities"*. He also justified the creation of the local autonomous administration by the abandonment that the Yezidis suffered in the face of the advance of ISIS in 2014: *"The forces that were supposed to protect us in 2014 fled, leaving our people alone [...]. It was obvious that they could no longer govern Shengal [the Kurdish name for Sinjar]"*. He also accused the Iraqi government of failing to take responsibility for protecting its citizens from Turkish attacks.

Ankara is also conducting a campaign of targeted assassinations based on the presence in Iraqi Kurdistan of its MIT (intelligence

service) agents. On the 24th, the Turkish state agency *Anatolia* announced the elimination of a PKK commander in Suleimaniyeh, without giving any details (*Rûdaw*).

Finally, it should be recalled that the jihadist organisation ISIS continues its terrorist activities, especially in the disputed territories between Baghdad and Erbil, taking advantage of the lack of coordination between the Iraqi military and the Peshmerga. The jihadists kidnap and murder farmers or set fire to fields. This is particularly the case in the Kirkuk region, where on the 10th, the security forces announced the arrest of 4 jihadists, including one responsible for atrocities during the Yezidi genocide.

While the security problem in the disputed territories lies mainly in the lack of coordination between Kurdish and Iraqi troops, it is worth noting that on the 13th, the acting governor of Kirkuk province, Rakan Al-Jabouri, indicated in an interview that representatives of the Turkmen and Arab communities were opposed to the establishment of a "Coordination Centre" between peshmerga and Iraqi forces in the province. The following week, a peshmerga delegation went to Baghdad in a new attempt to implement the project of a joint Iraqi-Kurdish "20th Division", which has so far remained unimplemented despite the agreement reached last year. On the 25th, Shakhawan Abdullah (KDP), Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, said that the administrative procedures for the creation of this force *"have been completed"* and that MPs are now working to *"fulfil the obligations of the federal government as soon as possible"*.

On the 14th, a joint operation by Iraqi forces and the anti-ISIS coalition began on Mount Qara Chokh, near Makhmur. This area, which

had been surrounded by the Iraqi army for two months, had become a sanctuary for ISIS jihadists. The result of the operation, which lasted all day, has not been announced. On the 17th, a jihadist attack in Tuz Khurmatu killed 1 Iraqi soldier and wounded 3 others. On the same day, another jihadist leader arrested in Kirkuk province confessed to executing 17 peshmerga captured in 2016... DNA tests will be used on the mass grave he indicated to verify his claims.

In addition, the climatic and health situation remains worrying

in Kurdistan and throughout Northern Iraq. The drought is such that, near Mosul, the drop in the level of the Kemune reservoir has caused a 3,000-year-old Mitannian city to re-emerge. The city had been drowned when the reservoir was filled in 1980. In addition, Iraq remains prey to Congo fever, a haemorrhagic fever transmitted by cattle, which has killed 27 people since January, including one in Kurdistan. But it is above all cholera that is worrying, even if it has not yet caused any deaths. Of the 13 cases reported in Iraq, 10 are from Suleimaniyeh and there are 56

suspected cases there. Sabah Hawrami, the province's Director General of Health, said on the 19th that in less than a week "About 4,000 cases of diarrhoea and vomiting [had] been registered in Suleimaniyeh hospitals". In Sinjar, where the health sector, like all public services, remains in a state of disarray, dozens of cases of diarrhoea have been reported among young children (WKI). On the 26th, cholera claimed its first death in Iraq, in Kirkuk (AFP). It is likely that the drought, which limits access to drinking water and increases pollution, plays a role in this resurgence.

IRAN: REPRESSION AGAINST KURDISH TEACHERS; FINGER-CUTTING MACHINE INSTALLED IN EVIN PRISON

The economic situation in Iran continues to deteriorate, hitting hard not only the poorest, but now also the middle class. Impoverishment has become widespread. The currency has collapsed to its lowest value ever recorded: on the 12th, it was trading at 332,000 rials to the dollar, five times more than in 2018; in 2015, when the nuclear deal was reached, it was 32,000 rials... (AP) At the end of March, annual inflation reached 40.1% (compared to 36.4% a year earlier) and unemployment 9.2%, figures that many economists say are underestimated. The government of the ultraconservative President Ebrahim Raisi has aggravated the problems of survival of Iranians by decreeing in May the abolition of subsidies on several basic food products, including flour, thus multiplying the price of pasta and especially bread, last resort of the poorest. Demonstrations against the high cost of living have become almost daily. An interviewee, head of a family, testifies to his concern about the future: "If our washing machine broke down, I would have to pay two months' income to replace it" (Le Monde).

These economic difficulties come at a time of already difficult circumstances, with the drought particularly severe in the centre of the country. The drought sparked protests last November that were met with violent repression, and farmers interviewed by *Radio Farda* this month said the situation had not improved at all. The water shortage is due to reduced rainfall and drought, but also to years of poor management...

On 23 May, the collapse of a ten-storey building in Abadan (Khuzestan) belonging to a prominent person close to the government killed at least 33 people. By 6 June, the death toll had risen to 41. This disaster crystallised general anger against the authorities, provoking first in Khuzestan, then throughout the country, daily demonstrations against their incompetence and corruption. After calling for the prosecution and punishment of those responsible, the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a televised statement blamed the protests on "Iran's enemies": "Today, [he said], our enemies' greatest hope for dealing a blow to the country lies in the popular protests" (The Guardian).

This accusation has only strengthened protests whose slogans now link themes related to daily needs, such as the price of basic products, bread, sugar, eggs, meat... and the corruption of the regime. It is because those close to the government continue to get richer, sometimes even insolently, while the vast majority of Iranians sink into misery. When, at the beginning of the month, pensioners demonstrated for two days in more than a dozen cities to demand an increase in their pensions, the government pledged a 60% increase, but the demonstrators said it was not enough and continued to chant: "Our expenses are in dollars, our income in rials". They questioned Iran's regional policy with: "Leave Palestine alone, think of us", ridiculed Khamenei's "enemy" speech with: "They lie to us saying America is our enemy, [but] our real enemy is here", and radically challenged the government with: "Down with the Islamic Republic" or (even more directly): "Death to Raisi" (Farda). Demonstrations by pensioners continued throughout the month in several Iranian cities, including Kermanshah, Arak, Rasht, Khorramabad, Sari, Dorud and Zanjan (NCRI).

The stalemate in the nuclear negotiations does not augur well for a rapid lifting of US sanctions, especially as Iran is taking advantage of the stalemate to accelerate its enrichment programme. According to experts, the country could already start building a bomb if it so decides. On the 8th, thirty states sitting on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted a severe resolution submitted by the United States and Europeans warning Tehran, whose lack of cooperation it condemned. In particular, the signatories criticise Iran for failing to provide a “*technically credible*” explanation for the presence of traces of enriched uranium found at three undeclared sites.

Tehran denounced the vote of the resolution as “*a political, incorrect and unconstructive act*”, “*based [...] on false information fabricated by the Zionist regime [Israel]*”, and in retaliation announced that it would remove 27 of the surveillance cameras installed when the treaty was signed in 2015 from its nuclear sites. The IAEA condemned this decision on the 9th while Berlin, London and Paris called on Iran in a joint statement to “*stop the nuclear escalation*” and “*urgently accept now the deal on the table*” since March. In addition to the deactivation of the cameras, Iran informed the IAEA of the inauguration of two new centrifuge cascades at the Natanz site. The agency still retains 40 cameras at the site, but its Director General, Rafael Grossi, said this led to “*less transparency, more doubt*”. In response, the Iranian President said: “*We will not back down*”.

However, at the end of his surprise visit to Tehran on 25 June, the head of European diplomacy, Josep Borrell, declared alongside his Iranian counterpart that the talks could resume soon (*Reuters*). This is because, given the risk of oil shortages caused

by the Ukrainian conflict and the dramatic situation of the Iranian economy, the two parties could accept compromises...

Internally, of the many protests this month, it was the teachers’ movement and the repression it provoked that had the most resonance on social media. This movement has spread throughout the country, but has been particularly active in Kurdistan, where wage demands have been compounded by those related to cultural repression. At the end of May, a state television station tried to find external causes for the movement by linking it to two French teachers arrested during their visit to Iran, Cécile Kohler and her companion, Jacques Paris. It should be noted that, at the end of June, Anisha Asadollahi and her husband Keyvan Mohtadi, arrested on 9 May after having served as interpreters for the two French visitors, were still in prison. Asadollahi’s mother took direct aim at the authorities in a video posted online in which she said: “*You arrested the brightest people in the country to make up for your own ineptitude and incompetence*”.

According to HRANA, quoting the *Kurdpa* news agency, teacher unionist Majid Karimi was arrested on 31 May and held incommunicado when he and several others came to the Revolutionary Guards Intelligence office to ask about another union activist, Masoud Farhikhteh, who had previously been arrested. On 8 June, teachers in Kermanshah protested against the arrests and, concerned about the health of their detained colleagues, asked them to stop their hunger strike. On 10 June, it was reported that Eskandar Lotfi, a teacher from Mariwan arrested on 30 May, had been transferred to an unknown location. He had been on hunger strike since his arrest to protest against attempts by

interrogators to extract a confession from him. On the 15th, security forces arrested 10 teacher trade-unionists in Saqqez and Divandarreh (Kordestan) and transferred them to an unknown location. On the same day, it was reported that Mohammad-Reza Moradi, one of the leaders of the Kurdistan Teachers’ Association in Sanandaj, had been arrested the previous evening at his home (*Hengaw*).

On the call of the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers’ Professional Associations, teachers, both working and retired, gathered across the country to protest against the widespread arrests of teachers. However, it turned out that the arrests in Kurdistan were only the beginning of a wave of repression that spread across the country the next day.

Among the protesters’ demands are the immediate release of detained teachers, the implementation of the “*job classification plan*” adopted by the Iranian Parliament, the reduction of the pension gap, free education for students and a maximum number of 16 students per class.

Prior to the demonstrations, security forces attempted to intimidate teachers from participating, and numerous preventive arrests were made. The rallies themselves were heavily repressed. In Tehran, security forces prevented protesters from gathering near the parliament. In Saqqez and Sanandaj, large numbers of plainclothes security officers were deployed. On the 17th, the HRANA website published a list of 51 arrested teachers whose identities it was able to verify (<https://www.en-hrana.org/mass-arrests-of-teachers-and-teacher-union-activists-in-cities-of-iran/>). The list includes 21 arrests in Saqqez alone, 3 arrests in each of Mariwan, Divandarreh and

Sanandaj, and one in Delfan, Lorestan. On the 18th, 10 teachers imprisoned during the demonstrations went on hunger strike in Saqez to protest against their detention. On the 20th, security forces arrested teacher unionist Reza Tahmasbi without showing a warrant and held him incommunicado (HRANA).

On the 21st, the Washington Kurdish Institute (WKI) published a list of Kurdish activists and teachers arrested in Saqez, Urmia, Sanandaj (Sena) and Kermanshah for demonstrating against their deteriorating living conditions. They include Arshak Gonbadi in Urmia, Yousif Farjan, Ramazan Farjam and Farzad Hajizadeh in Mako, and Mohammed Muradi in Sanandaj. Many of the arrested teachers have gone on hunger strike. In addition, the regime has threatened to arrest those who post critical texts on social media.

On the 23rd, HRANA published a list of at least 230 teachers arrested since the beginning of May, plus 23 summoned by the authorities, with the list of those whose identity it was able to confirm (<https://www.enhrana.org/iranian-teachers-protests-update-230-arrests-during-last-two-months/>). The organisation also published information on the situation of Zahra Mohammadi, a young Kurdish teacher from the Nojin association who is serving a five-year sentence in Sanandaj prison for “organising people to disrupt national security”. According to HRANA, despite her intestinal problems, Mohammadi, who is incarcerated in the wing for violent crimes, is still being denied proper care and release on medical grounds.

On the other hand, the Iranian judicial system continues to be marked by death sentences and inhumane punishments. According to the Norwegian

based NGO *Iran Human Rights* (IHR), the judiciary executed 12 prisoners from the Baluchi community, 11 men and one woman, by hanging in Zahedan prison on the morning of the 6th. The latter had been convicted of the murder of her husband. Six of the men were involved in drug trafficking, and five were also convicted of murder. According to IHR, Baloch prisoners accounted for 21% of the 2021 executions, although they represent only 2 to 6% of the population. All opposition NGOs make a similar observation for all ethnic minorities in Iran, be it Baluchis, Kurds or Arabs. For *Amnesty International*, “The death penalty has been used disproportionately against members of ethnic minorities accused of vaguely worded offences such as ‘enmity against God’”. Furthermore, IHR estimates that the number of executions in 2021 increased by 25% compared to 2020 (AFP). According to HRANA, two more prisoners were executed on the 8th in Ilam and Khalkhal prisons, and on the 9th in Amol and Kermanshah prisons, two more prisoners were hanged for murder. None of these executions were officially announced, as were the majority of those carried out in the country. On the 13th, HRANA reported further executions in Kermanshah, Gorgan and Shiraz, a total of 9 hangings from the 6th to the 12th, including a Baluchi hanged in Gorgan on the 12th in Shiraz for a drug-related offence. Finally, on the 20th, political prisoner Firooz Musaloo was executed in Urmia prison. He had been sentenced to death for “enmity with God” (*Moharebeh*) and “membership of an anti-regime political party” (HRANA).

On the 8th, the *Kurdish Human Rights Network* (KHRN) reported the transfer of 8 prisoners from Tehran to another prison for the amputation of their fingers. The KHRN had previously reported the transfer of 3 prisoners from Urmia to Tehran to undergo this

punishment, to which 5 others were also sentenced. According to messages circulating on social networks, 1 prisoner from Kermanshah prison transferred to Evin, near Tehran, has already undergone the sentence. In interviews with KHRN, the families of some of the prisoners have called for the immediate intervention of international human rights organisations and the UN Human Rights Council to prevent the amputations (KHRN).

In a joint statement, the Washington-based Abdorrahman Boroumand Center (ABC), which campaigns for human rights in Iran, and the KHRN said they were “particularly concerned by credible reports that a machine recently installed in a room of Tehran’s Evin prison clinic has been used to perform at least one amputation in recent days” (AFP). Images of a machine with a rotating blade have been appearing on social networks for several weeks. On the 22nd, the United Nations Office for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a statement urging Iran to desist from carrying out this punishment. According to OHCHR spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani, a first attempt to transfer the men took place on 11 June, but was halted due to resistance from fellow prisoners (*UN News*). Iran is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which prohibits “torture” or “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (Article 7) such as amputation, but Iran’s Shariah-based Penal Code provides for amputation for crimes such as repeat theft. The ABC says it has recorded at least 356 sentences of amputation since the Islamic Revolution in 1979, but stresses that the total is probably much higher (AFP).

Other arrests and convictions in Kurdistan earlier this month include those carried out in Kamyaran, Sadiq Mosabah (Bokan)

and Majeed Karimi (Sanandaj). Several Kakai Kurds were also arrested in Sahneh (WKI). On the 27th, 4 citizens of Oshnavieh were arrested without warrant and held incommunicado. The next day, the Court of Appeal upheld a 5-year prison sentence on Mohammad-Khaled Hamzehpour, a resident of Oshnavieh, along with 4 others, for "belonging to an anti-regime group" (HRANA).

In addition, 8 environmental activists from the *Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation* arrested in 2018 and charged with espionage remain in prison. One member of the group, Kavus Seyed-Emami, died in custody under suspicious circumstances shortly after the arrest. On 3 June, more than 50 environmentalists wrote an open letter to the Iranian authorities demanding their release. Among the signatories is the renowned British anthropologist Jane Goodall. The head of the United Nations Environment Programme, Inger Andersen, made a separate

appeal for the release of the environmentalists on the 4th (Farda).

The situation in prisons remains marked by injustice, violations of prison rules and precariousness, particularly for prisoners with health problems, who are frequently denied treatment. For example, Kamal Sharifi, in his 14th year of detention out of the 30 he has to serve in Minab prison, sent to hospital after a heart attack, was sent back to prison before his treatment was completed. Barely able to walk, he is kept in the violent prisoners' wing. Sharifi was convicted in 1998 for supporting the PDKI (HRANA).

On the 22nd, Kurdish political prisoner Keyvan Rashozadeh, who had been on hunger strike in Urmia prison since the 13th, was put in solitary confinement. Faced with the authorities' refusal to grant him provisional freedom, Rashozadeh had started his protest by refusing to drink and sewing his lips together. Arrested along with 4 others in October 2019 and held incommuni-

cado without contact with his family for interrogation, he was later sentenced to 7.5 years in prison for belonging to the Komala (KHRA).

On the 25th, Saada Khedirzadeh, a Kurdish prisoner who had just given birth by caesarean section, was returned to her cell in Urmia prison before her recovery was complete. Khedirzadeh had been arrested in Piranshahr in October 2021. Suffering from kidney, heart and lumbar disc problems, she remained on hunger strike for 11 days earlier this month to protest against the lack of treatment. She called off the hunger strike when she was promised parole, but so far the Mahabad court has denied her parole...

Finally, Iran seems to continue its terrorist activities abroad. On 6 June, Akbar Safar Almas, a member of a Kurdish exile organisation, was injured by a bomb in Erbil. Although the attack has not been claimed, the Iranian regime remains the prime suspect because of its history of assassinating dissidents in Iraqi Kurdistan.

NATO: KURDISH CONCERNS AFTER ACCESSION AGREEMENT

On 28 June, the Turkish President lifted the veto on NATO membership for Sweden and Finland that he had held since mid-May. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters he was "delighted" with an agreement that addresses "Turkey's concerns about arms exports and the fight against terrorism", and US President Joe Biden, in a statement issued by the White House, "congratulated Turkey, Finland and Sweden" on the signing of the agreement (AFP).

Turkey had been blocking the two Nordic countries' membership of the Atlantic Alliance for months, accusing them of harbouring PKK militants as well as supporters of the preacher Fethullah Gülen, named by the Turkish President as the inspiration behind the

failed coup of July 2016. Moreover, the strong man of Ankara used the issue of accession as a means of pressure to obtain the lifting of the arms export blockades decided against it by Stockholm after the Turkish military intervention in northern Syria in October 2019. In a statement, the Turkish presidency said: "Turkey got what it wanted". It seems that, on the side of Washington, Ankara still has to negotiate to hope to obtain some concessions on the F-16 aircraft, whose sale Washington suspended after Turkey bought the Russian S-400 defence system... What Ankara has obtained, in all likelihood, are concessions from Finland – and above all from Sweden – on the Kurds. And perhaps, beyond these two countries, of Europe?

The two most worrying points are

Europe's relations with Rojava and the extraditions of Kurdish exiles. On this second point, Ankara did not waste time: the day after the agreement, Turkey asked Sweden and Finland to extradite 33 people, including 17 Kurdish militants (6 in Finland and 11 in Sweden). If they are indeed extradited, their fate is clear: they will be tried for terrorism (France Info). Given the way terrorism is defined in Turkey, and after life sentences on empty cases like that of Osman Kavala or Pinar Selek, there is real cause for concern. It is especially in Sweden, which has at least 100,000 Kurdish refugees and 8 MPs of Kurdish origin, that the concern is felt.

On the issue of relations with Rojava, there is also much to be bitter about. The Kurdish fighters

of the PYD, forming the backbone of the Kurdish-Arab Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), have served and are still serving as ground troops in the anti-ISIS Coalition, a US-led offshoot of NATO in which most Western countries are present. They have given in this fight 11,000 dead and up to 20,000 wounded, now crippled. For the time being, neither the United States nor its Russian adversary seem to want to give the Turkish army a free hand to attack them again this time. But the position of the PYD, and more broadly of Rojava and the self-management experiment of the Autonomous Administration of North-East Syria (AANES), is becoming even more precarious, between Damascus' desire in the south to regain full control of its territories and the implacable hostility of Turkey's neighbour in the north. The Rojava fighters seem more than ever to be sitting on an ejector seat... On the issue of extraditions, the

question is also what will be the medium-term impact of the concessions made to Mr Erdoğan. Will he be satisfied with a symbolic victory vis-à-vis his domestic opinion? In order to conclude the accession agreement, a compromise had to be found that would allow Erdoğan to score the diplomatic victory he needed vis-à-vis his public, without endangering human rights in Sweden and Finland... Diplomats and NATO officials worked hard to come up with the 10-point tripartite (Turkey-Sweden-Finland) agreement published just before the announcement of the accession agreement, and which purports to do this. Point 8 is the most sensitive: Sweden and Finland commit themselves *"to deal promptly and thoroughly with pending requests for expulsion or extradition of terrorist suspects from Turkey"*. The wording is vague, which is double-edged. It can be interpreted as allowing the judi-

ciary to continue to function independently, but the very fact that it can be interpreted means that a new Swedish government, for example, could change its impact. It is not only the Swedish Kurds who are concerned about the long-term consequences of the agreement. The Swedish left-wing parties have also expressed their concern.

"This is a black day in Swedish political history", said Amineh Kakabaveh, an independent Swedish leftist MP and former Kurdish peshmerga in Iran: *"We are negotiating with a regime that does not respect freedom of expression or the rights of minority groups"*, she told SVT Nyheter TV. She also said she hopes the Left Party and the Greens will join her in pressuring the Swedish government over its concessions to Turkey: *"It's not just about the Kurds, it's about Sweden not bowing to a regime like Erdoğan's"*, she said (Politico).

MIGRANTS: THE TWO-SPEED POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

We remember the odyssey of Behrouz Boochani, the Kurdish journalist from Iran who received a 2019 literary award for his book *No Friend But The Mountains*. After arriving by boat in 2013 in Australian waters, he was intercepted before he could set foot on Australian soil and sent to an Australian offshore immigration centre on Manus Island, on the other side of Papua New Guinea, well north of it. He stayed there for six years in appalling conditions before his book, written on his mobile phone and sent paragraph by paragraph to a friend by text message, was granted refugee status in New Zealand.

Canberra's policy was to discourage illegal immigrants from arriving by boat in Australia. Those who did arrive were sent to deten-

tion centres in Manus or the small eastern state of Nauru. Once there, they were given an identification number and told they could not settle permanently in Australia. Nick McKim, an Australian Green Party senator who visited Manus five times before finally being refused entry, is blunt about the practice: *"I have no hesitation in describing what happened in those camps as torture"*. He said the authorities *"could never have afforded such conditions if those camps had been in Australia"*.

After years of this policy, which resulted in 14 detainee deaths, a series of suicide attempts, some by young migrants as young as five, and at least six referrals to the International Criminal Court, the Australian scheme has been dismantled. As of last month, around 100 people remained in detention

on Nauru. Yet Britain has now taken up the concept. After seeking advice from a series of Australian political strategists, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has put in place a plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda, more than 6,000 kilometres from London. Johnson echoed Canberra's arguments that the practice would *"deter migrants"*.

Boochani reacted by calling from New Zealand on the British people to fight against this project that aims at *"copying Australia's extremely dehumanising asylum policies"*, which another Sudanese migrant said had *"not worked"*. Indeed, figures show that the number of boat arrivals has risen steadily during the implementation of these deportation measures: so much for the deterrent effect.

Another Kurdish migrant, Barham Hama Ali, from Iraq, was to be among the first to be sent back from London to Kigali on 14 June. He told AFP that he was transferred shortly after his arrival on 23 May to a detention centre near Heathrow airport, where he was given a *"ticket to Rwanda"*. On 14 May, he was taken to a military base: *"There were seven of us migrants, each of us was escorted by four guards. They put us on the plane by force"*, he says. *"Apart from me, there was another Kurd from Suleimaniyeh, two Kurds from Iran, an Iranian, a Vietnamese and an Albanian"...*

But the specially chartered plane will not take off: the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) blocked the deportations just a few hours before the scheduled take-off time, leaving the plane grounded. Ali was taken back to the detention centre... The ECHR ruled that the British judiciary should examine in detail the legality of the scheme, which should be done in July. The UK government said it was determined to pursue its strategy.

Other migrants from Kurdistan are also facing such inhumane and illegal refoulement practices. While Ukrainian refugees are immediately granted temporary residence permits, the plight of non-European migrants still stranded at the Belarus-Poland border has largely gone under the radar. Yet *Human Rights Watch* continues to warn about their situation: *"The illegal deportations of migrants to Belarus and their subsequent mistreatment there stand in stark contrast to Poland's open-door policy for people fleeing the war in Ukraine"*, the NGO published on 7 June.

Several testimonies confirm these practices: *"When the [Polish] border guards came, we asked for asylum and showed them papers where we had written 'asylum' in Polish and English"*, explained a 23-year-old Kurd from Iraq. *"They told us: 'You don't need these papers' and threw them away"*. On two occasions, [migrants testify], Polish border guards hit them with batons or kicked them and pushed them around before forcing them back to the Belarusian side... An

Iranian gay migrant fearing for his life if returned to his country was refused asylum forms, and when he refused to sign the document agreeing to be sent back to Belarus, he was beaten up and thrown back across the wire. Some testify that even when they were able to obtain asylum papers from Polish volunteers, the border guards would confiscate them before deporting them anyway. According to another witness, when he asked for his passport back, he was beaten with a baton. Finally, there are reports of similar behaviour by Lithuanian guards. In addition, charges of rape have been brought against Belarusian border guards...

While Polish volunteers working on the Polish-Ukrainian border are being hailed as *"heroes"*, at least five activists have been prosecuted for providing humanitarian aid to stranded migrants and asylum seekers from the Middle East, Asia and Africa at the Polish border with Belarus. They face up to eight years in prison for *"organising illegal immigration"*.

The New York Times

Michael Crowley
and Steven Erlanger
May 30, 2022

For NATO, Turkey Is a Disruptive Ally

WASHINGTON — When President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey threatened this month to block NATO membership for Finland and Sweden, Western officials were exasperated — but not shocked.

Within an alliance that operates by consensus, the Turkish strongman has come to be seen as something of a stickup artist. In 2009, he blocked the appointment of a new NATO chief from Denmark, complaining that the country was too tolerant of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad and too sympathetic to “Kurdish terrorists” based in Turkey. It took hours of cajoling by Western leaders, and a face-to-face promise from President Barack Obama that NATO would appoint a Turk to a leadership position, to satisfy Mr. Erdogan.

After a rupture in relations between Turkey and Israel the next year, Mr. Erdogan prevented the alliance from working with the Jewish state for six years. A few years later, Mr. Erdogan delayed for months a NATO plan to fortify Eastern European countries against Russia, again citing Kurdish militants and demanding that the alliance declare ones operating in Syria to be terrorists. In 2020, Mr. Erdogan sent a gas-exploration ship backed by fighter jets close to Greek waters, causing France to send ships in support of Greece, also a NATO member.

Now the Turkish leader is back in the role of obstructionist, and is once again invoking the Kurds, as he charges that Sweden and Finland sympathize with the Kurdish militants he has made his main enemy.

“These countries have almost be-



(photo) President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey has accused Finland and Sweden of sympathizing with the Kurdish militants he has made his main enemy. Murat Cetinmuhurdar/Presidential Press Office, via Reuters

come guesthouses for terrorist organizations,” he said this month. “It is not possible for us to be in favor.”

Mr. Erdogan’s stance is a reminder of a long-festering problem for NATO, which currently has 30 members. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine may have given the alliance a new sense of mission, but NATO must still contend with an authoritarian leader willing to use his leverage to gain political points at home by blocking consensus — at least for a time.

It is a situation that plays to the advantage of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, who has grown friendlier with Mr. Erdogan in recent years. For the Russian leader, the rejection of Swedish and Finnish admission into NATO would be a significant victory.

The quandary would be simpler were it not for Turkey’s importance to the alliance. The country joined NATO in 1952 after aligning with the West against the Soviet Union;

Turkey gives the alliance a crucial strategic position at the intersection of Europe and Asia, astride both the Middle East and the Black Sea. It hosts a major U.S. air base where American nuclear weapons are stored, and Mr. Erdogan has blocked Russian warships headed toward Ukraine.

Mr. Erdogan met with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in September. The rejection of Sweden and Finland into NATO would be a significant victory for Mr. Putin. Sputnik, via Reuters

But under Mr. Erdogan, Turkey has increasingly become a problem to be managed. As prime minister and then as president, he has tilted his country away from Europe while practicing an authoritarian and populist brand of Islamist politics, especially since a failed coup attempt in 2016.

He has purchased an advanced missile system from Russia that NATO officials call a threat to their integrated defense systems, and

in 2019 he mounted a military incursion to battle Kurds in northern Syria who were aiding the fight against the Islamic State with U.S. support.

“In my four years there, it was quite often 27 against one,” said Ivo H. Daalder, a U.S. ambassador to NATO during the Obama administration, when the alliance had 28 members.

Mr. Erdogan’s objections to the membership of Sweden and Finland have even renewed questions about whether NATO might be better off without Turkey.

An [opinion essay](#) this month that was co-written by Joseph I. Lieberman, a former independent U.S. senator from Connecticut, argued that Mr. Erdogan’s Turkey would flunk the alliance’s standards for democratic governance in prospective new member states. The essay, published by The Wall Street Journal, warned that Ankara’s policies, including a coziness with Mr. Putin, had undermined NATO’s interests and that the alliance should explore ways of ejecting Turkey.

“Turkey is a member of NATO, but under Mr. Erdogan it no longer subscribes to the values that underpin this great alliance,” wrote Mr. Lieberman and Mark D. Wallace, the chief executive of the Turkish Democracy Project, a group critical of Mr. Erdogan.

Some members of Congress have said as much. “Turkey under Erdogan should not and cannot be seen as an ally,” Senator Bob Menendez of New Jersey, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said after Turkey’s 2019 incursion into Syria.

But NATO is a military alliance, and Turkey, with the second-largest army in the organization, an advanced defense industry and its crucial geographic position, plays a vital role.

Western officials say that Turkey would only cause more problems as a resentful NATO outsider — and one that could align itself more closely with Russia.

“Turkey has undermined its own image,” said Alper Coskun, a former Turkish diplomat who is now a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. But, he added, “it is still a critical member of the alliance.”

Once again, the question is what will mollify Mr. Erdogan and ensure his support for admitting Sweden and Finland.

President Biden underscored U.S. support for the move when he [hosted the two nations' leaders](#) at the White House this month and praised a larger NATO as a check against Russian power. “Biden took an extremely exposed, high-visibility position by inviting them to Washington,” said James F. Jeffrey, a U.S. ambassador to Turkey during the Obama administration.

Most analysts believe that Mr. Erdogan will not ultimately block the accession of Sweden and Finland, but that he wants to highlight Turkey's own security concerns and make domestic political gains before elections in his country next year.

President Biden underscored U.S. support for admitting Finland and Sweden into NATO when he hosted the two nations' leaders at the White House this month. Sarah Silbiger for The New York Times

Mr. Erdogan is mainly concerned with Sweden's longtime support for the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or P.K.K., which seeks an independent Kurdish state on territory partly within Turkey's borders.

The P.K.K., which has attacked nonmilitary targets and killed civilians in Turkey, is outlawed in that country and is designated by both

the United States and the European Union as a terrorist organization, although some governments, including Sweden, view it more sympathetically as a Kurdish nationalist movement.

The United States has also backed its affiliated fighters in Syria, the Y.P.G., or People's Protection Units, who helped to battle the Islamic State and whom Mr. Erdogan attacked in his 2019 incursion into the country.

The Turkish president wants the Y.P.G. to be designated as a terrorist group as well.

Mr. Erdogan accuses both Finland and Sweden of harboring [followers of Fethullah Gulen](#), a Turkish cleric living in U.S. exile, whom he blames for the 2016 coup. Turkey is requesting the extradition of roughly 35 people it says are involved with Kurdish separatists or Mr. Gulen.

Mr. Erdogan also objects to Swedish and Finnish arms embargoes against his country, which were imposed after the 2019 incursion into Syria. Sweden is already discussing lifting the embargo given current events in Ukraine.

Some analysts say that Mr. Erdogan's government views the P.K.K. much the way Washington saw Al Qaeda 20 years ago, and that the West cannot dismiss the concerns if it hopes to do business with Turkey.

Biden administration officials downplay the standoff and expect Mr. Erdogan to reach a compromise with Finland and Sweden. Turkish officials met in Ankara with Finnish and Swedish counterparts for several hours last week.

Julianne Smith, the U.S. ambassador to NATO, said in an interview that “this appears to be an issue that they have with Sweden and Finland, so we'll leave it in their hands.” She added that the United States would provide assistance if needed.

Appearing with Finland's foreign minister in Washington on Friday, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said he was “confident that

we will work through this process swiftly, and that things will move forward with both countries.”

Emre Peker, a London-based director for Europe at the Eurasia Group, a private consulting firm, said that he did not believe that Mr. Erdogan was seeking concessions from Washington. He expressed confidence that Turkey could work out an agreement with Sweden and Finland with the mediation of the NATO secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg.

Mr. Erdogan's main priorities are getting his country's security concerns about Kurdish separatists heard and getting the arms embargoes lifted, Mr. Peker said.

Some American analysts are skeptical. Eric S. Edelman, a former U.S. ambassador to Turkey and Finland, warned that Mr. Erdogan could be seeking to curry favor with Mr. Putin — or at least ease the anger in Moscow over the sale of lethal drones to Ukraine's military by a private Turkish company.

“He has this very complicated relationship with Putin that he has to maintain,” Mr. Edelman said. “This is a good way of throwing a little bone to Putin — ‘I'm still useful to you.’”

A protest in Istanbul against Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Most analysts believe Mr. Erdogan ultimately will not block Sweden and Finland from joining NATO. Burak Kara/Getty Images

Others believe the Turkish leader wants a payoff from Washington. Mr. Erdogan is angry that the United States denied Turkey access to the F-35 stealth fighter after his 2017 purchase of the Russian S-400 missile system. Turkey is now lobbying instead to buy enhanced F-16 fighters but has met stiff resistance in Congress from the likes of Mr. Menendez.

Mr. Erdogan may also be seeking presidential attention. He had a friendly rapport with President Donald J. Trump, but Mr. Biden has kept his distance.

“This is a man who needs to be at center stage,” said Mr. Daalder, the former U.S. ambassador to NATO. “This is a way to say: ‘Hey, I'm still here. You need to pay attention to my issues.’”

Mr. Peker believes that an agreement can be negotiated between Turkey and the Nordic countries before a NATO summit in Madrid next month, which would allow for the accession protocols to be signed there.

More likely, some analysts say, Mr. Biden will have to make a nod toward Mr. Erdogan in Madrid to clinch his assent, as Mr. Obama had to do at a NATO summit in 2009 to secure the appointment of Anders Fogh Rasmussen as secretary general.

At a [talk hosted by the Council on Foreign Relations](#) last week, Representative Adam Smith, Democrat of Washington and the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, suggested that the stakes of Swedish and Finnish membership were great enough to warrant direct U.S. involvement.

“We need to sit down and we need to cut a deal,” Mr. Smith said. “And we need to get aggressive about it, like now.”

Michael Crowley reported from Washington, and Steven Erlanger from Brussels. Eric Schmitt contributed reporting from Washington.

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En Turquie, le tour de vis d'Erdogan menace la société civile d'asphyxie

ENQUÊTE - À un an des élections, le président turc accélère la répression. Les tribunaux sous pression multiplient les condamnations d'opposants. Ce mercredi s'ouvre le procès de la principale association féministe du pays.

Fidan Ataselim s'excuse : elle n'a pas beaucoup de temps. Entre les réunions avec les militantes, les audiences au palais de justice pour épauler une femme qui a échappé à la mort, ou la famille d'une autre qui n'a pas eu cette « chance », la journée file et Fidan fonce comme un taxi dans Istanbul. Cette Turque aux yeux rieurs, aux cheveux noirs coupés en une frange épaisse, transforme sa colère en verve. Son association, la plateforme féministe qu'elle a vu grandir, soutenir tant de victimes depuis 2010, et emporter l'année dernière le prix International Gender Equality, pourrait bientôt être interdite.

« Vous vous rendez compte ? Les autorités enquêtaient sur nous depuis six ans et on ne l'a jamais su ! » gronde la secrétaire générale de cette ONG qui porte son objectif dans son nom : « Nous stopperons les féminicides » (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız). « On n'a appris que mi-avril qu'un procès s'ouvrirait contre nous et que la première audience aurait lieu le 1er juin. C'est un procès politique, dont le verdict sera politique », tranche Fidan Ataselim.

« Suite à la plainte de nombreux hommes sur le site internet de la présidence de



La féministe Fidan Ataselim (à droite avec la frange) lors d'une manifestation le 28 avril 2022 à Ankara contre le retrait de la Turquie de la convention d'Istanbul, un traité qui engage ses signataires à prévenir les violences faites aux femmes. ADEM ALTAN/AFP

la République », poursuit-elle, le parquet d'Istanbul s'est autosaisi et un juge a accepté le dossier. L'association est accusée de « mener des activités contraires au droit et à la morale ». On lui reproche, entre autres, de chercher à « détruire la structure familiale sous couvert de défendre les droits des femmes ».

Fidan Ataselim a un rire de défi en répétant ces mots. À ses yeux, c'est parce que le mouvement féministe devient chaque jour plus fort et mieux organisé qu'il est une cible du pouvoir. Ces femmes sont les seules, ou presque, à n'avoir pas déserté les rues sous l'effet de la répression de l'après-tentative de putsch de juillet 2016. « Ce qui fait le succès

de notre mobilisation, c'est que nous ne luttons pas seulement pour l'égalité des droits, nous luttons pour notre vie, explique Fidan Ataselim. L'an dernier, des hommes ont tué 280 femmes en Turquie, et la mort de 217 autres a été jugée suspecte. C'est terrifiant. Mais paradoxalement, ça fait tomber les murs de peur. Qu'est-ce qui pourrait nous arriver de pire que la mort ? »

Depuis 2014, les manifestations de la plateforme sont interdites, ce qui ne les empêche pas de rassembler des milliers de personnes. Avec ce procès, Fidan Ataselim estime que le pouvoir franchit une nouvelle étape dans la répression de la société civile, qui est loin de se limiter au mouvement fé-

ministe : « On sent nettement la pression qui monte à l'approche des élections présidentielle et législatives de juin 2023. Regardez ce qui s'est passé ces deux derniers mois seulement ! »

La militante cite, pêle-mêle, le procès en dissolution du parti pro-kurde HDP (Parti démocratique des peuples), la peine de prison à vie du mécène Osman Kavala, accusé d'avoir financé les manifestations du parc Gezi en juin 2013, les quatre ans de prison infligés à Canan Kaptancıoğlu, représentante à Istanbul du principal parti d'opposition (CHP, Parti républicain du peuple), la peine de prison réclamée contre le maire d'Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu, qui comparait aussi ce 1er juin... « J'espère qu'on ne verra pas pire que ça, mais je crains que le pouvoir ait l'intention d'alimenter ce climat de peur jusqu'aux élections », prédit Fidan Ataselim.

Tarik Beyhan, chargé de campagnes à Amnesty International, dénonce une stratégie de « criminalisation ». « Aucun pouvoir ne décrira jamais comme telles ses pressions contre les défenseurs des droits de l'homme, parce que nous sommes considérés comme des acteurs légitimes, observe-t-il. Alors,

que dit le pouvoir ? Il nous accuse d'être des terroristes, des agents, des traîtres, des financeurs d'activités illégales... Et nous, que pouvons-nous faire ? Certainement pas attendre qu'un super-héros vienne nous sauver ! Tout ce que nous pouvons faire, c'est continuer à lutter. »

Au cœur de cette stratégie, il y a la justice, les magistrats à l'indépendance de papier, en particulier depuis l'adoption en 2017 d'un régime hyperprésidentiel. La réforme constitutionnelle a notamment permis au chef de l'État et à sa majorité parlementaire d'avoir la haute main sur le Conseil des juges et procureurs (HSK), donc sur leurs nominations et révocations.

Le « procès de Gezi » en a démontré les effets. Le 25 avril, après quatre ans et demi de détention provisoire, un tribunal dont l'un des juges est un membre de l'AKP (Parti de la justice et du développement du président Recep Tayyip Erdogan) a non seulement condamné le philanthrope Osman Kavala à la prison à vie, mais avec lui sept autres figures de la société civile à une peine de dix-huit ans. À l'issue d'un premier procès, en février 2020, ils avaient tous été acquittés. Les juges à l'origine de cette décision avaient immédiatement subi une procédure disciplinaire.

« La justice n'a jamais été indépendante. Autrefois, nous nous plaignions d'une justice dépendante des autorités militaires, se souvient Eren Keskin, avocate

et vice-présidente de l'Association des droits de l'homme (IHD). Mais il faut souligner une chose : la justice était divisée en divers cercles d'influence. On trouvait toujours un juge ou un procureur à qui parler. Aujourd'hui, la justice dépend d'un seul homme. Les magistrats n'ont aucune liberté, et ils ont peur des avocats au point de s'enfermer dans leurs bureaux pour ne pas nous voir. »

« Quand j'entre dans une salle d'audience, je me sens totalement inutile. C'est très dur, à la fois professionnellement et humainement », confirme sa jeune collègue Benan Molu, qui défend l'ancien chef du parti prokurde HDP, Selahattin Demirtas, emprisonné depuis novembre 2016. « Je me souviens qu'en novembre 2018, la première fois que la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme (CEDH) a ordonné la libération de Selahattin Demirtas et qu'il n'a pas été libéré, je me suis effondrée. J'ai mis une semaine à m'en remettre. Je me demandais ce que j'aurais dû ou pu faire de plus. Mais il n'y avait rien à faire de plus ! J'avais déjà obtenu la meilleure décision possible de la plus haute juridiction possible, et ça ne suffisait pas à faire libérer mon client ! »

Depuis décembre 2019, la CEDH réclame également la libération d'Osman Kavala. Son refus d'appliquer l'arrêt vaut à la Turquie une procédure d'infraction au Conseil de l'Europe, qui peut mener à son exclusion.

Eren Keskin, elle, passe son temps dans les tribunaux, comme avocate ou comme accusée. Ces cinq dernières années, elle raconte avoir affronté pas moins de 140 procès. « Depuis trente ans que je participe au mouvement de défense des droits de l'homme, je ne me souviens pas d'une période où je me serais sentie à ce point menacée et sans défense, confie-t-elle. Autrefois, les gens n'avaient pas à ce point peur de manifester dans la rue, parce qu'ils n'avaient pas à ce point peur de se retrouver en prison. »

Eren Keskin parle avec une pointe d'amertume de ce qu'elle appelle « une attitude sélective à l'égard des victimes » chez les opposants au régime. Garo Paylan, député du parti HDP menacé d'interdiction pour « soutien au terrorisme », le regrette aussi. « Le pouvoir essaye de nous exclure du champ politique. Pourtant, alors que tout le monde dans l'opposition n'a que le mot "justice" à la bouche, pas grand monde ne se lève pour dénoncer ce qui nous arrive », soupire-t-il.

Selon lui, « le plan de Tayyip Erdogan est d'interdire le HDP - qui est, je le rappelle, le deuxième plus grand parti d'opposition - avant les élections, en comptant sur le reste de l'opposition pour ne pas trop se manifester, ce qui provoquera la rancœur et la colère de nos électeurs, qui décideront peut-être de ne pas aller aux urnes. »

C'est le double calcul du chef de l'État turc, qui sait que pour l'emporter en juin 2023 malgré la crise économique (70 % d'inflation), il devra à la fois entretenir la crainte du chaos parmi les électeurs et semer la division au sein de ses opposants.

À mesure que le vote approche, un débat déchire d'ailleurs ceux qui appellent à manifester malgré la répression, et ceux qui craignent que le pouvoir n'instrumentalise à son profit le moindre mouvement de contestation. Ces appels à la prudence émanent surtout du principal parti d'opposition, le CHP. « Ils veulent nous provoquer pour nous faire descendre dans la rue. Mais nous resterons calmes, nous attendrons le jour du vote et nous rétablirons la démocratie dans ce pays », affirmait il y a quelques mois le chef du CHP, Kemal Kılıçdağ.

« Ce parti qui n'a pas gagné une élection depuis plus de vingt ans nous demande de ne pas descendre dans la rue. Tout ça pour quoi ? Pour ne pas effrayer et dissuader les électeurs de l'AKP qui seraient tentés de passer à l'opposition à cause de la crise économique », ironise Kemal Akdemir, un ouvrier d'Istanbul. Kemal lève les bras pour dire qu'il n'en a rien à faire, et qu'il n'en fera rien : « Dans une période où les familles ne peuvent plus payer leurs factures, où les jeunes comme moi rêvent de fuir à l'étranger, je refuse cet appel à la passivité. »

MONDE / ԱՇԽԱՐՀ

La Turquie bichonne sa haine anti-arménienne

A l'extérieur comme à l'intérieur de la Turquie, le 24-Avril a donné lieu à une série de provocations anti-arméniennes d'Ankara. A un an des élections présidentielles et législatives en Turquie, mais aussi du centenaire de la République turque et du Traité de Lausanne, le durcissement de la politique d'Ankara est patent, tant à l'égard de la question arménienne que vis-à-vis du processus de normalisation des relations arméno-turques.

■ PAR VAROUJAN MARDIKIAN

Les mots manquent parfois pour décrire certains gestes répugnants et le timing choisi par leur auteur, à plus forte raison quand celui-ci est censé représenter une autorité politique de premier plan. En visite le 23 avril à Montevideo (Uruguay), le ministre turc des Affaires étrangères, Mevlüt Çavusoglu, a nargué les manifestants arméniens venus protester contre sa visite devant l'ambassade de Turquie en Uruguay, en leur faisant avec sa main droite le signe distinctif du groupe ultranationaliste des Loups gris. Une vidéo postée sur les réseaux sociaux le montre effectuant ce geste, juste après avoir pénétré dans le véhicule le conduisant. Qui plus est, la



Le ministre turc des Affaires étrangères, Mevlüt Çavusoglu, fait le signe distinctif des Loups gris

date et le lieu de cette provocation sont tout sauf le fruit du hasard, puisque celle-ci tombe à la veille de la commémoration du Génocide des Arméniens, et sur le sol du premier pays à l'avoir reconnu, l'Uruguay, en juin 1965.

Ce geste profondément insultant a suscité une cascade de

réactions indignées. Le président uruguayen, Luis Lacalle Pou, a estimé que l'attitude de Mevlüt Çavusoglu devrait être "fortement critiquée", avant de souligner que "la communauté [arménienne] est blessée, et à juste titre". Alors que le chef de la diplomatie turque s'était rendu en Uruguay pour entamer des négociations en vue de la signature d'un accord de libre-échange commercial, le président uruguayen a fait valoir qu'"avancer en matière commerciale ne signifie pas que Montevideo soit d'accord avec la politique intérieure ou extérieure de l'autre partie". Dès le lendemain, le ministre uruguayen des Affaires étrangères, Francisco Bustillo, a qualifié d'"inadmissible" l'attitude du chef de la diplomatie turque, avant de souligner que le gouvernement uruguayen rejetait "tout geste insultant générateur de violence physique ou morale". Cela n'empêchera pas Mevlüt Çavusoglu, quelques jours plus tard, de justifier son geste, "la réponse nécessaire aux comportements désagréables" des manifestants. En réponse à cette série de provocations, le Sénat uruguayen décidera à l'unanimité, le 3 mai, de suspendre la nomination de Hugo Cayrus comme nouvel ambassadeur d'Uruguay en Turquie, sur proposition de la sénatrice de l'opposition Liliam Kechichian.

Garo Paylan menacé, Osman Kavala condamné

Lorsque l'auteur d'un tel geste est le ministre turc des Affaires étrangères en exercice et qu'il l'assume avec autant de cynisme, il envoie un signal de passage à l'action aux organisations chargées de semer la haine et la terreur. On l'a bien constaté, hélas, à Bruxelles, où le monument dédié au Génocide des Arméniens a été profané, deux jours plus tard, dans la nuit du 25 au 26 avril (voir l'article p. 47). Pour le Comité de défense de la Cause arménienne (CDCA) de Belgique et la Fédération euro-arménienne pour la justice et la démocratie (basée à Bruxelles), les symboles et logos peints à la bombe

client de l'Arménie et les exportations arméniennes vers la Russie se sont élevées à 850 m USD en 2021, soit environ 27% du total. Les exportations arméniennes de fruits et légumes vers la Russie représentent 98% de ses exportations agricoles ; de même, 78% de ses exportations d'alcools forts y sont destinées. Mais malgré cela, l'Arménie accuse toujours un déficit commercial d'environ un milliard USD avec la Russie.

Inversement, l'Arménie importe de Russie la totalité du gaz qu'elle utilise pour le chauffage et la production d'électricité et 99% de ses importations de blé. Ces produits de base sont évalués en dollars sur les marchés internationaux et le passage au rouble pourra protéger l'Arménie contre la volatilité des taux de change. Cela s'est produit dernièrement lorsque le rouble a perdu environ la moitié de sa valeur après l'invasion de l'Ukraine ; mais il a rebondi après que Moscou a imposé des contrôles de capitaux et est intervenue massivement, rendant la monnaie russe non convertible.

La logique derrière l'utilisation des monnaies nationales est que les deux économies sont étroitement liées par les échanges et les envois de fonds de l'importante population arménienne travaillant en Russie.

Pour l'Arménie, il est avantageux de payer les marchandises russes en roubles puisqu'elle reçoit des sommes importantes dans cette monnaie ; les règlements en monnaies nationales permettent aussi d'éviter les coûts de change et de transaction. Ainsi, si l'Arménie reçoit des roubles et paie les importations en cette monnaie, il n'y a pas de problème : l'État ou la Banque centrale n'interviendront pas. Mais évidemment, ce système n'aidera pas l'Arménie à éviter les retombées de la crise économique russe.

Les sanctions contre la Russie se sont rapidement fait sentir en Arménie, qui a été forcée d'augmenter son taux d'intérêt de base à 9,25% il y a quelques semaines. Lorsque le rouble a reculé les produits étrangers sont devenus trop chers pour les Russes et les exportateurs arméniens ont été obligés de signer des contrats en roubles ; mais maintenant, malheureusement, ils reçoivent des paiements en monnaie dépréciée. Les exportations arméniennes ne sont pas menacées pour autant. Les matières premières extraites en Arménie sont exportées en grande partie vers la Chine et les pays européens, et les produits agricoles vers la Russie.

En ce qui concerne les importations, il peut y avoir des redistributions en faveur de la Russie. Les importateurs arméniens peuvent préférer des produits russes similaires, car le commerce en roubles ou en monnaie nationale réduit les coûts de transaction.

■ Appréciation de la monnaie arménienne

Le taux de change du dram contre le dollar a gagné environ 15% ces dernières semaines ; la monnaie nationale est soutenue par l'afflux des Russes en Arménie et la décision de payer les importations du gaz russe en roubles plutôt qu'en dollars.

Après avoir plané à son taux habituel de 480-485 drams pour un dollar, le cours est monté à 518 drams à la mi-mars avant de retomber à 449,65 le 2 mai, soit un gain de 15% en six semaines environ. Il y a plusieurs explications à cela :

- Les Russes, arrivés en masse, ont changé des quantités importantes de roubles en drams ; la monnaie arménienne fortement demandée s'est renforcée et son prix a augmenté. Cette situation se prolongera tant que la demande de drams restera élevée.

- Récemment, l'Arménie a commencé à payer le gaz



L'Arménie paie le gaz russe importé en rouble

naturel russe en roubles plutôt qu'en dollars alors qu'auparavant elle transférait chaque mois 35 à 40 m USD à la Russie. Maintenant, le dollar est moins demandé et son prix baisse.

- En outre, l'activité économique en Arménie s'est ralentie et le pouvoir d'achat a diminué.

La Banque centrale ne semble pas vouloir intervenir, considérant que cette situation permettra de maîtriser l'inflation. Sinon, elle aurait pu diminuer le taux de refinancement ou acheter des dollars et ramener le taux de change au niveau précédent. En conséquence, le dram s'est tellement renforcé par rapport aux devises américaines et européennes que les taux de change ont atteint leur plus bas niveau en sept ans.

- Ainsi les taux de change du dram vis-à-vis du dollar et de l'euro ont fortement fluctué :

2 mai :	1\$ = 449,65 AMD ; 1€ = 473,26
4 mai :	1\$ = 454,63 AMD ; 1€ = 478,59
6 mai :	1\$ = 474,38 AMD ; 1€ = 502,08
11 mai :	1\$ = 466,87 AMD ; 1€ = 492,22
12 mai :	1\$ = 460,13 AMD ; 1€ = 480,24
13 mai :	1\$ = 455,94 AMD ; 1€ = 473,68

Au 2 mai, le prix d'achat du dollar dans les bureaux de change est tombé à 445 drams et le prix de vente à 452 drams.

Une hausse du dram devrait contribuer à rendre les importations moins chères, bien qu'elle puisse nuire aux exportations.

Pour le Gouverneur de la Banque centrale, l'inflation devrait baisser à 4% à moyen terme.

■ Les relations avec l'Iran

Comme on le sait, l'Iran est aussi un partenaire important pour l'Arménie.

La 17^e commission économique conjointe Iran-Arménie s'est tenue à Erevan les 10 et 11 mai. Selon les responsables iraniens, il existe un potentiel important et des possibilités de coopération dans de nombreux domaines. Si elles sont utilisées, le volume des échanges pourra considérablement augmenter. De même, les transits nord-sud et est-ouest peuvent jouer un rôle important. La construction d'une nouvelle route entre les deux pays sera aussi une étape vers la réalisation d'une coopération de haut niveau en matière de transport.

L'Iran a proposé à l'Arménie d'utiliser le port iranien Shahid Rajaei dans le sud du pays. De là, les produits seraient acheminés jusqu'à Julfa (du côté iranien de la frontière avec l'Arménie) par chemin de fer et de là jusqu'en Arménie.

Par ailleurs, le ministre arménien de l'Infrastructure visitera l'autoroute Téhéran-Nord de l'Iran et le pont de 6,5 kilomètres qui raccourcit la route entre la capitale iranienne et les provinces du Nord.

Les défis que doit surmonter l'Arménie en termes politiques, économiques et d'adaptation aux évolutions régionales restent importants ; saura-t-elle en tirer le meilleur ?

Gérard Achdjian, économiste

portent vraisemblablement la signature des Loups gris. "Il y a tout lieu de croire que les Loups gris peuvent être parrainés par l'Etat, et on ne peut exclure que les auteurs de cet acte de vandalisme aient été inspirés par le comportement inapproprié du ministre des Affaires étrangères", souligne le communiqué commun des deux organisations.

Quand, de surcroît, on découvre l'inscription d'une insulte à l'encontre de Garo Paylan, sur le monument profané, deux jours après le dépôt par le député du HDP d'un texte appelant à la reconnaissance par le Parlement turc du Génocide des Arméniens, le doute n'est plus permis.



Garo Paylan

Ankara a d'ailleurs réagi très négativement au projet de résolution présenté le 23 avril, au Parlement, par Garo Paylan. Outre une reconnaissance du Génocide des Arméniens, le texte envisage d'identifier ses responsables, de retirer leurs noms des lieux publics, de nommer ces lieux d'après les fonctionnaires ottomans qui se sont opposés au Génocide et d'accorder la citoyenneté turque aux descendants arméniens des survivants. "Si une telle chose se produit [la reconnaissance], peu importe ce que les dirigeants et les Parlements des autres pays en diront. Seule la société turque peut panser les blessures du peuple arménien. Le Génocide des Arméniens a été commis sur ces terres, et la justice ne peut être établie qu'ici en Turquie", souligne le texte.

Immédiatement, le porte-parole de l'AKP au pouvoir, Ömer Çelik, a jugé l'initiative de Garo Paylan "politiquement immorale", a exigé qu'il s'excuse auprès du peuple turc et fait savoir qu'une "procédure judiciaire" sera lancée à son encontre. Depuis des années, Ankara menace de lever l'immunité parlementaire de Garo Paylan. Dans la foulée, le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan a considéré "comme une pure trahison la manifestation d'une telle effronterie dans cette instance [ndlr : le Parlement turc] symbolisant l'expression de la volonté nationale". Il a ajouté que les autorités turques prendront des "mesures appropriées" à l'encontre du député du HDP, sans préciser toutefois lesquelles. Interrogé par la chaîne de télévision CNN-Türk, Garo Paylan a estimé que la colère des autorités était montée d'un cran, sachant que des textes similaires présentés par le passé n'avaient pas provoqué un tel tollé.

Et comme si toutes ces provocations ne suffisaient pas, la justice d'Ankara a condamné le 25 avril le philanthrope turc Osman Kavala à la prison à perpétuité, sans possibilité de libération conditionnelle. Incarcéré depuis quatre ans et demi, coupable de "tentative de renversement du gouvernement par le financement de manifestations" organisées en 2013 au Parc Gezi d'Istanbul, Osman Kavala a joué un rôle majeur, en Turquie, dans le développement de la société civile. Le verdict de son procès, éminemment politique, a suscité la colère dans le monde entier. On a assisté à une "parodie de justice", pour Amnesty International. "Ce verdict injuste montre que le procès de Gezi n'était qu'une tentative de faire taire les voix

indépendantes", a estimé l'organisation de défense des droits de l'Homme.

Le président turc Erdogan avait comparé les manifestants du Parc Gezi aux militants kurdes et aux individus accusés d'avoir orchestré le coup d'Etat manqué de juillet 2016. Il avait accusé Osman Kavala d'essayer de renverser le gouvernement, affirmant que les pays alliés de la Turquie en Occident ne relâcheraient pas "des bandits, des meurtriers et des terroristes" dans leur pays.

On rappellera en outre qu'Osman Kavala avait pris position, à plusieurs reprises, sur la question arménienne, en participant notamment aux commémorations du centenaire du Génocide des Arméniens, le 24 avril 2015, autour de la Place Taksim. A cet égard, compte tenu du climat anti-arménien décrit plus haut, il est troublant de constater que la condamnation d'Osman Kavala tombe au lendemain du 24-Avril, alors que les chefs d'accusation établis par la justice turque n'ont rien à voir avec la question arménienne. Comme s'il fallait englober la répression de toutes les voix indépendantes au sein d'une politique anti-arménienne...



Osman Kavala, le 24 avril 2015, lors de la commémoration du centenaire du Génocide des Arméniens, près de la Place Taksim, à Istanbul

Ankara veut imposer son diktat à Erévan

Cette offensive anti-arménienne de la Turquie ne se limite pas à la seule question du Génocide. Elle se décline également, sous une autre forme, en direction de l'Arménie. A l'approche du troisième tour des pourparlers sur le processus de normalisation des relations arméno-turques, Ankara a tenté à deux reprises d'exercer une pression sur Erévan.

Le 14 avril, d'abord : en annonçant que la prochaine réunion entre les représentants arméniens Rouben Roubinian et turc Serdar Kiliç se tiendra de nouveau à Vienne, le ministre turc des Affaires étrangères, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, a invité l'Arménie à se montrer "plus courageuse", en l'appelant à cesser de réclamer la tenue des réunions dans des lieux neutres. "D'une part, vous dites que les relations doivent être normalisées et que la frontière [turco-arménienne] doit être ouverte. En revanche, vous n'osez pas vous rencontrer en Turquie et à Erévan. Si vous n'êtes même pas d'accord pour vous rencontrer sur le territoire de l'autre partie, comment allez-vous prendre des mesures sur d'autres questions?", a-t-il lancé aux



dirigeants arméniens au micro de la chaîne de télévision turque NTV.

Erévan a répliqué dès le lendemain, via une interview accordée à l'agence Armenpress par le porte-parole du ministère des Affaires étrangères, Vahan Hounanian : *“Ce qui compte, c'est la volonté politique de parvenir à la normalisation et le désir de prendre des mesures claires et substantielles. Nous [Erévan] affichons les deux et nous attendons la même chose de la Turquie. Si la volonté existe, le lieu des réunions ne sera plus qu'une question technique.”* Si les pourparlers doivent se tenir en Turquie et en Arménie, cela signifie que le processus est entièrement bilatéral, a relevé Vahan Hounanian. Or dans cette logique, il serait bon de *“ne pas entendre chaque semaine des représentants de la Turquie répéter qu'ils font avancer le processus en coordination avec l'Azerbaïdjan”*. Sur le manque de courage dont l'Arménie ferait preuve, Vahan Hounanian a rappelé les dispositions d'Erévan à *“aller de l'avant”*, à travers la participation d'Ararat Mirzoyan, le chef de la diplomatie arménienne, au Forum diplomatique d'Antalya, et la levée de l'embargo sur les produits turcs. Il a ajouté que proposition a été faite à Ankara, *“pour la première étape, d'ouvrir la frontière terrestre aux personnes titulaires de passeports diplomatiques”*; mais il a déploré que la partie turque *“continue de retarder le processus”*.

Deuxième coup de pression d'Ankara sur Erévan : à quelques jours de la rencontre Roubinian-Kılıç du 3 mai à Vienne, le chef de la diplomatie turque, Mevlüt Çavusoglu,



Mevlüt Çavusoglu

a affirmé que les deux parties devaient discuter d'une nouvelle délimitation de leur frontière, fermée depuis avril 1993, et qu'une commission bilatérale pourrait être mise en place à cette fin. Alors qu'Erévan a démenti l'inscription d'une telle question à l'ordre du jour des discussions bilatérales, la manœuvre turque avait pour but de contraindre l'Arménie à reconnaître formellement la frontière existante entre les deux pays.

Au final, la réunion de Vienne n'a rien dégagé de saillant susceptible d'imprimer une trajectoire décisive au processus. Dans deux communiqués aux termes identiques, les représentants arménien et turc ont indiqué qu'ils ont eu *“un échange sincère et productif de points de vue concrets”* et qu'ils ont discuté *“des mesures qui pourraient être prises pour enregistrer des progrès tangibles”* vers la normalisation des relations bilatérales.

Certes, lors d'un dîner organisé le 18 avril à l'intention des chefs des missions diplomatiques en Turquie, auquel était présent le Patriarche des Arméniens de Turquie, l'archevêque Sahak Mashalian, le président Erdogan a beau avoir déclaré qu'Ankara faisait avancer le processus de normalisation des relations avec Erévan *“de façon honnête”*. Mais ces proclamations de bonnes intentions émanant d'Ankara n'ont pas résisté à l'épreuve des faits. Quelques jours après la réunion de Vienne, la Turquie a interdit à la compagnie aérienne arménienne FlyOne Armenia de survoler son espace aérien pour

effectuer des liaisons en provenance et à destination de l'Europe. Et ce, sans aucune justification ! Une interdiction d'autant plus *“incompréhensible”* pour Stepan Payaslian, un haut responsable du Comité de l'Aviation civile du gouvernement arménien, que la compagnie arménienne est toujours autorisée à assurer des vols vers Istanbul.

■ Erdogan otage du MHP

On constate jour après jour, sur la question arménienne comme sur le processus de normalisation des relations avec l'Arménie, le durcissement patent de la position turque. Et il ne faut pas s'attendre à un quelconque assouplissement de la politique d'Ankara dans la période à venir. Bien au contraire ! Car 2023 sera une année charnière, à double titre, pour la Turquie. D'un point de vue historique, d'abord, elle marquera le centenaire de la fondation de la République turque par Mustafa Kemal (29 octobre 1923), mais aussi celui du Traité de Lausanne (24 juillet 1923), qui annulait le Traité de Sèvres (10 août 1920), scellait le sort de la question arménienne et, plus largement, celui des minorités. Sur un plan politique, ensuite, les élections présidentielles et législatives se tiendront en juin 2023, et c'est un Recep Tayyip Erdogan à la popularité nettement érodée qui briguera les suffrages des électeurs sur fond de graves difficultés économiques. Il devra affronter l'alliance de six partis d'opposition représentés au Parlement, qui ont signé le 28 février dernier un protocole d'entente en vue d'assurer le retour à un régime parlementaire, après l'instauration par le référendum de 2017 d'un régime présidentiel qui confie des prérogatives élargies au chef de l'Etat.

Autrement dit, le président islamiste cofondateur de l'AKP, qui a conclu une alliance en 2015 avec le MHP ultranationaliste de Devlet Bahçeli pour assurer ses arrières sur le plan électoral, est en passe de devenir l'otage de cette union en apparence contre nature. Or on sait que les Loups gris sont l'émanation directe du MHP. Et sur la question des minorités, nombreux sont ceux qui voient la main du MHP derrière les décisions du pouvoir. C'est ainsi qu'en mars dernier, l'ouverture par la justice turque d'une procédure visant l'interdiction du parti prokurde, le HDP, a été annoncée à la veille du congrès du MHP, qui avait activement milité dans ce sens.



Le leader du MHP, Devlet Bahçeli

L'agrégation de toutes ces données peut expliquer cette surenchère anti-arménienne dans laquelle s'enfoncent les autorités turques, galvanisées de surcroît par la victoire militaire obtenue par l'Azerbaïdjan, il y a un an et demi, au Karabagh. Car quand bien même le MHP ne participe pas au gouvernement, tout se passe comme s'il dictait dans une certaine mesure à un Erdogan fragilisé les grandes lignes de la politique de sécurité nationale. Laquelle reproduit invariablement, en Turquie, une répression féroce à l'encontre des minorités. Et à un an du centenaire de la République turque et du Traité de Lausanne, il importe par-dessus tout que celles-ci ne gâchent pas la « fête »... ■



Kurdistan's Weekly Brief June 1, 2021

Iran

The Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI) confirmed two of its Peshmerga, Hadi Shexi and Ayob Sultani, were killed in clashes with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) near Mehabad and Piranshahr. The KDPI has deployed its Peshmerga to cities and villages in Iranian Kurdistan on multiple occasions since it resumed armed resistance and "civil society struggle" against the Iranian regime in March 2016.

The Iranian regime continued its ongoing campaign against Kurdish political rights last week, with an Islamic Revolutionary Court in Mehabad sentencing a Kurdish activist named Saed Hussein to 40 years in prison for "rebellion." At the same time, the Hengaw Organization for Human Rights reported Sanandaj's Islamic Revolutionary Court sentenced a Kurdish environmental activist named Khabat Mafakheri to four years in prison for "membership in the Kurdish Free Life Party." Moreover, the Iranian regime charged two Kurdish labor activists, Osman Ismaeli and Mahmud Salihi, with "propaganda against the state" for organizing activities on International Workers' Day. Iranian intelligence officers (Ettela'at) then began investigating Kawa Hakimi, the initiator of a petition calling for the end of proceedings against Ismaeli and Salihi that was signed by at least 500 workers and activists. Lastly, Iranian security forces arrested a Kurdish man named Logman Nickzad in Marivan.

On Wednesday, Iranian border guards killed a Kurdish border porter (Kolbar) named Qubad Rahmani near Kermanshah's Sarpol Zahao and wounded another named Mahmud Rah-

mani near Baneh. At the same time, Iranian border guards assaulted several detained Kolbars who confessed to transporting cargo near Now-sud and Hawraman.

Iraq

Turkey continued its ongoing military operations in Iraqi Kurdistan, which have killed dozens of civilians, displaced thousands, and caused numerous school closures, by striking several locations in the region's northern areas, including Avashin, Batifa, and Kani Masi. Turkish forces also engaged in intense combat with Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) militants near Avashin. Concurrently, recently released photos and videos of Turkish personnel cutting down thousands of trees in Iraqi Kurdistan aroused public anger and were denounced by Kurdish lawmakers. Further reporting from Kurdish media sources claimed Turkey was taking approximately 450 tons of trees per day from Iraqi Kurdistan and selling them in Turkish markets. Likewise, Turkey intends to establish a new road connecting its Kurdish province of Şırnak with Duhok Governorate's Amedi District.

Kirkuk's security forces found several 122mm rockets prepped for launch between Kirkuk Governorate's Hasar and Darman villages. ISIS (Da'esh) and Iranian-backed militias remain the likely suspects regarding the attempted attack, as both have carried out an increasing number of attacks on Kurds and Peshmerga positions in Iraq's "Disputed Territories," which have been controlled by Iraqi forces and Iranian-backed militias since October 16, 2017.

The Kurdish-owned oil com-

pany Kar plans to resume operations at Kirkuk Governorate's Havana and Bai Hassan oil fields. Kar's operations were previously hindered when Iraqi forces and Iranian-backed militias seized Kirkuk Governorate in October 2017, and since then, it has been limited to transporting a portion of the governorate's oil to Turkey in collaboration with the Russian company Rosneft. On another note, a Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) delegation arrived in Baghdad to hold talks with several officials from the Government of Iraq (GOI), including Minister of Finance Ali Allawi, regarding the implementation of the country's recently passed 2021 budget law.

Da'esh terrorists executed a kidnapped Kurdish police officer named Jalal Baban near Qara Tapa last week. Baban and his cousin were abducted nearly 20 months ago, though the cousin was later released after a ransom was paid.

Syria

The Afrin Activists Network (AAN) released a monthly report detailing human rights abuses perpetrated by Turkey and its Islamist proxies in and around Afrin during May. Among other things, the report cited the deaths of several local Kurdish residents, including an elderly Kurdish woman tortured to death by Turkish-backed Islamists and the suspicious death of a Kurdish child. The report also elaborated on the construction of settlements for non-Kurds funded by Turkey, Qatar, and Kuwait. Afrin's Kurdish population has dropped from 96 to 25 percent since the 2018 Turkish invasion.

A motorcycle explosion killed

one civilian and injured three more in eastern al Hasakah city on Monday. Suspected Da'esh militants also assassinated a man in Raqqa Governorate's Kasrat al Faraj on Sunday. That said, Kurdish-led local security forces (Asayesh), backed by the US-led coalition, arrested five militants in Deir Ez Zor Governorate.

Turkish proxies clashed with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-affiliated Tal Tamer Military Council (TMC) in the Christian town's suburbs. Turkish proxies also bombarded eastern Manbij, which has been the scene of ongoing tensions between the SDF and Turkey since its 2016 liberation from Da'esh, on Monday. Turkey continues to support Sunni extremists as a means of undermining the authority structures established by Kurds in northeastern Syria.

Turkey's ongoing interdiction of northeastern Syria's water supplies from the Euphrates River has damaged farmlands and resulted in shortages of drinking water and electricity that have affected millions. Local Kurds describe Turkey's actions as a "blockade" on the region.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported an Iranian cultural center in al Mayadin city is now offering a free Persian language course for children and a prize of one million Syrian pounds to anyone passing the course's Persian language test with a grade of excellent. Iran has also relocated hundreds of Iraqi and Afghan Shiite militants and their families to the town since the defeat of Da'esh and has accelerated efforts to bolster its influence throughout Syria during the Syrian Civil War.

Turkey

Exiled Turkish mob boss Sedat Peker released a video detailing the Turkish government's use of a company named Sadat to transfer weapons and drones to al Qaeda affiliates in Syria last week. Senior lawmakers of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) responded to Peker's latest revelations by officially requesting the creation of

a parliamentary commission to investigate the company, which was founded by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's former chief military advisor Adnan Tanriverdi.

The 25th Heavy Penal Court of Ankara sentenced jailed Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtas to two and a half years in prison for "insulting" a prosecutor named Yüksel Kocaman on

Friday. Kocaman, who has personal ties to President Erdogan, filed a defamation case against Demirtas for remarks the latter made during his defense. Meanwhile, the Turkish government extended a ban initially implemented in 2016 on public activities for another two weeks, and Turkish police in Van arrested six members of the Kurdish solidarity association MEBYA-DER that supports the

families of those killed in Turkey's ongoing conflict with the Kurds.

The Turkish military launched an operation targeting alleged PKK militants in Bitlis Province's Hizan town. The Turkish military typically carries out several operations in the nation's Kurdish region per year and often implements curfews and restrictions to facilitate them.

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01 juin 2022

Blinken prévient qu'une offensive turque en Syrie "saperait la stabilité régionale"

Une nouvelle offensive de la Turquie en Syrie "saperait la stabilité régionale", a prévenu mercredi le chef de la diplomatie américaine Antony Blinken, en réponse aux menaces du président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "La grande inquiétude que nous avons est que toute nouvelle offensive saperait la stabilité régionale" et "donnerait l'occasion aux acteurs malveillants d'exploiter l'instabilité", a-t-il affirmé lors d'une conférence de presse à Washington.

Le chef de l'Etat turc a renouvelé mercredi la menace de mener une opération militaire contre deux localités du nord de la Syrie, visant des combattants kurdes qu'il qualifie de "terroristes". Depuis une semaine, il menace d'attaquer le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), classé comme mouvement terroriste par Ankara et ses alliés occidentaux, ainsi que les Unités de protection du peuple (YPG), alliées au PKK



Le chef de la diplomatie américaine Antony Blinken à Washington, le 27 mai 2022. Photo REUTERS/Sarah Silbiger

mais qui furent soutenues par les Etats-Unis et la coalition internationale contre le groupe jihadiste Etat islamique (EI).

"Nous nous opposons à toute escalade dans le nord

de la Syrie et nous soutenons le maintien des lignes de cessez-le-feu actuelles", a martelé Antony Blinken aux côtés du secrétaire général de l'OTAN Jens Stoltenberg. "Nous ne voulons rien voir qui mette en péril

les efforts que nous faisons pour maintenir l'EI dans la boîte où nous l'avons enfermé", a-t-il insisté, illustrant de nouvelles tensions avec la Turquie, pourtant alliée des Etats-Unis au sein de l'OTAN.



Jun 2, 2022
Prof. Hamit Bozarslan

'Endgame? Erdoğan's game has no end'

Under Erdoğan's leadership, Turkey has escalated a series of challenges and crisis within NATO, in the neighbourhood and region. Pushing Sweden and Finland into a corner, Erdoğan ups the ante with the United States too and seems all set for a large-scale incursion into Syrian and Iraqi soil. What's at stake? Has Erdoğan passed the Rubicon? How can NATO react? Will the region's Kurds once more end up as losers of the grand power game? Leading expert Professor Hamit Bozarslan weighs in on the issues.

It is very difficult to see an endgame for Turkish foreign policy as there is no endgame for President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, said Hamit Bozarslan, Director of the Centre for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan, and Central Asian Studies at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) in Paris, France.

Recent conflicts with almost everyone during the last 15 years, show that Erdoğan can declare a new war, create a new crisis again and again, Bozarslan told Ahval's Editor-in-Chief Yavuz Baydar for the Hot Pursuit podcast series on Wednesday.

The system of Erdoğan's foreign policy is exclusively based on tensions, war and crisis with almost everyone, but this does not bring Turkey so much, because this tactical step cannot be converted to strategic thinking and a strategically reasonable, rational line, according to Bozarslan.

"Erdoğan's foreign policy is nothing more than this and at the



end, this game cannot be won," he said.

Turkey is playing its capacity of blackmailing as the only power it has and this power of blackmailing remains a limited one, according to Bozarslan.

However, this does not necessarily mean that Erdoğan will not be able to enter Rojava in Syrian Kurdistan, or fail in destroying Kurdish autonomy in the Kobane region or will have no success in challenging the United States in the field, the analyst said.

Kobane was a huge failure for the Turkish president, because in 2014 he announced that Kobane was about to fall and yet the town resisted, he said.

"That was an absolute turning point for him. Now he wants his revenge," Bozarslan said. "Erdoğan's main strategy is revenge, revenge and revenge." But at the end the price would be very heavy, according to the analyst, as there is no mechanism of checks and balances within the Turkish state's apparatus.

"If the military incursion of Syria takes place, this does not mean that Erdoğan will win," Bozarslan said "The tactical victories may be possible but strategic victories are not, because I think that Turkey will not be able to have any kind of strategic thinking and projection in the future."

The crisis in NATO is a double crisis, according to Bozarslan.

Turkey wants the United States to change its entire foreign policy in the Middle East, but it also asks Finland and Sweden and other democracies to cease to be democracies and follow the autocratic rules of Turkey, he said.

The second dimension in NATO crisis is of course the crisis with Greece, according to the analyst.

It is obvious that the fact that the Greek prime minister has been received at the White House and has been applauded at least seven times in the U.S. Congress, was a very heavy narcissistic failure for Erdoğan, Bozarslan said.

"He will never be able to be received by Congress," he said. But on the other hand, even Erdoğan was accepted once again in the White House as with under the Trump administration, that will not change anything, Bozarslan said.

The expert spoke on Erdoğan's long-term perspective, which extends to 2071.

According to Erdoğan, by 2071, which marks the millennium of the first Turkish victory against Byzantine Empire, Turkey has to be restored in its moral and material strength and power and a new period of imperial Turkish domination has to be started, Bozarslan said, noting that there are questions looking over how the country will get there.

"Turkey is not a regional power. Turkey is not a NATO power. Turkey thinks that it has a very big and undeniable strategic position, but that is not the case," he said.

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En Irak, Daech reste une menace au quotidien

Dans la région de Kirkouk, Daech mène des attaques régulières, de faible intensité mais meurtrières. Les combattants djihadistes, retranchés dans une zone montagneuse hostile, profitent d'un manque de coordination entre les différentes forces de sécurité.

Les visages déteints des martyrs défilent sur une centaine de mètres le long de la route poussiéreuse qui mène à Taza. Un mausolée impressionnant pour rappeler le lourd tribut – 73 morts et plus de 200 blessés – payé par cette petite ville située dans le sud de Kirkouk (province située dans le nord de l'Irak), visée par d'une attaque kamikaze djihadiste en 2009. Bien avant le « règne » de Daech, accusé en 2016 d'avoir perpétré une attaque chimique sur ces mêmes terres, essentiellement peuplées de Turkmènes chiites.

Cinq ans et demi après la proclamation par les autorités irakiennes de leur victoire sur Daech, Taza pourrait logiquement penser la menace djihadiste évanouie. Mais le groupe terroriste, quoique très affaibli, continue d'y perpétrer des attaques régulières, de faible envergure mais meurtrières. « Daech a maintenu sa capacité à lancer des attaques à un rythme régulier en Irak, notamment des délits de fuite, embuscades et bombes en bordure de route, avec une concentration marquée dans les gouvernorats de Kirkouk, Diyala et Salaheddin », indiquait un rapport de l'ONU publié en janvier dernier. Les

auteurs de ce rapport dénombrent entre 6 000 et 10 000 combattants de Daech, répartis entre l'Irak et la Syrie.

Dans la région, une des dernières attaques en date remonte au 23 mai, quand des hommes de Daech ont incendié des terres agricoles, avant de s'en prendre aux forces de l'ordre et à des locaux. « Lorsque des policiers et des civils sont venus éteindre le feu, ils ont été attaqués par des éléments de Daech qui ont tué trois policiers et trois adolescents », a indiqué Hussein Adel, directeur du district de Taza Khurmatu, dans le sud de Kirkouk. Un civil est également porté disparu.

Ces attaques n'ont certes pas l'ampleur du spectaculaire assaut de la prison de Ghwayran dans la province de Hassaké, dans le nord-est de la Syrie, en janvier. Mais dans la région de Kirkouk, la menace est connue de tous. « Ils sont partout, ils ont aussi des gens dans la ville, mais ne sont pas faciles à reconnaître car ils ont lâché les codes traditionnels de Daech et n'ont plus ni uniforme ni drapeau », estime Sami, jeune trentenaire, qui travaille dans le domaine de la sécu-

rité à Kirkouk. Du 23 au 26 mai, pas moins de sept attaques de Daech ont eu lieu à Kirkouk, Diyala, Ninive et Salaheddin, faisant au moins 15 morts et 12 blessés. Les zones rouges sont plutôt bien connues des habitants de la région, comme Rashad, au sud de la grande ville pétrolière, ou Bashir, libérée de Daech par les peshmergas (forces kurdes) et les forces de sécurité. Les habitants prennent d'ailleurs cette menace avec un certain pragmatisme. « Il n'y a pas d'inquiétude à avoir durant la journée, ils n'attaquent que de nuit », assure ainsi Sami. En visant les villageois et les forces de sécurité de toutes sortes (peshmergas, milices, police...), les hommes de Daech n'affichent pas de stratégie lisible, hormis la volonté de semer la panique et de mettre une pression croissante sur les autorités.

Ils prospèrent sur un terrain hostile, qu'ils maîtrisent. « Les combattants de Daech sont des hommes de la région car ils connaissent bien cette zone montagneuse et difficile, impossible à surveiller et à contrôler », précise cet habitant de Kirkouk. Ils profitent notamment du manque de coordination entre les diverses forces de

sécurité irakiennes, les milices pro-iraniennes et, par endroits, les peshmergas. « Ils bénéficient de complicités locales, sans quoi ce serait impossible pour eux de survivre. » Nour, elle-même originaire de Kirkouk, se souvient bien du jour où dans le cadre de son travail associatif, elle s'est retrouvée face à un sympathisant de Daech, outré que son neveu ait été emprisonné pour son appartenance à l'organisation terroriste. « J'ai eu tellement peur que j'ai depuis changé de poste pour faire moins de terrain », explique-t-elle.

Si les motivations de ceux qui ont rejoint Daech sont peu connues – allégeances familiales, religieuses... –, certains craignent les conséquences à moyen terme du modèle économique défendu dans cet Irak de l'après-guerre. « Les gens du désert n'ont rien. Ils ne bénéficient pas du tout du système de ruissellement qui est prôné, explique un observateur occidental. On ne reviendra pas en arrière, mais si l'on ne fait pas plus attention aux inégalités et à trouver une meilleure redistribution des richesses, on risque de se retrouver avec un Al-Qaida 3 ou un Daech 2 dans le futur. »



2 juin 2022
Par Blandine Lavignon

En Turquie, la plus ancienne ONG de lutte contre les féminicides dans le viseur de la justice

Le procès de l'association turque de lutte contre les féminicides Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz devait s'ouvrir ce mercredi, mais a été renvoyé à l'automne. En attendant, le futur de l'ONG, menacée de dissolution, reste incertain.

Sükriye Gür, Gözde Çelen, Remziye Tüysüz... Sur la page Instagram de l'ONG turque Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz («Nous arrêterons les féminicides»), les noms des victimes et leur photographie se succèdent tragiquement au fil des jours et des publications. Méthodiquement, l'association collecte les noms et histoires de ces femmes, assassinées parce que femmes, depuis plus de dix ans. Un militantisme qui met en lumière les violences faites aux femmes dans le pays, mais n'est pas du goût du régime turc.

En avril, un procureur d'Istanbul entreprenait des poursuites envers l'ONG pour «activités contre la loi et morale» en vue d'une dissolution. En cause ? Des plaintes déposées par des particuliers, qui accusent l'association de «détruire la famille au prétexte de la défense des droits des femmes». Selon le procureur, la plateforme aurait dévié de ses missions initiales et serait à présent contraire à «la morale». Le procès, qui devait s'ouvrir ce mercredi, a finalement été reporté au 5 octobre, mais l'avenir de l'ONG reste plus qu'incertain.

Dans un communiqué, Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz parle d'«allégations sans fondement et déplorables», tandis que Nursel Inal, l'une de ses responsables, dénonce un procès «politique». «Atteintes à la famille» ou encore «insulte au Président», la douzaine de chefs d'accusations sont particulièrement flous. Ils sont basés sur des plaintes dont certaines remontent à plus de six ans. «Il n'y a aucune preuve ou docu-

ment dans le dossier pour étayer cette affirmation. La majorité des plaintes sont celles d'hommes qui n'ont pas payé à leurs ex-femmes leurs dettes alimentaires» détaille Leyla Süren, l'avocate de l'ONG, auprès de Libération. D'après ses informations, l'acte d'accusation serait également constitué de captures d'écran des profils Facebook personnels de certains bénévoles de l'association, qui se montrent critiques envers le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Durcissement du régime

L'association a vu le jour en 2010, un an après un drame qui a ému jusqu'à l'extérieur des frontières turques. Celui de Münevver Karabulut, une lycéenne de 17 ans tuée par son compagnon et dont le corps avait été retrouvé en morceaux dans une benne à ordures d'Istanbul. Depuis, l'ONG s'est implantée dans plusieurs régions et dispose d'environ 700 salariés et de bénévoles. Un maillage conséquent dans un pays qui manque de structures adaptées. «Si notre association est visée par la justice aujourd'hui, c'est parce qu'elle parle des droits des femmes et qu'elle mène une lutte très efficace pour prévenir les violences faites aux femmes» affirme Leyla Süren.

Les salariés de l'ONG, qui n'ont jamais été auditionnés par la justice depuis le début de la procédure, s'inquiètent d'un durcissement progressif de la position du régime vis-à-vis des droits des femmes. Pour cause, en mars 2021, la Turquie s'était retirée de la convention d'Istanbul, traité international établissant un cadre légal et institutionnel pour la lutte contre les

violences sexistes. Pour justifier cette décision, le gouvernement avait brandi l'étendard d'une menace pour la structure familiale traditionnelle turque.

En attendant de connaître son sort à l'automne, Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz souhaite continuer tant bien que mal ses missions. «Ce procès n'empêchera certainement pas l'association de travailler efficacement en attendant le verdict. La plateforme de féminicides continuera à suivre les dossiers» précise Leyla Süren. Depuis le début de l'année, l'ONG a recensé 160 féminicides, tandis qu'en 2021, le funeste bilan s'établissait à 423 féminicides. Dans la majorité des cas, le meurtrier était le mari, le petit-ami ou un ex-conjoint. Au-delà de son travail d'archivage, le groupe fournit notamment des conseils juridiques et un lieu de parole aux femmes turques victimes de violences sexistes et sexuelles. «La lutte contre les féminicides et les violences envers les femmes sont historiquement au cœur du mouvement féministe en Turquie. Ce sont des sujets qui sont problématisés depuis les années 80. Mais au niveau étatique, il n'a jamais été question d'une égalité entre les sexes. Le «féminisme d'Etat» en Turquie considère que les hommes doivent être égaux aux hommes et les femmes égales aux femmes», explique à Libération Hazal Atay, chercheuse associée au Cevipof et spécialiste du genre et des mobilisations féministes en Turquie.

«Une régression de l'Etat de droit» Dans un rapport publié le 26 mai, Human Rights Watch pointait du doigt l'incapacité de l'Etat turc à

«fournir une protection efficace contre la violence domestique, à aider les survivants de cette violence ou à punir les auteurs d'agressions contre les femmes». Pourtant, des lois spécifiques existent bel et bien, à l'instar de celle de 2012 visant à prévenir la violence à l'égard des femmes, et calquée en partie sur la convention du Conseil de l'Europe. «Ces lois, qui furent consensuelles au moment de leur vote, ne suffisent pas à protéger car leur bonne application doit être forcément accompagnée d'une volonté politique», souligne Hazal Atay. Ainsi, le système juridique turc renâcle à se pencher sur les affaires de violences faites aux femmes et les condamnations demeurent très rares. Dans 8,5 % des cas de féminicides entre 2016 et 2021, la femme avait bénéficié d'une ordonnance de protection ou de prévention en cours au moment de son meurtre.

«Ce procès témoigne d'une régression de l'Etat de droit en Turquie. Les associations, qui doivent faire face à une pression politique en permanence dans leur travail, sont également tributaires d'une justice liée aux volontés gouvernementales. Malgré l'importance du mouvement féministe en Turquie, ces attaques judiciaires récurrentes contribuent à le fragiliser», analyse Hazal Atay. La potentielle disparition de Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz marquerait un recul de plus pour les droits des femmes en Turquie. «Il y a eu plusieurs procès récemment dont les issues n'ont pas été heureuses, donc on peut s'attendre à un scénario similaire pour cette ONG», s'alarme la chercheuse.

Erdogan: Sweden, Finland need to 'act accordingly' toward Kurdish groups for approval on NATO bids

The Turkish president repeated these points while announcing another military operation into Syria.

Erdogan: Turkey will 'cleanse' Syrian towns of terrorists

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan this week announced "a new phase" of military operations to create a 19-mile "safe zone" into Syria "to cleanse Tal Rifaat and Manbij of terrorists."

And he may not stop there, adding that "we will do the same to other regions step by step."

Syrian Kurdish groups aligned with the United States, which Turkey considers terrorists, operate in both towns.

"Though the president has mentioned Ankara's plans to form a safe zone alongside the Syrian border before, this is the first time he has explicitly included Manbij and Tal Rifaat in Turkey's new operation and openly stated Ankara's intention to expand to other regions," writes Nazlan Ertan. "The Turkish president is putting an old plan back on the table amid what he considers more favorable conditions with the war in Ukraine and Turkey's veto power over the accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO."

So far, the US-led coalition has seen little troop movement on the Turkish side that would indicate an imminent incursion, two sources briefed on the matter told Jared Szuba for Al-Monitor's Security Briefing newsletter. There is still speculation that



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan waves during a group meeting at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) in Ankara, on May 18, 2022. - ADEM ALTAN / AFP via Getty Images

Turkey may be holding off until after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visits Turkey on June 8, and likely won't launch an operation, if it eventually decides to do so, until after the NATO summit on June 28.

NATO bids by Sweden, Finland linked to changes on Kurds

Although the Biden administration may be seeking to keep down the temperature in its response to Erdogan's hard line, the Turkish president is not letting up on his position.

To the contrary. Speaking to Justice and Development Party leaders on June 1, Erdogan dug in his opposition to NATO bids by Sweden and Finland until they "act accordingly" with respect to Turkey's concerns.

He said that on the same day the Swedish and Finnish delegations were in Turkey for negotiations, "the Swedish state

TV aired an interview with Salih Muslim [co-chairman of the Syrian Democratic Union, PYD]. What kind of sincerity is that? Those, who play with letters and try to conceal and legitimize the PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party] by changing its name into PYD, YPG [People's Protection Units] or other acronyms are fooling themselves, not us."

Erdogan considers the PYD and YPG, which make up the bulk of the US-aligned Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), as indistinguishable from the PKK, which both Turkey and the US have designated as a terrorist group.

Erdogan added, "We have declared right away and in a clear manner that we are against their NATO membership because of their support to the PKK terrorist organization and its extension organizations. Those, who try to present the most bloodthirsty terrorist organization in the world as a

disciple of democracy, are, in our eyes, aligned with the murderers of our babies, women, elder citizens, teachers and security forces, who were killed by the PKK."

The Turkish president's only slight nod to diplomacy came at the end of his remarks, when he said, "We hope these two countries and those who work vigorously for their membership understand Turkey's security concerns and act accordingly. In that case, we as a country that have duly fulfilled its responsibilities within NATO so far will do our part."

Stoltenberg: 'No other NATO ally has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey'

The US and NATO plan to keep their reservations about Turkish military actions in Syria separate from smoothing over differences which would allow Sweden and Finland to join NATO, as Al-Monitor reports here.

"These are separate questions," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken responded when asked about the connection between a potential fighter jet sales to Turkey and Ankara's demands over Finland and Sweden joining NATO.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, appearing at the same press conference with Blinken, said that "concerns that Turkey has raised directly with Finland and Sweden are being addressed by the Finns and the Swedes with the assis-

tance of NATO. We want to make sure that all Allies have their security concerns taken into account, and that, of course, includes Turkey, but I'm confident this process will move forward."

While the US has stayed back from direct mediation in the matter, Stoltenberg has stepped up.

"No other NATO ally has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey," Stoltenberg said. "Turkey is an important ally, not least because of its strategic geographic location bordering Iraq and Syria ... and also a Black Sea country close to Russia." He added, "When they raise concerns, of course we sit down and we look into

how we can find a united way forward."

Erdogan weighs the consequences

If launching a military operation east of the Euphrates, "Turkey has to take both the United States and Russia into account," writes Fehim Tastekin. "But in Tel Rifaat and Manbij to the west of the river, the United States might turn a blind eye to Turkish maneuvers."

Blinken said on June 1 that the US would oppose any Turkish military escalation in Syria and respect existing ceasefire lines and not undermine regional stability, especially the fight against Islamic State.

The next day, Russia's Foreign

Affairs Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said in a statement that "We hope that Ankara will refrain from actions that could lead to a dangerous deterioration of the already difficult situation in Syria," but added that "such a move, in the absence of the agreement of the legitimate government of the Syrian Arab Republic, would be a direct violation of Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

For Erdogan, Tel Rifaat is a target promising a number of practical gains. It is a convenient position to keep northern Aleppo under pressure," writes Tastekin. "At present, YPG control of the area cuts off the connection between the rebel forces in northern Aleppo and

Idlib. By seizing Tel Rifaat, Turkey would be able to block fully the YPG's access to Afrin, keep Syrian government forces in northern Aleppo under pressure and pave the way for cooperation between rebel groups in the Aleppo countryside and Idlib."

"The conjuncture has domestic aspects as well," adds Tastekin. "Under growing pressure over Turkey's hosting of millions of Syrian refugees, Erdogan is drawing a link between the incursion plan and the goal of repatriating the refugees, while diluting the public's focus on the country's deepening economic woes. To drum up popular support, he argues that a military operation would provide a safe space for

Teacher Union Activist Majid Karimi Arrested in Sanandaj

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, quoting Kurdpa, on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, teacher union activist Majid Karimi was arrested. Reportedly, he and several others had gathered before the IRGC Intelligence Office to inquire about detained teacher union activist Masoud Farhikhteh, when several IRGC agents came out and took him to an unidentified location.

The reason for his arrest and his whereabouts are unknown so far.



En Irak, la sécheresse sort des eaux une cité engloutie vieille de 3400 ans

La sécheresse de ces derniers mois a obligé les habitants de la région de Mossoul, en Irak, à puiser dans un réservoir qui en se vidant a révélé les vestiges d'une cité vieille de plus de trois millénaires. Fortifications, édifices, tablettes: sur place, les archéologues vont de découverte en découverte.

Si on sait que l'Afrique est le "berceau de l'humanité", c'est au Moyen-Orient qu'on trouve les traces d'agriculture, d'écriture et d'urbanisme les plus anciennes. Et on vient justement de mettre au jour les vestiges d'une cité trois fois millénaire en Irak, près de Mossoul, comme l'a notamment rapporté Futura Sciences ce mercredi. Une nouvelle occasion après les rendez-vous manqués

Au début d'année, l'Irak a traversé une sévère période de sécheresse. Au point que dans le nord, les locaux en ont bientôt été réduits à puiser dans le plus grand réservoir d'eau du pays, à Kemune, à 80 kilomètres de Mossoul environ. Si bien qu'au bout de quelques mois, la réserve s'est vidée.

Ont alors refait surface les reliquats d'une cité antique, disparue sous les eaux voilà 42 ans au moment de la construction du réservoir en 1980. Si on ne peut donc pas parler d'une découverte stricto sensu - d'autant qu'un précédent coup de chaud



Le site de Kemune, près de Mossoul, dans le nord de l'Irak. - Capture d'une photo Twitter de l'Université de Tübingen.

avait déjà permis un premier aperçu en 2018 et 2019 - il y a beaucoup à redécouvrir. En effet, à l'époque de la constitution de ce stock d'eau, on n'avait pas jugé bon d'y laisser fureter les archéologues au préalable. Ceux-ci n'ont cette fois pas manqué la nouvelle occasion que leur offre le réchauffement climatique. Palais et céramique

Cette vieille dame que la sécheresse a dénudé de sa robe d'eau a 3400 ans. Les archéologues allemands et kurdes dépêchés sur place estiment que cette cité bâtie sur le Tigre pourrait bien correspondre à Zakhiku, une ville importante de l'empire Mittani qui a dominé la contrée au milieu du deuxième millénaire avant Jésus-Christ.

Au rang des trouvailles déjà dégagées par les experts sur le site, on compte un palais, de hautes et épaisses fortifications dont tours et murs sont encore visibles, et surtout un bâtiment de stockage. Edifice où l'on a notamment débusqué cinq récipients de céramique contenant plus de 100 tablettes recouvertes de caractères cunéiformes, comme le précise ici Science et Vie. "C'est presque un miracle que des tablettes cunéiformes faites d'argile non cuite aient survécu à tant de décennies sous l'eau!" s'est écrié l'archéologue Peter Pfälzner, cité par la même revue.

Séisme

La résistance des murs de boue fait aussi la merveille des spécialistes. Or, c'est

sans doute ce matériau qui explique le degré de conservation exceptionnel de l'endroit. Ainsi, un tremblement de terre a ravagé la ville vers -1350, précipitant sa fin. Durant le séisme, les parties supérieures du rempart sont tombées sur les pans les plus bas, un ensevelissement qui a protégé l'ensemble.

Le crépuscule de Zakhiku coïncide avec celui de l'empire Mittani. L'enjeu qui gît au milieu de ces ruines tirées des eaux est d'ailleurs le suivant pour les chercheurs: se faire une idée plus claire de la chute du royaume, qu'on attribue aux coups de boutoir du puissant rival assyrien, grâce aux décombres de la cité redécouverte.



Kirkuk Minute June 3, 2022

Kirkuk

On May 31st, in a politically driven ruling, the Criminal Court sentenced former Kirkuk Provincial Council Chairman, Rebwar Talabani to six years in prison on a criminal complaint of the prosecutor general. Rebwar Talabani has been charged under Article 340 of the Iraqi Penal Code, which deals with deliberate damage to public property. Talabani's trial was held in absentia. Talabani said he had not received the sentences officially and that the trials were politically motivated. Talabani was forcibly displaced by the Iraqi government on October 16th, 2017, after he participated in the Independence Referendum held by the Kurds in September of 2017. Currently, Talabani is an advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) Prime Minister, Massrouf Barzani.

On May 31st, tensions arose between the Iraqi army and the Peshmerga forces after two off-duty Peshmergas were arrested at a checkpoint near Laylan subdistrict. A Peshmerga regiment opened warning fire near the checkpoint. The Iraqi troops released the Peshmerga after talks between commanders on both sides. Separately, the Iraqi army attacked Kurdish protesters blocking the road between Erbil and Kirkuk near Pirde (Alton Kopri) dis-

trict. The protests sparked by residents of several villages of the Shwan subdistrict demonstrated against the deterioration of primary services, mainly electricity and water. The protestors were furious with the deteriorating living standards as they now receive less than one hour of electricity per day. Likewise, dozens of Kaka'i Kurds protested the demolition of 700 of their homes in the Hay Askari neighborhood, continuing the Ba'ath era Arabization policy which has ramped up since October 16, 2017.

On May 25th, a high-level security delegation arrived in Kirkuk 48 hours after ISIS (Da'esh) attacked two Shiite Turkmen villages in the Taza subdistrict and killed several farmers. The security delegation was led by Brigadier Ruken Abdul Amir Shamari, deputy commander of Iraqi operations. According to reports, Shamari ordered the deployment of more forces in the southern and southwestern areas towards the Hawija and Daquq districts. On May 26th, Da'esh terrorists claimed responsibility for arson that targeted Kurdish farms in the recent weeks in Daquq and Khanaqin. Meanwhile, using the pretext of Da'esh attacks, the Iranian-backed militias, "North Axis Operations Command," announced deploying more militants in Kirkuk.

On May 29th, police arrested a drug dealer while transporting narcotic pills hidden inside children's toys. According to police, the suspect was arrested during an ambush by security forces at the Perde checkpoint. The suspect is a resident of Baghdad and had tried to smuggle drugs from Erbil to Kirkuk. According to the Iraqi Oil Marketing Company (SOMO), the revenue from Kirkuk oil exports in May was \$369,461,916. Crude exports via the Cihan Pipeline reached 3,002,133 barrels earning \$335,038,042 US dollars, averaging 111.6 per barrel. Meanwhile, 353,973 barrels were sold to Jordan, earning \$34,423,874 at \$97.25 per barrel.

Khanaqin

On May 29th, unknown gunmen attempted to assassinate a Kurdish officer named Saman Kaka'i, director of the third branch of Diyala's customs in Khanaqin. Kaka'i survived, but no group claimed the assassination attempt. Moreover, the Iraqi General, Ali Fazil, head of Diyala's Operation Command, met with Peshmerga forces near Kalar, requesting "further coordination" to control the security near Khanaqin. On October 17th, 2017, Fazil prevented the director of Kirkuk's police from holding a press conference in Kurdish.

Makhmour

Three months have passed since the Iraqi army's siege of the Qara Chokh mountain without signs of any military operations carried out. The area has been the de facto headquarters for Da'esh terrorists since 2017. Meanwhile, on May 27th, Da'esh terrorists kidnapped two shepherds near Raian village. The terror group has been generating wealth by abducting locals, mainly in ruler areas, and releasing them on a ransom.

Shingal

On May 27th, the head of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Security and Defence, Nathalie Loisea, said they are ready to provide significant assistance for the normalization of the situation in Sinjar and the return of the displaced. Her remarks came during a visit to the Kurdistan Region and holding a press conference in the parliament. Shingal remains calm for the third week after recent clashes between the Iraqi army and the Shingal Resistance Units (YBS). However, after reaching an agreement to seize fire and release detainees, five members of the YBS remain in the custody of the Iraqi forces. The clashes resulted in the displacement of 10,000 Yazidis.



June 2, 2022
By Mustafa Gurbuz

Turkish reasons for rapprochement with Saudi Arabia analyst

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan did not hide his main demand when he buried the case of Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post columnist who was killed on October 2, 2018 by Saudi agents in his country's consulate in Istanbul. A logical outcome of Erdoğan's decision was burying the hatchet with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS), the main suspect of ordering Khashoggi's elimination. "We agreed with Saudi Arabia to reactivate a great economic potential through organisations that will bring our investors together," Erdoğan declared recently during his first trip to Riyadh since 2017, adding, "my visit will herald a new era in the ties between our two countries."

Erdoğan's embarrassing step back from his earlier support for justice for Khashoggi was a clear indication that Turkey, not Saudi Arabia, is the most interested party in the new engagement. The Turkish economy's sustained plight has become an opportunity for the rich Gulf elite. With handing over Khashoggi's murder trial to Saudi Arabia, Erdoğan aimed to straighten out his personal relations with MbS and give assurances that the Turkish President would not continue to delegitimize the Saudi prince's persona on the international stage.

Erdoğan reiterated the need "to start a new era in foreign policy"—a call that has become a staple of his speeches in the past year. Turkey's turn to diplomacy deserves most attention indeed, given the fact that the Turkish president and his political alliance with Turkish nationalist firebrands have created a militarist vision since the 2016 coup attempt.

Erdoğan's recent threats of military operations in Syria is in apparent conflict with his obvious change of heart toward the Gulf countries as well as his discourse on Middle East diplomacy for the post-American order. So are current Turkish military operations in Iraq. Such contradictions indicate that Turkey does not seek a radical transformation in its foreign policy orientation. Rather, Erdoğan aims to recalibrate his strategy before the critical 2023 elections at home, exploiting emerging opportunities with a balance of diplomacy and militarism.

Erdoğan aims to recalibrate his strategy before the critical 2023 elections at home, exploiting emerging opportunities with a balance of diplomacy and militarism.

Overall, two key factors are behind Turkey's calculus in resetting relations with Saudi Arabia. First, the crumbling Turkish economy may not be sustainable without the government's intervention, hence Gulf investments will serve as a life vest for Erdoğan's declining popularity. Second, Ankara was hit hard by Riyadh's role in strengthening the anti-Turkey alliance in the eastern Mediterranean. Erdoğan's government as well as the Turkish nationalist state apparatus want to break the country's growing isolation in the region which, according to Turkey's military elite, benefits Greece and Cyprus. In this regard, rapprochement with Saudi Arabia becomes a part of the greater strategic reengagement with Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt.

Turkey's Economic Woes With a surge to nearly 70 percent, the inflation rate in Turkey is at its highest level since Erdoğan's ruling party, Justice

and Development (AKP), came to power in 2002. In 2021, the Turkish lira lost its value against the US dollar by 44 percent, and the staggering downturn trend has proven to be unstoppable. Using state banks to buy up liras, the Turkish government is trying to halt the decline in the national currency. Turkey's economy was already in a recession before the COVID-19 pandemic. The longevity of the pandemic and the deepening debt crisis have resulted in very high prices and bills that increased broad discontent against Erdoğan's regime. Youth unemployment is also at its peak at 25 percent.

Given that the presidential and parliamentary elections are fast approaching—currently scheduled in June 2023—it is hard to overstate fears inside Erdoğan's government. The toll of the economic downturn already began to hit hard before the pandemic. During the 2019 municipal elections, Erdoğan equated losing Istanbul with an eventual loss of his power grip in the country. His fears, however, did not change the outcome: The ruling party's embarrassing setback in that city galvanized the opposition, and since then Erdoğan's approval witnessed historic lows. The financial crisis has also raised serious doubts about unconventional theories in managing the Turkish economy—such as keeping interest rates low in the fight against rising inflation. Moreover, mass scapegoating of immigrants for the economic troubles does not help the Erdoğan regime, which is often criticized for misguided refugee policies.

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nomy—such as keeping interest rates low in the fight against rising inflation.

Erdoğan's recent turn to the Gulf elite for financial investments is thus quite understandable. Since the Khashoggi crisis, Saudi Arabia's boycott of Turkish goods has cost three billion dollars annually. By bringing in Saudi investment and adding Riyadh to the currency market, the Turkish government seeks to reap benefits from its new Gulf opening. Erdoğan hopes to get a deal from Saudi Arabia that is comparable to that with the UAE a few months ago; Abu Dhabi signed a \$4.9 billion currency swap and has plans for a \$10 billion fund for investments in Turkey.

Erdoğan's pragmatic shift due to the collapsing economy at home is welcomed by Turkey's regional competitors, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Israel. It is reasonable to expect that Riyadh will offer short-term, immediate financial relief packages to help Erdoğan instead of long-term investments. However, to meet his full expectations from Riyadh, Erdoğan will need to emerge victorious from the 2023 elections. Therefore, it is too early to call the current warmth in bilateral relations between Ankara and Riyadh as a new era. Besides, the Saudis announced that Mohammed bin Salman's reciprocal visit to Erdoğan will include a trip to Greece, Greek Cyprus, Jordan, and Egypt, an inclusion that indicates that Saudi Arabia may prefer to move cautiously and slowly in its relations with Turkey.

Dynamics of the Eastern Mediterranean Power Game

Analyzing Turkey's foreign policy through domestic politics

may present risks. It is thus important to investigate the structural forces behind the Turkish-Saudi rapprochement. The common perception of the coming post-American order in the Middle East calls all countries to recalibrate their strategies in the region. Turkey perceives Saudi Arabia as a regional hegemon, hence a competitor in power politics. Even if the Erdoğan regime ends abruptly, it is unlikely to see a Turkish retreat from the Middle Eastern power game. Before the rise of Erdoğan's AKP, the Turkish state elite were oblivious about engaging with the Middle East, a rejectionism in state ideology since the time of Kemal Atatürk. After the AKP's 20-year rule, however, Turkey's secular nationalists experienced a metamorphosis and the old Turkish militarism revived through new markets for securitization policies, the arms industry, and an expansionist agenda from Libya to Iraq to Azerbaijan. Although Erdoğan's neo-Ottoman discourse was a drift away from the Turkish state's ideology, the new militarism has provided opportunities for the old state elite to seek financial incentives and try to regain their influence in shaping the Turkish foreign policy agenda.

One of the main points of friction between the Turkish state ideology and Erdoğan's new presidential regime, however, has been the use of political Islam in regional politics. Erdoğan has long portrayed his image as anti-status quo and himself as a revisionist leader. Riyadh, together with Abu Dhabi and Cairo, found Erdoğan's agenda especially dangerous to their national interests. But with a new rapprochement with Israel and Gulf states, Erdoğan appears to be stepping back from his revisionist policies and priorities to satisfy his nationalist alliance at home. Erdoğan's secular nationalist partners have long demanded a retreat from Turkey's support to the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas. On his return to Turkey from Riyadh,

Erdoğan shut down the Brotherhood's Mekameleen television station and put restrictions on the group's public relations, noting that "diplomatic circumstances have changed." This was clearly a direct message to Saudi Arabia and pro-status quo Gulf regimes to quell their concerns about Ankara's ambitions. Moreover, the Turkish government has begun to expel Hamas activists, communicating with the group that members of the Izzedin al-Qassam Brigades, its military wing, could not remain in Turkey. These developments indicate that, while Riyadh may still be disturbed by the neo-Ottoman discourse that allows Turkish military operations in Iraq and Syria, Erdoğan's withdrawal of support for the Muslim Brotherhood in regional politics will make Ankara-Riyadh relations better.

There are also clear signals that Ankara aims to use the current reconciliation with Riyadh to eventually reach out to Cairo. Turkish and Egyptian delegations have started to engage in dialogues in the past year. A potential visit between Erdoğan and Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi may not be possible before the critical 2023 elections, given that the Turkish president does not want to give an image of weakness in the eyes of his own political Islamist AKP constituency. The 2013 Egyptian coup against Islamist President Mohammed Morsi was utilized by Erdoğan to buttress his revolutionary image with the claim that he is a target of Western conspiracy and coup attempts.

Turkey's disputes with Greece and Cyprus are often perceived as national security matters, prompting Erdoğan to satisfy his nationalist alliance by breaking Turkey's isolation through relations with other actors.

In the long run, however, a strategic rapprochement between the Turkish and Egyptian militaries is desirable for An-

kara due to the shifting dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean. With unprecedented moves, Greece and Cyprus have developed significant relations—including joint military drills and collaborative platforms to explore natural gas—with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Turkey perceives these developments as highly alarming and thus aims to break such alliance formation against Turkish interests in the region. For the official state ideology, Turkey's disputes with Greece and Cyprus are often perceived as national security matters, prompting Erdoğan to satisfy his nationalist alliance by breaking Turkey's isolation through relations with other actors. Can Turkey Deliver on the Iranian Threat?

In a post-American order in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia and Turkey may find opportunities for cooperation in Syria and Iraq. Despite being competitors, Ankara and Riyadh find common ground in perceiving Iran's regional ambitions as detrimental to their national interests. Erdoğan's recent statements included sympathy for Riyadh's security concerns about the Islamic Republic. There are both financial and geopolitical reasons behind Turkey's desire to sell its famous Bayraktar drones to Saudi Arabia.

In the short term, however, Turkish-Saudi relations in Syria and Iraq will be shaped by American policies. The US Treasury Department has recently lifted some sanctions to exempt investors and private companies with relations in northeastern and western Syria from the Caesar Act. This is a critical development as far as Saudi Arabia is concerned since the United States seeks to help the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in those areas but to continue sanctioning the Syrian regime's territories. Saudi Arabia and the UAE seek to engage with the Assad regime in order to lessen Iran's leverage in Damascus, but

they will be limited by the Caesar Act. At the same time, if the Saudis get involved with the SDF, they will be inviting trouble with Turkey which is fighting the SDF and considers a Kurdish enclave in northern Syria a national security threat. As it was previously, Saudi assistance to the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) irked Ankara and caused repeated media criticism of the kingdom. Thus, a Saudi-Turkish rapprochement will necessarily entail a Saudi change on YPG and their ally, the Kurdistan Workers Party, and its operations in Iraq and Iran, even if they target Iranian regime troops.

In Iraq, however, Turkish-Saudi cooperation is also dependent on finding a delicate balance of competing demands. Baghdad is highly disturbed by Turkey's expanding military influence in the Sinjar region, thus limiting its ability to help strengthen Sunni interests in the country, a key Saudi desire. Neither is the expansion of Turkish military zones in Iraqi Kurdistan good news for Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Iran is also trying to increase its presence in Iraqi Kurdistan at the same time that Israel is seeking to strengthen its foothold there, a situation that invites tense relations between Ankara and Tehran. To be sure, overlapping interests of many parties in northern Iraq do not necessarily guarantee an emerging Turkish-Saudi pact in the near future.

Still, Turkey and Saudi Arabia seem to be steadfastly moving, although deliberately on the latter's part, toward a rapprochement after years of tension. This is likely to help President

Erdoğan address some irksome political and economic facts in the country. It is also likely to give the Saudis hope that they may not be on their own amidst widespread speculation in the region that the United States is planning an exit from the Middle East.



June 3, 2022
By Chenar Chalak

Kirkuk sentences four former officials to 15 years in prison

A court in Kirkuk on Thursday sentenced four former members of the provincial council to 15 years in prison after it accused them of using their official positions for personal gain.

In an official court document seen by Rudaw English, Kirkuk's criminal court sentenced Adwar Orham, Irfan Kirkukli, Parwin Mohammed, and Riyadh Danuk to 15 years in prison each, in accordance with Article 316 of the Iraqi Penal Code. All four individuals are former members of the Kirkuk provincial

council, representing the Brotherhood bloc.

Kirkuli described the decision as "political" to Rudaw, saying they will appeal it.

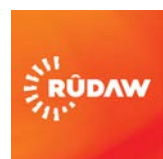
The court said the four members have the right to surrender themselves and appeal the decision. It also confirmed freezing the assets of all four members and prohibited them from traveling outside of Iraq.

The decision against the former members comes days after the

council's former acting chairman, Rebwar Talabani, was sentenced to six years in prison on charges of "willfully" inflicting damage on the authority's property. He was also a member of the Brotherhood bloc.

Article 316 of the Iraqi Penal Code constitutes that, "any public official or agent who exploits his position in order to obtain funds, goods or documents establishing legal rights or other things to which he is not entitled and which belong to the State or to an establishment or organization in which the state has

a financial interest is punishable by imprisonment." Many former Kirkuk officials, especially the Kurds, left the city and their positions after the events of October 16, 2017, which saw the province transition from being under the control of Kurdish authorities to the control of the Iraqi armed forces. Kirkuk, a diverse oil-rich province of Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen, and Christian residents, is disputed between the federal Iraqi and Kurdish regional governments.



June 3, 2022

Kurdish woman among first female Physicians, graduating in 19th century

While women were not allowed to get an education in many countries, a Kurdish woman named Dr. Sabat Islambouli in 1890 got a medical degree from the first women's college of medicine in the US and became one of the first female doctors around the world.

Detailed information about those women, including Dr. Sabat, who studied medicine during the 19th century, is archived at the Legacy Center and Special Collections of the college that grants medical degrees. Among the graduates were people from Middle Eastern Countries.

The archived information and documents include a copy of their degrees, photographs, and personal details.



All those who studied at the university have personal portfolios, containing all information related to them, among them is Dr. Sabat's profile who moved to the US in 1885 to pursue a degree in medicine.

"The information that we have is just material that was recorded when she was here at the school. So, it includes the photograph included the two other women, which was taken at the dean's party," Matt Herbison, ar-

chivist at the Legacy Center and Special Collections at Drexel University told Rudaw on May 12.

There is a confusion around Dr. Sabat's name, which is referenced differently in documents and photographs. Her name is written as Tabat Islambooly, Tabat Istanbuli, Sabat or Thabat.

In the past, each student at this college had to pay \$130 (equivalent to over \$3000 now) as tuition fees for each year during their four year course. But Dr. Sabat had been granted a scholarship, receiving \$35 (equivalent to \$1000 now) for every year during the study program, Herbison said.

According to the documents and information available, Dr. Sabat

finished college in five years instead of four. She began her studies in 1885 and graduated in 1890. It is unclear as to why she had skipped a college year. It appears of the first year that she was at the school was 1885 and 1886 school year, and when we looked at the list of students of the next school year, she is not on that list for some reasons. I don't think we had a record indicate why she took a year off," Herbison noted.

"She came back the next year which was 1887, and for the three years from 1887 to when she graduated in 1890, she was a student," the archivist added. Dr. Sabat received a diploma in medicines, making way for her to embark on her professional career as a physician. She was seen as one of the early female

physicians in history who held a diploma in medicine. In the first year of college, students had taken classes in Chemistry, Anatomy, Psychology, and Medical Substances to make medication, General Treatment, and Pharmacy. Practical lessons were also taught in designated laboratories. Modules and course studies at this college had also heavily focused on women's health. "There would have been labs throughout, each year there would be lab component. If you look at the annual announcement that we talked about a couple times, you can see what their actual daily schedule was, you could see on Wednesday afternoon, they will learning about this in the lab, on Saturday morning they will learning about that," Herbison stated.

Details on Dr. Sabat's year of birth are not clear. However, it is known that she hailed from a Jewish Kurdish family who lived in Damascus and later moved to Pennsylvania, according to remarks from the archivist. According to Herbison, those who were student at this college had either been sent by their own countries to continue their undergraduate studies here, or they had applied through relatives or friends.

Dr. Sabat made her way back to Damascus after her graduation and continued her professional career there, Najeeb Jarrar, head of consumer marketing in Google Middle East and North Africa told Rudaw.

Officials from the college say they have had little information

about Dr. Sabat ever since she had departed the US, once and for all.

The archivist Herbison said they lost track of her in 1929. Jarrar, who had researched Dr. Sabat's life, said the physician later moved to Cairo after staying in Damascus for an unknown period of time to continue her work in the medical field, he said. She is said to have died in 1941, with her descendants living in Canada now.

The Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, where Dr. Sabat obtained her degree from, was founded in 1850 and was the first college in the world established to train women to receive a degree in medicine. The college was later absorbed by the Drexel University college of Medicine.



June 3, 2022

Journalist Berivan Altan investigated over report on attack on Kurdish family

The reporter was asked whether she had received instructions from anyone to report on the incident.

The Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office summoned Berivan Altan, a reporter for the Mezopotamya Agency (MA) to testify because of her report titled, "Racist attack on Kurdish family in Ankara: Women and children removed from neighborhood."

Altan is under investigation for "provoking the people into hatred and animosity," MA reported.

The prosecutor reportedly asked the journalist how she had received the information in the report and whether she had



received instructions from anyone to write the report. Altan said she had heard of the incident from her news sources

and headed to Elmadağ district to report on the events.

"I went to Elmadağ, where the

incident happened, and met the family. Then I did the report. There is nothing in the new content that would cause hatred and animosity among the people," said the journalist.

"I reported on such an incident and brought it to the agenda because I thought there was a right violation. While doing this reporting, I did not receive an opinion or suggestion from anyone else to report on it. All the news content belongs to me."

She left the courthouse after giving the statement.

Irritante et incontournable, la Turquie sur tous les fronts diplomatiques

Entre menaces et coups de menton, la Turquie veille à rester au cœur du jeu international, sans craindre de marchander ses atouts et ses objections, au risque d'irriter ses alliés.

Guerre en Ukraine et corridors maritimes, élargissement de l'OTAN, incursions en Irak et à venir en Syrie, tensions avec le voisin grec, Ankara se retrouve sur tous les dossiers régionaux à l'avantage de son président, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, au pouvoir depuis 2003 et candidat l'an prochain à une réélection incertaine.

D'un dossier à l'autre, il tape du poing sur la table en jouant à la fois de la sécurité et des intérêts de son pays.

Le secrétaire d'État américain Antony Blinken a prévenu qu'une opération turque dans le nord de la Syrie, tel qu'Erdogan en brandit la menace pour « nettoyer » la zone frontalière de la présence des combattants kurdes, « saperait la stabilité régionale ». Mais de là à l'arrêter...

La menace surgit en plein débat sur l'entrée de la Suède et de la Finlande dans l'OTAN, auxquelles Ankara s'oppose en leur reprochant, justement, d'héberger des « terroristes » du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) et leurs alliés. Ceux-là mêmes visés par l'opération militaire envisagée en Syrie afin d'établir une « zone de sécurité » de 30 km de large le long de la frontière turque.

Une offensive est déjà en



Le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Florion Goga/File Photo/Reuters

cours depuis mi-avril dans le nord de l'Irak pour les mêmes raisons.

Opportunité diplomatique

« Il essaye de transformer (la question de l'OTAN) en opportunité diplomatique », accuse Yektan Turkyilmaz, chercheur rattaché à l'Université d'Europe centrale à Vienne. « La Suède et la Finlande se trouvent obligées de discuter des "inquiétudes" de la Turquie. Qui correspondent en fait au droit réclamé par la Turquie de traiter de "terroriste" qui elle veut. »

Cette façon d'occuper la scène a aussi des fins de politique intérieure à un an du scrutin présidentiel de juin 2023, comme l'avance Soner Cagaptay, spécialiste de la Turquie au Washington Institute. « Bien sûr, la Turquie a de légitimes inquiétudes concernant le PKK et les YPG (branche armée du Parti de l'union démocratique kurde en Syrie) ainsi que leurs liens

avec la Suède, dit-il. Mais même si (les Suédois) ne font pas tout ce que (Erdogan) demande, il finira par revendiquer une victoire qui aura forcé les Européens à mettre genou à terre. » « Son image d'homme à poigne en sortira renforcée dans le monde entier et lui profitera aussi au plan national », prédit-il.

Les analystes interrogés par l'AFP relèvent aussi l'espoir turc de profiter du dossier OTAN pour solder celui des F-16 américains, ces avions de chasse commandés et partiellement payés, dont Washington a suspendu le contrat après qu'Ankara eut acquis un système de défense russe S-400.

Les dernières frictions avec la Grèce, partenaire au sein de l'OTAN mais accusée par Erdogan de vouloir bloquer le dossier des F-16 à Washington, s'emboîtent ainsi à la perfection dans la stratégie turque.

Posture irritante

Pour Soner Cagaptay, « Erdogan envoie un signal à (Joe) Biden : Parlons de mes avions bloqués par le Sénat et je serai heureux de lever mon veto à l'OTAN ».

« Sa posture est certainement irritante, mais ses objections sont souvent fondées », nuance le géopolitologue Didier Billion, de l'Institut des relations internationales et stratégiques (IRIS) à Paris. « Et au-delà du chantage, à la fin un compromis sera trouvé », parie-t-il.

Peut-on se passer du reis turc qui a réussi jusqu'à présent, seule puissance régionale, à maintenir des relations avec Kiev, armé par des drones turcs, sans s'aliéner Moscou ? « Grâce à sa neutralité, même sans progrès notables, la Turquie reste le tiers de confiance pour une médiation entre l'Ukraine et la Russie », relève Elizabete Aunina, de l'Université d'Amsterdam.

Le patron de la diplomatie russe Sergueï Lavrov arrive en Turquie mercredi pour discuter de l'établissement de « corridors » en mer Noire, pour exporter les céréales ukrainiennes. Ankara a proposé son aide et sa flotte et, pour le moment, la Russie fait mine de l'envisager. Ce sera la seconde visite de M. Lavrov après les pourparlers d'Antalya (Sud) en mars, qui reste l'unique face-à-face avec son homologue ukrainien Dmytro Kuleba depuis le début de la guerre.

BROOKINGS

3 June, 2022
By Ranj Alaaldin

Turkey's threat to derail Swedish and Finnish NATO accession reraises the Kurdish question

Turkey's opposition to Sweden and Finland joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the wake of Russia's war on Ukraine has elevated the Kurdish question on the international stage. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is attempting to capitalize on the urgency of fortifying Western deterrence by increasing the pressure on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The insurgent group has fought the Turkish state for five decades to secure greater rights for Turkey's Kurds but enjoyed a rapid ascension with the onset of the Syrian civil war and Washington's 2014 decision to partner with its sister organization to defeat the Islamic State group (IS).

The PKK has constituted a major component of Turkey's relationship with Europe and the United States for decades, and Erdoğan has initiated several military campaigns into Syria's northeast to suppress the autonomous enclave the PKK's sister organization, the Peoples' Protection Units (YPG), formed in the midst of the civil war. While Turkey may be using the Nordic NATO accession talks to receive Western backing for another campaign, it has a long record of carrying out cross-border incursions against the PKK and Erdoğan may also be trying to secure other concessions, including the lifting of embargoes on Turkey's defense industry.

But Ankara's opposition to Swedish and Finnish accession, based on their refusal to extradite PKK members, as well as followers of the Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen (whom Ankara accuses of instigating a 2016 coup attempt), highlights

that the Kurdish question cannot be decoupled from Western security interests. The tectonic shifts that have taken place in the global security order since Russia invaded Ukraine means that the second-order effects of the war against IS and the proximity of the Kurdish question to U.S. and European security interests requires a reprioritization of the issue in the West.

Crisis-driven relations

Turkey's conflict with the PKK has long complicated Turkey's relations with the U.S. and its European allies. Relations have been in flux and either enhanced or upended by shifting fault lines in the Middle East since the 2011 Arab uprisings and the emergence of IS. Although the 2013 peace process between the Turkish state and the PKK raised hopes of a lasting settlement, the fragile truce was upended in 2015 by the YPG's ascension in Syria, its refusal to prioritize the fall of the Assad regime, and deep-seated animosities. The result was a renewal of a domestic conflict that has taken on multiple transnational dimensions and produced untold humanitarian crises.

Ankara has for decades questioned Europe's commitment to addressing its security concerns. In the 1990s, Greece and Italy provided refuge to the PKK's imprisoned founder and leader, Abdullah Öcalan, and the PKK established an expansive infrastructure, including in Sweden, that allows it to mobilize supporters and resources in Europe and in Turkey. European leaders had hoped to leverage Turkey's EU accession process to improve

Turkey's human rights records but talks stagnated more than a decade ago and both sides have effectively given up on it.

Similarly, in addition to supporting the YPG, the U.S. has provoked Erdoğan's ire by refusing to extradite the Pennsylvania-based Gülen, while Washington also imposed tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminium after an agreement to release pastor Andrew Brunson fell through in 2018. Ankara did U.S.-Turkey relations no favours by purchasing Russian air defense systems, after which Washington imposed sanctions on Turkey.

Turkey's relations with the West will continue to be crisis-driven amid a range of ongoing tensions, including over the conflict in Libya, the eastern Mediterranean crisis, tensions with the EU over the future of 3 million Syrian refugees in Turkey, and NATO expansion in response to Russia's aggression. Putting Turkish responsibility for the current state of affairs to one side, the trans-Atlantic alliance is guilty of failing to establish forward-looking approaches to tumult in Turkey's Middle Eastern neighborhood, opting instead for incoherent and reactive engagement that has put issues like the PKK conflict and broader Kurdish political questions on the back burner.

The failure to mitigate the second-order effects of policies designed to address security threats like IS has allowed Ankara to exploit the West's failure to balance the imperative of securing the defeat of the jihadis with the need to manage the security interests of regional actors like Turkey. This has

had serious strategic implications, as evidenced by the current dispute over NATO membership and the pressure NATO has faced as a result of the ebb in relations and disputes over the YPG's dominance in Syria.

Europe's opportunity?

Washington's preoccupation with Russia, China, and Iran, combined with Erdoğan's combative approach to the West and wider fatigue over Turkey's foreign policy, means that it is difficult to foresee a political climate that could enable a proactive U.S. effort to reverse the deteriorating state of relations with Turkey — even if, ultimately, the Biden administration will need to grant Ankara concessions to secure support for the NATO expansion.

However, this may be the moment for Europe to alleviate the strategic fault lines. Although some European countries like France have also embraced the YPG, perceptions of U.S. betrayal in Turkey run deeper and have developed and crystallized over the course of a decade of tumult since the 2011 Arab uprisings. Europe presents Turkey with a different set of dynamics. The EU is by far Turkey's largest trading partner: in 2020, 33.4% of Turkey's imports came from the EU and 41.3% of the country's exports went to the bloc. Total trade between the EU and Turkey that year amounted to €132.4 billion. There are, therefore, limits to how low Turkey-EU relations can go, particularly when considering the dire straits of the Turkish economy.

While 58% of the Turkish public believe the U.S. constitutes the biggest threat to Turkey, 60% favour closer ties to the EU and Turks believe the EU's effectiveness for solving global problems is more likely to produce favourable results for humanity. Such dynamics could empower Europe to dial down tensions over NATO and address questions surrounding the future of the PKK's relationship with the U.S.-led anti-IS coalition, within which a number of European countries are key players.

Integrating policies

The West must engage Turkey within the confines of the country's political landscape as it approaches its 2023 elections. There will be limited space to address Turkey's status as a difficult NATO ally or Erdoğan's combative engagement, and no space to revive the peace process with the PKK.

The U.S. and Europe could wait out their stormy relationship with Ankara until after the

elections, but that banks on a far-from-certain Erdoğan defeat and the notion that it would result in an immediate change in Turkish foreign policy. Alternatively, the U.S. and Europe can start to think about ways to manage the crisis over the YPG to deescalate tensions, and establish much-needed confidence-building measures balancing the West's dependency on the Kurdish fighters against IS with Turkey's security concerns.

That will require Europe exercising leadership to establish, in coordination with Turkey and the U.S., a task force that includes personnel who have a track record of executing conflict resolution mechanisms, including ceasefires and peace-monitoring, power-sharing formulas, and revenue-sharing frameworks, which will be important in light of Washington's decision to allow foreign investment in Syria's northeast. It could signal to Ankara that the West is taking its concerns seriously, while also providing a space in

which to find mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders in the autonomous enclave.

The YPG has banked on European support to enhance its legitimacy, while the PKK has capitalized on such support, and strained Western relations with Turkey, to maintain its grassroots networks in European capitals. Europe, therefore, has sufficient leverage to condition its continued support for the YPG on the organization opening up political space for its local Kurdish rivals. Holding the YPG accountable and enabling Turkish political influence over the future of Syria's northeast will weaken the case for further Turkish military offensives. However, the YPG and the PKK must make their own difficult decisions: it is only a matter of time until the U.S. deems them dispensable assets whose utility as an integral component of the anti-IS campaign is diminished. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has reshuffled Western priorities.

Geopolitically, Turkey and the Iraqi army have launched military campaigns to dislodge the PKK from the town of Sinjar in northern Iraq, where the PKK's partnership with Iranian proxy groups and rivalry with Iraqi Kurdistan's ruling party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), has hindered the anti-IS coalition and U.S. containment of Iran. A PKK withdrawal from Sinjar, per a United Nations-backed agreement, presents one less problem to manage.

The Kurds constitute the largest ethnic group in the Middle East seeking a state of their own, with half of the 40 million Kurds residing in Turkey. For Western policymakers, reprioritizing the Kurdish issue provides an opportunity to integrate policies to manage different but interlocked crises in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Ukraine, while bolstering NATO's northern flank and reinforcing deterrence against Russia.



13 juin 2022
Par Audrey Parmentier

A l'ONU, pourquoi la Turquie prend-elle son nom turc "Türkiye" ?

Le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan souhaitait changer le nom officiel du pays, le terme anglais "Turkey" étant trop connoté. Une communication politique bien rodée.

Les documents officiels vont devoir connaître une mise à jour. Aux Nations unies, la Turquie se fait dorénavant appeler dans toutes les langues par son nom turc "Türkiye" et non plus "Turkey" trop connoté en anglais. Derrière cette nouvelle annoncée par l'ONU jeudi 2 juin, s'inscrit la volonté du président Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "Le changement est immédiat", a indiqué

à l'AFP Stéphane Dujarric, porte-parole du secrétaire général de l'ONU Antonio Guterres. Le diplomate a précisé que c'est un courrier officiel d'Ankara reçu au siège des Nations unies à New York, mercredi 1er juin, qui a aussitôt officialisé le changement de nom de la Turquie.

Le pouvoir turc demandait depuis décembre 2021 que son

pays ne soit plus appelé Turquie, en français, et Turkey, en anglais, qui signifie aussi "dinde", et qui pouvait donc revêtir une connotation négative. "A l'époque, les Anglais ont appelé ce volatile 'Turkey' car ils croyaient qu'il venait de Turquie, alors que les Français et les Turcs pensaient qu'il venait d'Inde", explique à L'Express Jean Marcou, titulaire de la chaire Méditerranée et Moyen-

Orient à Sciences Po Grenoble et spécialiste de la Turquie. Cette croyance des Anglais s'explique par le fait que les premières dindes importées en Angleterre avaient transité par la Turquie. D'après certaines recherches poussées, le volatile viendrait d'Amérique. Mardi 31 mai, le ministre turc des Affaires étrangères Mevlüt Cavusoglu s'était affiché sur son compte Twitter, signant la

lettre adressée au secrétaire général de l'ONU et réclamant que "le nom de notre pays à l'ONU, en langues étrangères, soit enregistré comme 'Türkiye'". Dans son post, l'homme politique ajoute que "le processus" du président turc "d'accroître la valeur de la marque de notre pays touche à sa fin".

Ce geste symbolique sur le plan économique et politique est une façon de redorer le blason de la Turquie sur la scène internationale. De fait, en matière économique, Ankara souhaite depuis quelques années imposer à l'international le "made in Türkiye" aux dépens de "made in Turkey". "Au cours des deux dernières décennies, le tourisme a explosé en Turquie, c'est un pays qui s'est ouvert au monde, la compagnie aérienne Turkish Airlines est évaluée comme l'une des meilleures au niveau européen, déroule Jean Marcou avant de continuer, Avec cette volonté d'ouverture au monde, le terme 'Turkey' est donc de plus en plus utilisé. Si le volatile avait été un aigle, ça n'aurait peut-être pas posé de problème." Une façon de se repositionner sur la scène mondiale "Certains peuvent trouver ce changement de nom idiot, mais cela place Erdogan dans le rôle du protecteur et de la sauvegarde du respect inter-



En imposant le nom turc "Türkiye", Recep Tayyip Erdogan tente d'imposer son pays sur la scène internationale, alors qu'il est gangrené par l'inflation.

national à l'égard du pays", analyse Mustafa Aksakal, professeur d'histoire à l'université Georgetown de Washington, cité jeudi par le quotidien américain New York Times. Le média souligne qu'en juin 2023 la Turquie célébrera le centenaire de sa fondation après le démantèlement de l'Empire ottoman. Yohanan Benhaim, chercheur à l'institut français d'études anatoliennes d'Istanbul et à Noria Research note une volonté du président turc de "renationaliser le nom Turquie", tout en expliquant à L'Express qu'il s'agit avant tout d'une "communication politique" afin de réaffirmer l'identité nationale du pays.

Selon Jean Marcou, il s'agit aussi d'une façon d'imposer l'idée de l'existence d'une

culture turque" tout en "flattant la sensibilité nationale". Après, il reste difficile de savoir si ce changement de nom à l'ONU se prolongera par d'autres mesures administratives - par exemple, sur les passeports et visas. "Sur les lignes de la Turkish Airlines, avant les films ou dans les moments de publicité, le clip officiel répète à l'envi 'Hello Türkiye', sur fond de décors enchanteurs, c'est une façon 'de sensibiliser le monde à cette nouvelle appellation", fait remarquer le spécialiste. Mercredi 1er juin, le directeur de la communication, Fahrettin Altun, a publié cette vidéo promotionnelle sur Twitter, avec la légende #HelloTürkiye.

Si Recep Tayyip Erdogan met les bouchées doubles sur la scène internationale, serait-ce

pour combler les difficultés auxquelles il est confronté sur le plan national ? La décision de changer le nom de la Turquie trouve peu d'écho selon la BBC, compte tenu de la crise économique qui traverse le pays. "Cette mesure vise surtout à séduire les franges nationalistes de l'électorat et intervient dans un contexte de grave crise économique qui remet en question la popularité du président et du Parti de la justice et du développement (AKP)", décrypte Yohanan Benhaim.

En Turquie, l'inflation accable la population : elle a atteint 73,5% sur un an en mai, au plus haut depuis décembre 1998, tirée par l'augmentation des prix de l'énergie et de l'alimentation, selon les données officielles publiées vendredi 3 juin. La hausse des prix à la consommation a cependant ralenti en mai, comparé à la progression constatée en avril, où l'inflation avait bondi de 61 à 70%. Dans ce pays de 84,4 millions d'habitants, l'inflation se trouve au cœur des préoccupations. L'opposition et de nombreux économistes accusent l'Office national des statistiques (Tük) de sous-estimer sciemment et largement son ampleur.

Kurdistan au féminin 5 juin 2022

La Méditerranée à travers le regard féminin

Le gouverneur d'Adana interdit la représentation de Tartuffe en kurde

La pièce en kurde Tartuffe de Molière, qui était prévue au théâtre de la municipalité métropolitaine d'Adana, a été interdite par le gouverneur d'Adana.

La demande faite au bureau du gouverneur d'Adana pour mettre en scène la pièce de théâtre a été rejetée. Le bureau du gouverneur d'Adana a

interdit la pièce, affirmant qu'elle était « inappropriée ».

Contrairement au gouvernorat d'Adana, le gouverneur de Mersin a autorisé la représentation de la pièce kurde Tartuffe.

Réagissant à la décision d'interdiction, l'organisateur Suat Ekin a déclaré: « Normale-

ment, il n'est pas nécessaire d'obtenir l'autorisation du bureau du gouverneur pour que des événements se déroulent dans des salles. Mais la direction de la culture de la municipalité métropolitaine du CHP d'Adana a insisté sur le fait que, comme la pièce est en kurde, il valait mieux obtenir l'autorisation du bureau du gouverneur. La décision d'in-

terdiction est une indication d'intolérance envers la langue kurde. »

Tartuffe, ou l'Imposteur en 1664, est une comédie théâtrale de Molière. Les personnages de Tartuffe, Elmire et Orgon sont considérés parmi les plus grands rôles de théâtre classique.

Syria: US-backed SDF 'open' to working with Syrian troops to fight off Turkey invasion

Ankara has vowed a new offensive against areas of northern Syria controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) would be "open" to coordinating with Syrian government troops to fend off any Turkish invasion of the north, the head of the US-backed militia has said.

Mazloum Abdi also told Reuters on Sunday that Damascus should use its air defence systems against Turkish planes.

Earlier this week, Ankara vowed a new offensive against areas of northern Syria controlled by the SDF, a Kurdish-led alliance spearheaded by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has said his country wants to capture the SDF-held towns of Tal Rifaat and Manbij in northern Aleppo province, most of



The Syrian Democratic Forces are a Kurdish-led alliance spearheaded by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (AFP)

Earlier this week, Turkish military sources told Middle East Eye that Ankara had decided on the operation after Russia moved a significant number of troops out of the country due to the war in Ukraine.

The operation would be the fourth of its kind mounted by Turkey in northern Syria since 2016.

was no need to send additional troops.

Last month, Syria's foreign ministry said it would consider any new Turkish incursions as "war crimes and crimes against humanity".

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The operation would be the fourth of its kind mounted by Turkey in northern Syria since 2016.

'Our priority is defending Syrian territory'

During an interview from an undisclosed location in northern Syria, Abdi told Reuters that his forces were "open" to working with Syrian troops to fight off Turkey but said there was no need to send additional troops.

"The essential thing that the Syrian army could do to defend Syrian territory would be use air defence system against Turkish planes," he said.

Turkey has backed rebel groups in clashes against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces and the SDF.

It has used warplanes and increasingly drones to target territory held by the SDF, where Syrian Kurdish authorities have set up a governance system separate from Damascus.

Abdi said that increased military coordination would not threaten the semi-autonomous rule it has.

"Our priority is defending Syrian territory, and no one should think about taking advantage of that situation to make gains on the ground," he said.

He added that any new Turkish offensive would displace around one million people and lead to "wider" zones of fighting, but would not say whether the SDF would respond with an attack on Turkish territory itself. SDF fighters guard camps and prisons where fighters for the Islamic State group (IS) and their affiliated families are detained, and redeploying those guards to fight Turkey could leave security gaps.

Abdi, who warned of a possible resurgence of IS if there is an escalation, said that he hoped an upcoming meeting between the foreign ministers of Russia and Turkey could lead to a de-escalation. But he said that a negotiated settlement must include a halt to Turkish drone attacks in northern Syria.



Turkey planned Syria military operation after Russian troops withdrew over Ukraine

which is otherwise held by Syrian government troops.

Last month, Syria's foreign ministry said it would consider any new Turkish incursions as "war crimes and crimes against humanity".

'Our priority is defending Syrian territory'

During an interview from an undisclosed location in northern Syria, Abdi told Reuters that his forces were "open" to working with Syrian troops to fight off Turkey but said there

June 7, 2022

WKI Kurdistan's Weekly Brief June 7, 2022

Iran

A car bomb wounded an Iranian member of the exiled "Organization of Iranian Kurdistan" in Erbil on Monday. The Counter-Terrorism Group (CTG) Kurdistan identified the injured man as Akbar Safar Almas and said he was born in 1973. Though no one has claimed responsibility for Monday's attack, the Iranian regime remains the prime suspect because of its history of assassinating dissidents in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Reza Pahlavi, the son of the last Shah of Iran, angered Iranian Kurds when he described the nation's minorities as "tribes and clans." That said, Pahlavi appealed to Kurds, Arabs, and the rest of Iran's minorities to forge a "covenant of unity and solidarity in support of the people who bravely take to the streets." The Secretary-General of the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran (KDP-I), Khalid Azizi, expressed his party's regret for Pahlavi's remarks. "It is no secret that the Kurdish national struggle is one of a nation of Iranian nations that demands national rights and self-determination," said Azizi.

The Hengaw Organization for Human Rights reported the Iranian regime sentenced 16 Kurdish activists to prison in May. Simultaneously, Urmia's Islamic Revolutionary Court sentenced a 61-year-old woman named Narmin Abadi to five years in prison for "cooperation with the Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK)." Moreover, Iranian security forces in Sahneh arrested several Kaka'i Kurds, including an activist named Sawesh Hayati. Lastly, Iranian authorities detained Khalid Qurbani in Kamyaran, Sadiq Mosabab in Bokan, and Ma-jeed Karimi in Sanandaj



(Sena).

Iraq

Baghdad and Erbil remain at odds over the Federal Supreme Court of Iraq's ruling that rendered the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) oil and gas law unconstitutional. The President of the Kurdistan Regional Judicial Council, Abdul Jabar Hassan, rejected Baghdad's ruling and defended the validity of the KRG's law that was passed in 2007. Hassan also denied the constitutionality of the Federal Supreme Court. "Article 92 (2) of the Constitution of Iraq requires that the Iraqi Council of Representatives pass a law to establish an Iraqi Federal Supreme Court. No such law has to date been enacted," said Hassan. Though the US urged both parties to come to an understanding, Baghdad remains unwilling to provide the KRG with its share of the federal budget. A KRG delegation met with Iraqi Finance Minister Ayad Allawi who warned that the KRG would not receive its 12 percent share of the federal budget until an agreement was reached, in an attempt to force the KRG into submission.

On May 31, the Central Crimi-

nal Court of Iraq sentenced five former Kirkuk Provincial Council members, including former chairman Rebwar Talabani, to prison. Talabani received a six-year sentence, while each of his colleagues received 15 years. The five were tried in absentia and officially charged with violating Article 340 of the Iraqi Penal Code, which states, "Any public official or agent who willfully inflicts damage on the property or interests of the authority for which he works or to which he is associated by virtue of his position or on another's property that has been entrusted to him is punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding 7 years or by detention." Talabani responded saying that the trials were politically motivated, and he and his comrades were displaced by the Iraqi government and Iranian-backed militias for supporting the September 2017 Kurdistan independence referendum. Baghdad has continually attempted to punish those who supported the 2017 Kurdistan Independence Referendum, when more than 92% of voters voted yes for an independent Kurdistan.

Renewed talks between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of

Kurdistan's (PUK) did not lead to discussions on the selection of a presidential candidate last week. Separately, the leaders of Iraq's major Kurdish parties intend to hold another round of talks to discuss the upcoming elections in October 2022. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Jeanine Hennis-Plaschaert mediated the first round of negotiations in May.

Syria

US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield reiterated US opposition to a new Turkish invasion of northern Syria during a phone call with Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal on Thursday. A readout of the call stated that renewed Turkish military operations in the region "could lead to additional population displacement, further destabilize an already fragile situation, and undermine the international coalition's efforts to defeat ISIS (Da'esh)." Turkey has announced plans to invade Manbij and Tal Rifaat, where thousands of displaced Kurds from occupied Afrin have settled. Meanwhile, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had a phone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin and received no Russian commitment to Turkish demands. Finally, Syrian Democratic Forces General Commander Mazloum Abdi told Reuters the SDF is "open" to coordinating with the Syrian Arab Army to repel the Turkish invasion.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East of Syria (AANES) handed over 153 Iraqi families and relatives of ISIS (Da'esh) in the al Hol Camp to the Iraqi government.

The repatriation process started after coordination between the AANES and the Committee of Immigration and Displacement in Iraq's Council of Representatives. Al Hol camp has seen internal violence and crimes among Da'esh sleeper cells. Since the physical defeat of Da'esh Caliphate, 148 people have been killed in the camp.

Turkey

The Swedish government survived a no confidence vote after a lawmaker, Amineh Kakabaveh, originally a Kurd from Iran, abstained from voting,

breaking the tie between the opposition and the ruling parties. The Turkish government has targeted Kakabaveh on several occasions and actively demand Sweden to handover Kurdish activists "terrorists" settled in Sweden. The No Confidence Vote came on the Parliament's floor by the center-right Swedish opposition. Turkey blocked Sweden and Finland joining NATO, demanding deportation of Kurdish opposition figures and activists. The government rejects the Turkish demands since most of the Kurds on Turkey's list are citizens of Sweden. "It is in this chamber that

Swedish laws are decided, not in Ankara." said Kakabaveh.

On Tuesday, June 7th, the European Parliament approved, by a majority, a resolution on Turkey. The legislation proposed by Spanish lawmaker, Nacho Sánchez Amor, criticizes the Turkish government's authoritarianism inside the country and its military aggressions abroad, and calls for reforms. "I hope it's a clear message for Turkish Gov will not fall on deaf ears: it's been your deliberate decision to close the door to the EU path. Turkish society must know, though, that the future is not

written!" tweeted Amor.

Turkish lira fell further 16.75% against the dollar on Tuesday as inflation has reached 23-years high. The Pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) released a "declaration" after conducting a large conference on Youth, bashing the ruling parties for the deterioration of the economy. While 30 million people in the country are struggling with the risk of hunger, 9 million people are trying to survive without work, and society is condemned to hunger," read the HDP statement.



June 07, 2022

Journalist Dicle Müftüoğlu released after 3 days in detention

Accused of sending money to the imprisoned journalists Nedim Türfent and Ziya Ataman, Dicle Müftüoğlu has been released on probation after giving her statement to the prosecutor's office. The co-chair of the Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) and Mezopotamya Agency (MA) editor Dicle Müftüoğlu has been released yesterday (Jun 6) after 3 days in detention.

Accused of sending money to the imprisoned journalists Nedim Türfent and Ziya Ataman, Müftüoğlu was brought to Diyarbakır Court House, early yesterday morning.



Müftüoğlu's statement was taken by the Van Public Prosecutor's Office via Audio and Video Information System (SEGBİS).

Later the journalist was transferred to the Van Penal Court of Peace for judicial control. Giving her defense, journalist Müftüoğlu said she knew Nedim Türfent and Ziya Ataman since she was the Edi-

tor-in-Chief of Dicle News Agency.

Müftüoğlu stated that she had sent money for solidarity with her colleagues in prison.

Müftüoğlu's lawyer, Resul Temur, also said that the money Müftüoğlu sent could not be considered financing and demanded her release.

The journalist was released on probation.

Müftüoğlu was called in for questioning on June 3 and detained after police raided her home in the mostly Kurdish populated southeastern province of Diyarbakır.



June 7, 2022

Swedish government survives no-confidence vote with help of former Kurdish fighter

Sweden's government survived a no-confidence vote on Tuesday with the help of a lawmaker whose demands for support for Kurds in Northern Syria could complicate its attempts to join NATO.

Turkey is blocking both Sweden and Finland's hopes of quick accession to the NATO military alliance after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, arguing both countries harbour people linked to Kurdish groups it deems terrorists

Independent member of parliament Amineh Kakabaveh, who is of Iranian Kurdish descent, abstained from voting on the motion brought by the centre-right opposition against Justice Minister Morgan Johansson over rising gang crime.

Without Kakabaveh's vote, the no-confidence motion won the support of only 174 members of parliament, one short of the 175 needed to pass.

Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson had said her Social Democrat minority government would resign if her minister was voted out.

Sweden has grappled with rising gang violence in recent years, which the opposition blame on generous immigration policies and lax crime prevention under the Social Democrats.

So far this year, at least 30



Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson holds a news conference in the parliament press center after the no-confidence vote against minister Morgan Johansson. TT News Agency/Anders Wiklund via REUTERS

people have been shot dead and in the past two decades Sweden has gone from having among the lowest number of deadly shootings per capita in Europe to among the highest.

Kakabaveh, herself a former Kurdish peshmerga fighter, told Reuters on Friday she would help the government if it affirmed that "we support the Kurds and people from those organisations coming to Sweden are not terrorists".

On Tuesday in parliament, Kakabaveh criticised Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan for opposing Sweden's candidacy to NATO and pressuring Stockholm into adapting Sweden's freedom of speech and freedom of assembly to his demands.

Addressing her fellow lawmakers, she said: "It is in this chamber that Swedish laws are decided, not in Ankara."

Kakabaveh previously rescued Andersson in November when Sweden's first woman prime minister was forced to briefly resign after just one day in office.

Andersson promised then that Sweden would deepen its cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Union Party, a Kurdish group. Turkey considers the party to be part of the PKK, which Sweden designates a terrorist organisation.

The PKK has been waging an insurgency in Turkey since 1984 in which more

than 40,000 people have been killed.

Sweden disagrees the Syrian party, or several other Kurdish groups, are part of the PKK. Andersson's Social Democrats at the time said it was "unacceptable" that sympathisers of the Syrian party be considered terrorists.

"The deal which is from November last year is still valid," Social Democrat party secretary Tobias Baudin told news agency TT on Tuesday.

The Social Democrats did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Sweden is due to hold a general election in September.

The Washington Post June 07, 2022
By Bassem Mrouel

US-backed Syrian Kurds to turn to Damascus if Turkey attacks

The U.S.-backed and Kurdish-led forces in northern Syria said Tuesday that they will turn to the government in Damascus for support should Turkey go ahead with its threat to launch a new incursion into the war-torn country.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF, said after a meeting of its command that its priority is to reduce tension near the border with Turkey but also prepare for a long fight if Ankara carries out its threat.

The announcement appears to be a message directed at the United States and meant to elicit pressure from Washington on Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to put aside his offensive plans.

Erdogan has repeatedly said over the past weeks that he's planning a major military operation to create a 30-kilometer (19 mile) deep buf-

fer zone inside Syria along Turkey's border, through a cross-border incursion against U.S.-allied Syrian Kurdish fighters — an attempt that failed in 2019.

Analysts have said Erdogan is taking advantage of the war in Ukraine to push his own goals in Syria — even using Turkey's ability as a NATO member to veto alliance membership by Finland and Sweden as potential leverage.

On the ground, the situation has been tense with near daily exchanges of fire and shelling between the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters on one side and Turkish forces and Turkey-backed Syrian opposition gunmen on the other.

The Turkey-backed Syrian opposition fighters have been preparing for weeks to take part in the expected operation against Syrian Kurdish-led forces, seeking to ex-

pand their area of influence inside Syria. On the other hand, relations between the Kurdish-led fighters who control large parts of northern and eastern Syria — including the towns of Tel Rifaat and Manbij that Erdogan has named as possible targets — with the Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces have been mostly frosty over the past years.

But faced with Erdogan's threat, Syrian Kurdish fighters may want those ties to thaw.

"The meeting confirmed the readiness of (SDF) forces to coordinate with forces of the Damascus government to confront any possible Turkish incursion and to protect Syrian territories against occupation," the statement said and added that a "possible Turkish invasion will affect the stability and unity of Syria's territories."

The statement did not elaborate

on what such a coordination entailed — and whether an alliance with Assad's government in Damascus would translate into joint forces on the ground. Syrian Kurdish officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

Since 2016, Turkey has launched three major operations inside Syria, targeting Syria's main Kurdish militia — the People's Protection Units or YPG — which Turkey considers to be a terrorist organization and an extension of Turkey's outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. The PKK has for decades waged an insurgency within Turkey against the government in Ankara.

The YPG, a backbone of the SDF, has led the fight against the militants of the extremist Islamic State group and has been a proven top U.S. ally in Syria.



8 juin 2022

Lavrov en Turquie : la "crise du blé" au menu mais aussi la Syrie

Ouvrir un corridor pour reprendre les exportations de blé ukrainien, c'est le principal objectif affiché pour la visite du chef de la diplomatie russe à Ankara. Alors que la crise alimentaire menace, Sergueï Lavrov est attendu ce mercredi en Turquie.

Mais le transport de céréales ne sera pas le seul sujet abordé. Les discussions porteront aussi sur les projets d'An-

kara de lancer une nouvelle offensive militaire dans le nord de la Syrie pour y déloger les milices kurdes.

"La Turquie a vraiment besoin de la bénédiction de la Russie pour pouvoir mener cette opération" explique Merve Tahiroglu, spécialiste de la Turquie au "Project on Middle East Democracy".

"Je pense donc qu'ils vont vrai-

ment essayer d'obtenir ce genre de concession de la part de la Russie. Outre la crise alimentaire dont ils vont discuter pour l'Ukraine, je pense que cela va être un sujet de premier plan pour la Turquie. Le président Erdogan a vraiment besoin de cette opération en Syrie pour des raisons de politique intérieure. Car il est en train de perdre du terrain selon tous les sondages d'opinion et il fait face à une élection assez

critique, qui pourrait être un couperet", dit-elle.

A un an de l'élection présidentielle, le pays est confronté à une grave crise monétaire. Les autorités turques comptent notamment sur les revenus du tourisme pour soutenir l'économie. Or la Russie est aussi le pays qui fournit le plus gros contingent de touristes au pays.

La Turquie avance difficilement dans son offensive contre le PKK en Irak

Ankara poursuit ses opérations contre la guérilla kurde du PKK dans le nord-ouest du pays. Sa progression sur le terrain est lente, même si la rivalité politique entre la famille Barzani et le PKK joue en sa faveur. Par ailleurs, la Turquie se prépare à une offensive en Syrie, en attendant le feu vert de Moscou.

La Turquie poursuit son opération militaire lancée au mois d'avril dans le Kurdistan irakien contre la guérilla kurde du PKK. Les combats ont lieu dans les montagnes, dans le nord-est de l'Irak, dans les régions de Zap et de Metina, dont l'armée turque essaye de s'emparer pour pouvoir progresser vers les monts Qandil, fief de l'organisation.

Les forces armées turques, qui progressent pas à pas dans cette zone au relief escarpé, font officiellement état d'une quinzaine de morts dans leurs rangs (un chiffre contesté par le PKK). "Autour de 150 terroristes séparatistes ont été mis hors d'état de nuire depuis le début de l'opération", affirme un éditeur du journal pro-gouvernemental **Star**.

Le média proche du **PKK Medya Haber** dénonce, lui, un usage d'armes chimiques par les forces turques :

"Malgré les intenses bombardements, la guérilla tient bon dans les tunnels creusés dans les montagnes, l'armée turque a donc, comme elle l'avait déjà fait à une reprise l'année dernière, recours à des armes chimiques pour déloger les combattants. Du fait des gaz, huit guérilleros sont tombés en martyrs dans la région de Ciyares et cinq dans celle de Kurojahro."



(photo) Sur cette photo prise le 19 avril 2022, un nuage de fumée s'élève après un raid turc contre le PKK dans une zone montagneuse du nord de l'Irak. Photo AFP

La Turquie mène également en parallèle une guerre de renseignement et une campagne d'assassinats dans les grandes villes kurdes irakiennes où le PKK est influent. "Un des dirigeants du PKK mis hors d'état de nuire", se félicite ainsi le quotidien **Sabah**, qui rapporte qu'une opération des services secrets turcs, le MIT, a permis de viser un cadre de l'organisation, Mehmet Dogan, non loin de la ville de Souleimaniye.

Le risque d'affrontements entre différents mouvements kurdes

Si le gouvernement irakien a critiqué l'opération turque, considérant qu'elle violait sa souveraineté territoriale, Ankara peut compter sur le sou-

tien du gouvernement de la région kurde d'Irak, tenu par la famille Barzani, qui partage de nombreux intérêts économiques avec la Turquie et s'oppose au PKK, qu'il voit comme un rival politique.

Les forces du gouvernement régional autonome ne participent pas directement aux combats, mais elles fournissent de précieux renseignements à l'armée turque, et la possibilité de leur implication plus directe dans les affrontements inquiète le PKK, comme le rapporte l'agence kurde **Firat News**, citant un responsable de l'organisation :

"Si les forces du KDP [le parti de la famille Barzani] décident, comme elles semblent tentées de le faire, d'attaquer les nôtres dans la région de Me-

tina, alors elles doivent savoir que nous leur déclarerons la guerre et que les combats s'étendront à l'ensemble du territoire."

Prochaine intervention en Syrie ?

La Turquie menace par ailleurs d'intervenir en Syrie, contre les Forces démocratiques syriennes (FDS) qui tiennent une partie du nord du pays après y avoir défait le groupe **État islamique (EI, ou Daech)** et qu'Ankara considère comme émanant directement du PKK.

Mais une éventuelle intervention militaire dans le nord-est du pays suppose qu'Ankara obtienne le feu vert de la Russie, sont des troupes sont stationnées dans la région, en soutien au régime de **Bachar El-Assad**.

Le ministre des Affaires étrangères russe, Sergueï Lavrov, est attendu pour une visite officielle et une rencontre avec le président turc **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** mercredi 8 mai à Ankara.

La question d'un éventuel feu vert russe à une intervention turque sera "très probablement abordée" à cette occasion, d'après le porte-parole du Kremlin, Dmitri Peskov, ce que souligne le média en ligne **Gazete Duvar**.

Le nord de la Syrie est devenu le défouloir d'Erdoğan

Le président Erdoğan a annoncé que la **Turquie** ferait bientôt une incursion dans le nord de la **Syrie** pour débarrasser Tel Rifat et Manbij des « **terroristes** » **kurdes**. Il s'agira de la quatrième **incursion militaire** d'Ankara dans la région en six ans. Comme les fois précédentes, Erdoğan cherchera à expulser les milices kurdes qui contrôlent actuellement ces régions pour les remplacer par des forces rebelles syriennes pro-Turcs, transformant ces villes en régimes client le long de la frontière turque.

Ankara goûte peu la présence des Unités de protection du peuple (YPG), groupe syrien affilié au Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, faction séparatiste turque), le long de sa frontière depuis qu'elles s'y sont installées lors de la **guerre syrienne**. Mais les Kurdes syriens se servent rarement de leur position pour lancer des attaques contre la Turquie et aucune hausse significative des frappes terroristes ne rend nécessaire cette soudaine incursion.

Ces attaques visant à stimuler la popularité d'Erdoğan en Turquie au moment opportun sur le plan international deviennent un schéma prévisible

En réalité, les actes d'Erdoğan ne sont pas motivés par les développements en Syrie, mais par ses propres préoccupations nationales et les opportunités qu'offre le climat **géopolitique actuel**.

Sur le plan national, après vingt ans au pouvoir, la **popularité d'Erdoğan vacille** et son parti et lui risquent sérieusement de **perdre les élections**



Le président américain Joe Biden avec le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdoğan lors du sommet du G20, au palais des congrès de Rome La Nuvola, le 31 octobre 2021 (AFP)

à la fois présidentielles et parlementaires en 2023. **L'économie souffre**, tandis que **l'hostilité monte** envers les **3,6 millions de réfugiés syriens** qu'Erdoğan a personnellement accueillis. Le président espère qu'une action contre les YPG dans le nord de la Syrie pourra évacuer une partie de la **pression** en Turquie.

Les opérations contre les YPG/le PKK sont généralement bien accueillies, en particulier chez les nationalistes qu'Erdoğan veut reconquérir. Par le passé, les régions conquises de Syrie ont également été identifiées comme de possibles « **zone de sécurité** » **pour rapatrier les réfugiés** non désirés. Tandis qu'en réalité, très peu ont été **renvoyés** dans ces zones prises, l'idée plaît aux électeurs.

Moscou et Washington

Toutefois, l'évolution de la situation internationale qui facilite l'initiative d'Erdoğan est tout aussi importante. Si la Turquie est un acteur externe important dans le conflit syrien, elle est subordonnée à la fois à la **Russie** et aux

États-Unis, qui contrôlent l'espace aérien syrien. Les précédentes invasions et opérations de la Turquie contre les YPG n'ont été rendues possibles que par l'approbation de Moscou ou de Washington. Cependant, tous deux sont opposés à de nouvelles attaques pour différents motifs et ne vont certainement pas approuver le **plan** de 2019 d'Erdoğan visant à construire une énorme zone tampon de 30 km le long de la frontière syro-turque.

Mais dans le même temps, aucun ne devrait objecter sérieusement à la prise de Tel Rifat et Manbij.

Qu'est-ce qui a changé ? En un mot : **l'Ukraine**. Alors que l'attention de la Russie se porte sur cet épuisant conflit, Moscou retire certaines de ses forces de Syrie et ne peut donc s'opposer vraiment à l'opération d'Ankara, malgré **l'accord** qu'il a conclu en 2019 avec les Kurdes syriens sur le fait de garder la Turquie hors de Manbij.

Si Vladimir Poutine n'accueillera pas très bien le fait

qu'Erdoğan expose la faiblesse de la Russie de cette manière, le président russe a besoin que la Turquie maintienne sa **position réservée** sur l'Ukraine et sera peut-être prêt à sacrifier son accord avec les Kurdes syriens. En outre, Moscou préférera que la Turquie empiète sur le territoire kurde plutôt que de raviver le conflit à Idlib, une région plus importante où la Russie et son allié, le régime d'Assad, ne sont pas en position de force.

Les États-Unis sont dans une position encore plus précaire, étant donné qu'ils sont alliés avec les YPG via le rôle important que jouent ces derniers au sein de la **coalition des Forces démocratiques syriennes** que Washington a financée pour vaincre **l'État islamique** (EI), à la plus grande indignation d'Ankara. La dernière fois qu'Erdoğan a attaqué en 2019, l'opinion publique américaine était **furieuse** contre **l'abandon par l'administration Trump** de son allié, forçant le président **Donald Trump** à négocier un cessez-le-feu entre la Turquie et les YPG.

Mais les priorités américaines ont changé, et Erdoğan le sait. Les États-Unis aussi souhaitent préserver la neutralité relative d'Ankara concernant l'Ukraine et ne veulent assurément pas que la Turquie se rapproche de la Russie. En outre, Washington veut qu'Erdoğan revienne sur son opposition à **l'adhésion à l'OTAN de la Suède et de la Finlande**, laquelle repose sur le refus de ces pays d'extrader des membres exilés du PKK vers la Turquie et leurs objections à **l'attaque d'Ankara en 2019**.

Exiger plus

Erdoğan sait parfaitement qu'il est en position de force et il pourrait exiger plus de Washington en contrepartie de son acceptation de ces nouveaux membres, comme sa réintégration dans le programme d'avion de chasse F-35.

Il s'attend assurément à ce que la Maison-Blanche ferme les yeux sur la prise de ces poches kurdes, laquelle laisserait intacte la majorité du territoire des YPG sous protection américaine.

Ces attaques visant à stimuler la popularité d'Erdoğan en Turquie au moment opportun sur le plan international deviennent un schéma prévisible. Ses précédentes invasions étaient survenues dans des circonstances similaires.

En 2019, la Turquie avait lancé l'opération Source de paix quelques mois après la défaite du parti d'Erdoğan (AKP) à d'importantes élections locales à Istanbul et Ankara alors que l'hostilité envers les réfugiés montait. L'opération avait boosté la popularité du président et créé un espace

pour relocaliser les réfugiés syriens, bien que l'on soit loin des deux millions prévus. Il est important de noter que Washington avait facilité les choses : Trump avait procédé au retrait des forces américaines, donnant ainsi un avantage à Erdoğan.

La guerre russo-ukrainienne projette une nouvelle ombre sur la Syrie

Avant cela, la Turquie avait attaqué la ville kurde d'Afrin dans le cadre de l'opération Rameau d'olivier début 2018, encore une fois à un moment d'incertitude nationale pour Erdoğan. Le lien avec la politique nationale était tel que le parti AKP, à la suite d'un sondage particulièrement favorable après l'invasion, avait convoqué des élections anticipées en juin 2018 au prétexte que « les développements en Syrie et ailleurs les [rendaient] urgentes ».

Une fois de plus, l'attaque avait été facilitée par des acteurs externes, la Russie cette fois. Poutine avait permis à la Turquie de pénétrer dans l'espace aérien syrien en échange du silence de la Turquie sur l'aide fournie par

Moscou au président syrien Bachar al-Assad pour conquérir certaines régions d'Idleb, de Damas et du sud plus tard dans l'année.

On retrouve le même schéma en 2016, lorsque la Turquie a lancé l'opération Bouclier de l'Euphrate contre l'État islamique, qui visait également à interrompre la progression des Kurdes. Une fois de plus, elle était motivée par la politique nationale et internationale.

En Turquie, Erdoğan faisait une démonstration de force après la tentative de putsch quelques mois auparavant, tandis qu'à l'international, l'intervention était convenue avec la Russie, qui avait accepté les gains territoriaux d'Ankara dans le nord de la Syrie à condition qu'il interrompe son soutien aux rebelles à Alep, permettant à Assad de prendre la ville.

En résumé, les incursions turques ont peu à voir avec les événements sur le terrain en Syrie et, malgré la rhétorique d'Erdoğan, ne sont pas motivées par des préoccupations émergentes en matière de sécurité.

Au contraire, ces régions contrôlées par les Kurdes dans le nord de la Syrie sont devenues le dévouement d'Erdoğan : des régions qu'il peut frapper lorsque cela convient à son programme national, si les circonstances internationales s'y prêtent. La situation ne devrait pas changer tant que le président turc restera au pouvoir, et puisque de nombreuses régions le long de la frontière syrienne sont toujours sous le contrôle des YPG, de nouvelles incursions semblent probables à l'avenir.

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Les opinions exprimées dans cet article n'engagent que leur auteur et ne reflètent pas nécessairement la politique éditoriale de Middle East Eye.

Traduit de l'anglais (original) par VECTranslation.



Juin 8, 2022

Tehran: Eight prisoners at risk of amputation of fingers

Some eight prisoners in the Greater Tehran Central Penitentiary were summoned today in order to be transferred to another prison for the amputation of their fingers.

These prisoners were previously sentenced to amputation of four fingers of their right hands over "theft".

However, due to unknown reasons, their transfer has been postponed to another date.

As their sentences have been finalised, the prisoners face the risk of execution of their sentences at any moment.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) previously reported the transfer of Hadi Rostami, Mehdi Shahivand and Mehdi Sharafian – three prisoners sentenced to amputation of their fingers – from Orumiye Central Prison to the Greater Tehran Central Penitentiary.

Of the other five prisoners sentenced to amputation of fingers in the Tehran prison, only one, named Yaghoub Fazeli, has been identified so far.

In the news circulating on social media in the past days, it was claimed that a detainee, whose fingers were ordered to be cut off, was taken from Dizel Abad Prison in Kermanshah to Evin Prison in Tehran and his sentence was executed.

Reportedly, a guillotine has been taken to Evin Prison to amputate the fingers of the prisoners. There is a possibility that sentences of at least eight prisoners will be executed.

In interviews with the KHRN, the families of some of the prisoners called for the immediate intervention of international human rights organisations and the United Nations Human Rights Council to prevent the amputations.

Guerre en Ukraine : la Turquie se pose en médiatrice de la crise du blé

Le chef de la diplomatie russe, Sergueï Lavrov, est attendu par son homologue turc, Mevlüt Cavusoglu, à Ankara, mercredi 8 juin, pour des discussions sur la reprise des exportations ukrainiennes de céréales.

Ankara, qui soigne son image de facilitateur entre Moscou et Kiev, espère contribuer à une solution négociée pour la reprise des exportations de céréales depuis les ports ukrainiens. Selon Anadolu, l'agence de presse officielle turque, la Russie, la Turquie et l'Ukraine sont parvenues à élaborer une feuille de route dans le but d'ouvrir un « corridor céréalière » entre les ports ukrainiens et les marchés mondiaux.

Un « mécanisme d'observation » est à l'étude, lequel pourrait amener la marine turque à escorter des vraquiers venus d'Ukraine. Parrainée par les Nations unies, cette opération humanitaire pourrait permettre de sortir des silos et des hangars jusqu'à 20 millions de tonnes de céréales, selon la partie turque.

Le chef de la diplomatie russe, Sergueï Lavrov, est ainsi attendu par son homologue turc, Mevlüt Cavusoglu, à Ankara, mercredi 8 juin, pour des discussions sur la reprise des exportations ukrainiennes de céréales, suspendues en raison du blocus de la mer Noire imposé par la Russie. La guerre déclenchée par Moscou en Ukraine a paralysé les exportations alimentaires des deux belligérants, grands producteurs de blé, faisant craindre une crise alimentaire d'ampleur, en particulier en Afrique.

Tandis que les stocks ukrainiens de céréales sont bloqués dans les silos ou sur les vraquiers des ports d'Ukraine – Marioupol et Berdiansk –



Le ministre turc des affaires étrangères, Mevlüt Cavusoglu (gauche), et son homologue russe, Sergueï Lavrov, lors d'une conférence de presse conjointe à Moscou, le 16 mars 2022. ALEXANDER SHCHERBAK / TASS / SIPA

contrôlés par l'armée russe, les exportations russes de céréales et d'engrais sont ralenties par les sanctions occidentales ainsi que par la situation sécuritaire en mer Noire.

M. Cavusoglu compte sur la création d'un « centre d'observation des corridors » à Istanbul et veut croire que la Russie est prête à des concessions pour permettre la libre circulation des marchandises en mer Noire. En atteste le fait que le ministre des affaires étrangères russe sera accompagné, lors de sa visite de travail à Ankara, de militaires censés s'entretenir avec leurs homologues turcs au sujet de l'ouverture de voies maritimes sécurisées.

Allégations de vols

Le transport du grain ne sera pas le seul sujet abordé. Il sera également question de la Syrie, où M. Erdogan projette de lan-

cer une nouvelle offensive pour en chasser les Kurdes syriens, qu'il estime devoir éradiquer en raison de leur affiliation au Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, autonomiste), interdit en Turquie. Le Kremlin donnera certainement son aval, comme il l'a fait par le passé. Mais à quel prix ?

Débloquer les routes commerciales en mer Noire est possible à condition que Kiev et Moscou parviennent à s'entendre. Or, pour l'heure, les deux belligérants sont à couteaux tirés, laissant peu de chances à une solution négociée, quoi qu'en dise la diplomatie turque, plutôt confiante sur l'issue de sa médiation. Le gouvernement ukrainien est ulcéré par le comportement de la Russie, qui pille les céréales ukrainiennes dans les territoires occupés afin de les exporter, notamment vers le Liban et la Syrie.

Dans un communiqué publié en

mai, le ministère de l'agriculture ukrainien a estimé que 500 000 tonnes de blé avaient déjà été « volées » par Moscou pour être exportées vers la Russie ou le Moyen-Orient, via les détroits du Bosphore et des Dardanelles. L'ambassade d'Ukraine à Beyrouth a estimé, pour sa part, que plus de 100 000 tonnes de blé ukrainien « pillées » étaient arrivées en Syrie, au port de Lattaquié, ces trois derniers mois. Au moins un navire russe aurait été re-foulé par l'Égypte sur demande de Kiev.

En avril, Moscou a démenti les allégations de vol de blé : « Nous ne volons rien de personne », assurait le vice-ministre des affaires étrangères russe, Andreï Roudenko. Pourtant, l'agence de presse officielle russe TASS, citant Kirill Stremousov, chef adjoint de l'administration militaro-civile installée dans la zone récemment occupée de Kherson, a annoncé, fin mai, que la région avait « commencé à exporter des céréales vers la Russie ». Les autorités ukrainiennes soupçonnent les terminaux portuaires d'exportation de Sébastopol, en Crimée, d'en être la première destination.

Navettes incessantes

Selon Vasył Bodnar, l'ambassadeur d'Ukraine à Ankara, Kiev a « demandé l'aide de la Turquie pour résoudre le problème ». Alliée de l'Ukraine, à laquelle elle fournit des drones de combat, la Turquie veille à ménager ses liens privilégiés avec la Russie, dont elle dépend

pour ses approvisionnements en énergie et en blé.

Décidée par Ankara aux premiers jours de la guerre, la fermeture des détroits, elle, s'applique « à tous les navires militaires », mais ne concerne pas les navires commerciaux. Or, ces derniers mois, d'énormes cargos, affrétés notamment par l'entreprise Obo-ronlogistics, affiliée au ministère de la défense russe, ont ainsi effectué d'incessantes navettes entre les ports militaires de Sébastopol et de Novorossiïsk, sur la mer Noire, et la base navale de Tartous, en Syrie, sans que la Turquie ait procédé à la vérification de leurs contenus.

De cette façon, Moscou peut transporter du blé mais aussi du matériel militaire de la Syrie vers l'Ukraine.

Vérifier les contenus est impossible, fait valoir une source diplomatique à Ankara. Selon la Convention de Montreux de 1936, qui régit le passage de la mer Noire vers la Méditerranée, la Turquie n'est pas autorisée à intercepter, ni à inspecter, les navires de commerce qui transitent par ses détroits.

Selon le chercheur Yoruk Isik, qui effectue une veille de la circulation dans les détroits, « la Russie abuse de cette distinction [entre navires militaires et

navires commerciaux] en utilisant des navires marchands civils comme auxiliaires navals pour fournir la logistique à ses opérations militaires en Syrie et en Ukraine ». Dans une étude publiée le 18 mai sur le site du Middle East Institute, ce spécialiste des transports maritimes affirme aussi que « de grandes quantités de marchandises volées finissent en Turquie, certaines même transportées inexplicablement par la compagnie maritime gouvernementale syrienne Syriamar ».

En 2017, pourtant, la chambre turque de la marine marchande avait demandé à ses ports d'interdire l'entrée et la sortie des

navires commerçant avec la Crimée, province ukrainienne annexée par la Russie en 2014, quel que soit leur pavillon. Or, à au moins deux reprises ces dernières semaines, un céréalier russe en provenance de Sébastopol a déchargé du blé dans le port turc d'Iskenderun, en Méditerranée. Le 5 juin, il y était à nouveau au mouillage. En provenance du port criméen.

Alors que la Russie bloque les principaux ports ukrainiens, Odessa et Tchornomorsk, « les navires russes devraient se voir refuser l'accès commercial aux détroits turcs », estime M. Isik.

**L'Orient
LE JOUR**

1er juin 2022
avec AFP

Erdogan renouvelle ses menaces d'opération militaire dans le nord de la Syrie

Le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan a renouvelé mercredi devant le Parlement la menace d'opération militaire contre deux localités du nord de la Syrie, visant les combattants kurdes qu'il qualifie de terroristes.

"Nous passons à une nouvelle étape dans l'instauration d'une zone de sécurité de 30 km le long de notre frontière Sud. Nous allons nettoyer Tell Rifaat et Manbij", à l'ouest de l'Euphrate, a-t-il indiqué. Le chef de l'Etat a promis de procéder "étape par étape dans d'autres régions".

M. Erdogan menace depuis une semaine de lancer une opération contre les combattants kurdes du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), classé comme mouvement terroriste par Ankara et ses alliés occidentaux. Il vise aussi les Unités de protection du Peuple



Le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan, lors d'une conférence de presse à Ankara, le 21 septembre 2020. Adem ALTAN / AFP

(YPG), alliées au PKK mais qui furent soutenues par les Etats-Unis et la coalition occidentale contre le groupe jihadiste Etat islamique.

"Qui va soutenir ces opérations légitimes de sécurité conduites par Turquie et qui va tenter de

s'y opposer, on verra bien" a ajouté le chef de l'Etat.

Joint par l'AFP, Farhad Shami, porte-parole des Forces démocratiques syrienne - (FDS, coalition militaire anti-EI largement dominée par les YPG) - s'est montré fataliste.

"Ca fait un moment déjà que les FDS s'attendent à une possible bataille", a-t-il déclaré. "Si elle se produit, nous suspendrons notre guerre contre l'Etat islamique pour nous opposer à l'invasion turque".

Ce week-end, M. Erdogan a prévenu que la Turquie "n'attendra pas la permission" des Etats-Unis pour lancer une nouvelle offensive en Syrie. Il a également rappelé mardi à son homologue russe Vladimir Poutine qu'un accord signé en 2019 entre Ankara et Moscou prévoyait la création d'une telle zone "nettoyée du terrorisme", le long de la frontière turco-syrienne. "Sa création est impérative", a-t-il martelé. Il s'oppose depuis mi-mai à l'entrée de la Suède et de la Finlande dans l'OTAN, les accusant d'héberger des "terroristes" du PKK et des YPG.

The Farda Briefing: As Iran Blames 'Foreign Enemies' For Anti-Government Rallies, Protesters Blame 'Real Enemy' Within

Welcome back to *The Farda Briefing*, a new RFE/RL newsletter that tracks the key issues in Iran and explains why they matter.

I'm senior correspondent Golnaz Esfandiari. Here's what I've been following and what I'm watching out for in the days ahead.

The Big Issue

Pensioners and retired government employees have staged two days of protests in more than a dozen cities across Iran to complain about the high cost of living and to demand higher pensions. The government said it was increasing pensions by nearly 60 percent. But pensioners say it is too little, too late to cope with soaring inflation. Demonstrators shouted, "Our expenses are in dollars, our income in rials." Others chanted, "Leave Palestine alone, think of us," suggesting the government should focus more on domestic issues. Security forces have detained several protesters.

Why It Matters: Iran has seen a string of demonstrations in recent weeks against skyrocketing food prices and following a deadly building collapse, which protesters blamed on government corruption and negligence. Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has sought to blame the unrest on "foreign enemies" seeking to overthrow the Islamic republic. But the protesters have directed their anger at Iran's clerical establishment. Some of the protesting pensioners chanted, "They lied that America is our enemy, our real enemy is right here!" Other demonstrators chanted "Death to Raisi," a reference to hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, and "Death to a deceitful government."

What's Next: Protests over price hikes, rising unemployment, and growing poverty are likely to con-



People in Arak protest over pensions and the cost of living.

tinue in Iran. Teachers, bus drivers, and other workers have all staged rallies in recent months over a deteriorating economy that has been crippled by U.S. sanctions and years of government mismanagement. Authorities are likely to use intimidation and arrests to contain the protests for now. If the rallies start to pose a more serious threat to the regime, the authorities are likely to resort to force. In 2019, mass anti-government protests led to a brutal state crackdown that left hundreds of people dead.

Stories You May Have Missed

Over 50 conservationists penned an open letter on June 3 calling for Iranian authorities to free eight jailed environmentalists. Among the signatories was renowned British anthropologist Jane Goodall. United Nations Environment Program chief Inger Andersen made a separate call for the release of the environmentalists on June 4. Associated with the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation, the eight Ira-

nians were arrested in 2018 and accused of espionage. One of the environmentalists, Kavus Seyed-Emami, died in jail in unclear circumstances. The others remain in prison. The jailing of the group has been widely condemned inside and outside Iran.

A group of thieves broke into scores of safety deposit boxes at a Tehran branch of Iran's biggest bank and took off with the contents. The state-owned Bank Melli Iran said 168 safety deposit boxes had been opened. The bank and police, however, have not revealed what was stolen or the worth of the missing contents. The incident occurred on June 5, a state holiday in Iran. Fars news agency reported that the thieves entered and exited through a rear door. Tehran police told the official IRNA news agency that several bank employees were under investigation for alleged negligence.

What We're Watching

The United States, Britain, France,

and Germany have submitted a draft resolution to the UN's nuclear watchdog to censure Iran over its lack of cooperation with the agency. The draft resolution urges Iran to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The vote is likely to take place on June 8 during a meeting of the IAEA's 35-member board of governors. In a report last month, the IAEA said it still had questions that were "not clarified" regarding traces of enriched uranium previously found at three undeclared nuclear sites in Iran.

Why It Matters: If passed, the resolution would mark the first time Tehran was censured at the IAEA since June 2020. The move is likely to anger Iran, where officials have already warned of unspecified retaliation. Ahead of the vote, Iran's Atomic Energy Organization said it had turned off two cameras installed by the IAEA at an unidentified Iranian site. Iranian officials have said that the passing of the resolution, which is likely, will further undermine stalled indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington aimed at reviving the 2015 nuclear deal. For the West, the resolution highlights growing frustration with Iran amid the ongoing standoff over the nuclear agreement.

That's all from me for now. Don't forget to send me any questions, comments, or tips that you have.

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Guerre en Ukraine : échec de la médiation turque sur la crise du blé

La venue à Ankara du chef de la diplomatie russe n'a pas permis de résoudre la question de l'acheminement de millions de tonnes de céréales bloquées dans les ports ukrainiens.

Montée en épingle par la diplomatie turque, la visite à Ankara, mercredi 8 juin, de Sergueï Lavrov, le ministre des affaires étrangères russe, n'a pas permis de faire avancer d'un pouce la question de l'acheminement de plusieurs millions de tonnes de blé bloquées dans les ports ukrainiens depuis le début de l'invasion russe, le 24 février.

Les efforts de médiation de la Turquie n'y auront rien changé, aucune trêve n'est en vue dans la « guerre du blé » entre la Russie et l'Ukraine, le Kremlin imposant des conditions jugées irréalisables selon Kiev.

Moscou, qui contrôle désormais une bonne partie de la côte ukrainienne tandis que ses navires et ses sous-marins règnent sur la mer Noire et la mer d'Azov, empêche les exportations agricoles de l'Ukraine, au risque de déclencher une crise alimentaire mondiale. « En ce moment, nous avons 20 à 25 tonnes bloquées. Cet automne, on pourrait atteindre 70 à 75 millions de tonnes », avait affirmé le président ukrainien, Volodymyr Zelensky, la veille de la rencontre russo-turque, en précisant que son pays discutait aussi avec la Pologne et les pays baltes pour exporter de petites quantités de céréales par les chemins de fer. Des rôles partagés

A Ankara, le chef de la diplomatie russe et son homologue turc, Mevlüt Çavusoglu, ont paru plus soucieux de dicter leurs conditions et de renforcer leur contrôle sur la mer Noire que de dénouer la crise. La Russie exige des



Le ministre russe des affaires étrangères, Sergueï Lavrov, avec son homologue turc, Mevlüt Çavusoglu, lors de leur rencontre à Ankara, le 8 juin 2022. ADEM ALTAN / AFP

contreparties, notamment le fait que les ports ukrainiens, en particulier Odessa, soient déminés et la levée, au moins partielle, des sanctions occidentales. Une revendication « légitime » selon M. Çavusoglu, qui s'est dit préoccupé par le fait que les « céréales et les engrais » russes sont l'objet des sanctions. En réalité, les produits agricoles russes ne figurent pas sur la liste des mesures de représailles, mais leur exportation est freinée par le gel des échanges financiers et des transactions bancaires avec Moscou.

Avec la morgue qui le caractérise, M. Lavrov a rejeté la responsabilité du blocus sur Kiev. « Si, comme nos amis turcs nous le disent, la partie ukrainienne est prête à sécuriser un passage entre les mines, alors cette question peut être résolue », a-t-il déclaré. « Nous sommes prêts à assurer la sécurité des navires qui quittent les ports ukrainiens, a-t-il ajouté lors d'une conférence de presse conjointe avec M. Çavusoglu.

Nous sommes prêts à le faire en coopération avec nos collègues turcs. »

Le voulant dominantes en mer Noire, leur pré carré, la Turquie et la Russie s'étaient entendues, bien avant la visite de M. Lavrov, sur une feuille de route pour la mise en place d'un corridor. Les rôles étaient partagés. La marine turque s'engageait à déminer les ports ukrainiens et à escorter les vraquiers chargés de céréales jusqu'à Istanbul.

Côté turc, des gains étaient même attendus, l'Ukraine s'étant engagée à effectuer une réduction sur le prix des céréales transférées du port d'Odessa vers le Bosphore. « Si l'accord se concrétise, nous aurons une remise de 25 % sur le grain », s'est réjoui Vahit Kirişçi, le ministre de l'agriculture turc. De son côté, Moscou acceptait de rompre son blocus maritime, à ses conditions, avec le soutien actif de la Turquie qui n'applique aucune

sanction et sert désormais de refuge aux capitaux russes. « Ses mots sont vides de sens »

Seule ombre au tableau, l'Ukraine, tenue à l'écart des discussions, a rejeté le plan russo-turc. Mardi soir, alors que l'avion de M. Lavrov atterrissait à Ankara, le gouvernement de Kiev a dévoilé ses conditions à la mise en place d'un corridor, à savoir la fourniture d'armes de défense côtière, l'implication de navires de l'OTAN en mer Noire et l'octroi de garanties de sécurité.

M. Lavrov a beau assurer que Moscou ne profitera pas de la situation pour grignoter un nouveau morceau de la côte ukrainienne, les autorités ukrainiennes ne l'ont pas cru. Pas plus lorsqu'il a assuré que le président russe était prêt à se porter garant en cas d'accord. « C'est ce même Poutine qui a dit au chancelier allemand [Olaf] Scholz et au président français [Emmanuel] Macron qu'il n'attaquerait pas l'Ukraine, quelques jours avant de lancer une invasion à grande échelle de notre pays. Nous ne pouvons pas lui faire confiance, ses mots sont vides de sens », avait prévenu Dmytro Kuleba, le ministre des affaires étrangères ukrainien, peu auparavant.

« En forçant l'Ukraine à déminer ses ports, comme Odessa, cela donne à Moscou l'opportunité de lancer des débarquements amphibies pour prendre une plus grande partie du littoral et finir d'enclaver l'Ukraine », estimait pour sa part sur son blog l'économiste Timothy Ash, bon connaisseur de la région.

Nucléaire : L'Iran sommé de respecter ses obligations

Une résolution, adoptée par trente Etats siégeant à l'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique, vise à mettre la pression sur Téhéran alors que les tractations engagées pour relancer l'accord sur ses activités nucléaires patinent.

C'est une sévère mise en garde adressée à l'Iran, alors que le sauvetage de l'accord censé l'empêcher de se doter de l'arme nucléaire est dans l'impasse. Le conseil des gouverneurs de l'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique (AIEA) a voté, mercredi 8 juin, à Vienne, une résolution condamnant le manque de coopération de Téhéran en matière nucléaire. Ce texte, examiné à l'initiative des Etats-Unis et des Européens, reproche notamment aux autorités iraniennes de ne pas avoir fourni d'explications concernant la présence de traces d'uranium sur trois sites non déclarés. Trente Etats siégeant au conseil ont voté la résolution. La Russie et la Chine s'y sont opposées. L'Inde, le Pakistan et la Libye se sont abstenus.

A l'inverse, les Etats-Unis, la France, l'Allemagne et le Royaume-Uni se sont félicités de l'adoption du texte, d'une forte portée symbolique. « Le vote de cette résolution à une très large majorité par le conseil des gouverneurs de l'AIEA aujourd'hui envoie un message clair à l'Iran sur la nécessité qu'il respecte ses obligations en matière de garanties », soulignent les quatre pays occidentaux, en référence aux engagements pris par Téhéran dans le cadre du traité de non-prolifération nucléaire.

Cette résolution vise à mettre la pression sur Téhéran, alors que les tractations engagées voici près d'un an, afin de relancer le JCPoA, l'accord sur les activités nucléaires du pays, tournent à vide à ce jour. Le président américain, Joe Biden, en avait pourtant fait l'une de ses priorités diplomatiques, afin de revenir sur le retrait unilatéral décidé par son prédécesseur, Donald Trump, en 2018, pour torpiller l'accord. Risque de caducité

Dans ce but, l'administration Biden s'est dite prête à lever une grande partie des sanctions imposées à l'Iran en raison de ses activités nucléaires, en échange de son retour aux engagements pris en 2015. Un compromis semblait imminent en début d'année, mais les discussions indirectes menées entre Washington et Téhéran bloquent depuis. Les Etats-Unis refusent, en particulier, d'alléger les sanctions infligées aux gardiens de la révolution, au grand dam de l'Iran.

Les tractations ont également pâti de la guerre en Ukraine, Moscou ayant un temps exigé d'obtenir de larges dérogations aux sanctions massives prises par les Occidentaux en riposte à l'invasion du pays voisin décidée par Vladimir Poutine, afin que ces mesures n'entravent pas sa coopération économique avec l'Iran. Un arrange-

ment sur ce point a dû être négocié.

En attendant, Téhéran poursuit, selon les Occidentaux, rapport de l'AIEA à l'appui, l'enrichissement de quantités de plus en plus importantes d'uranium, condition préalable à la fabrication d'une bombe. D'après les experts, le pays enrichirait d'ores et déjà assez d'uranium pour passer à la fabrication d'une bombe, s'il en décidait ainsi.

Les Occidentaux ont prévenu qu'ils ne souhaitaient pas prolonger davantage les tractations, avant que le dispositif qu'il s'agit de restaurer ne devienne totalement caduc en raison des progrès rapides, selon eux, du programme nucléaire iranien. « Chaque jour qui passe est dangereux dans la mesure où il diminue l'intérêt d'un sauvetage de l'accord », avance une source française haut placée. L'approche des élections de mi-mandat aux Etats-Unis, en novembre, ne simplifie pas l'équation et risque de compromettre la ratification de tout nouveau compromis par les élus du Congrès.

Caméras mises à l'arrêt

L'adoption de la résolution peut-elle provoquer un sursaut salutaire ou au contraire une escalade ? Peu avant le vote au conseil des gouverneurs de

l'AIEA, Téhéran a annoncé avoir mis à l'arrêt deux caméras de surveillance de l'AIEA installées sur ses sites. Washington a aussitôt prévenu que cette décision risquait de « compliquer encore » les pourparlers sur le sauvetage de l'accord.

Le chef de la diplomatie irannienne, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, avait aussi averti, juste avant le vote de la résolution, d'une possible action de son pays contre les Etats-Unis. « Si l'autre partie suit la voie des menaces et des résolutions, nous ne serons pas en reste », a-t-il déclaré lors d'une réunion avec des familles iraniennes vivant à New Delhi, en Inde.

Le ministère des affaires étrangères iranien a publié, jeudi matin, un communiqué condamnant la résolution du conseil de l'AIEA comme « un acte politique, incorrect et non constructif ». « Cette résolution est basée sur le rapport hâtif et déséquilibré du directeur général de l'AIEA [Rafael Grossi] et sur de fausses informations fabriquées par le régime sioniste [Israël dans la rhétorique irannienne] », affirme le régime. Selon ce dernier, elle « n'aura pour effet que d'affaiblir le processus de coopération et d'interaction de la République islamique d'Iran avec l'AIEA ».

Turkey's Erdogan warns Greece to demilitarize Aegean islands

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday warned Greece to demilitarize islands in the Aegean Sea, saying he was “not joking” and posting tweets in Greek and English, in a marked harshening of rhetoric against Turkey’s neighbor and historic regional rival.

Turkey says Greece has been building a military presence in violation of treaties that guarantee the unarmed status of the Aegean islands. It argues the islands were ceded to Greece on the condition they remained demilitarized.

Athens counters that the islands, which have been garrisoned for decades and lie within close striking distance of a large Turkish landing fleet, can’t be left undefended.

“We invite Greece to stop arming the islands that have non-military status and to act in accordance with international agreements,” Erdogan said on the final day of military exercises taking place near Izmir, on Turkey’s Aegean coast. “I’m not jok-

ing, I’m speaking seriously. This nation is determined.”

Greece and Turkey are NATO allies, but have a history of disputes over a range of issues, including mineral exploration in the eastern Mediterranean and rival claims in the Aegean Sea.

The two countries came close to war three times in the past half century, the last being in 1996 over ownership of an uninhabited eastern Aegean islet. But Ankara has recently been questioning Greece’s sovereignty over large, inhabited Greek islands — Rhodes, Kos and Lesbos, for example, would meet the description of “militarized” islands.

“We warn Greece to stay away from dreams, statements and actions that will lead to regret, as it did a century ago, and to return to its senses,” the Turkish leader said. A hundred years ago, Turkey defeated Greece after a three-year war that saw Greek armies invade western Turkey.

Greece maintains Turkey has deliberately misinterpreted the treaties and says it has

legal grounds to defend itself following hostile actions by Ankara, including a long-standing threat of war if Greece extended its territorial waters.

Later Thursday, Erdogan made the rare move of tweeting in Greek and English, saying: “As Turkey will not resign its rights in the Aegean, it will not hesitate either to make use of its rights arising from international treaties on the issue of the islands’ demilitarization.”

Greek government spokesman Giannis Oikonomou commented that Erdogan’s choice of Greek was “notable.”

“Greek is known as the language of reason, freedom and justice,” he said. “The tactics Turkey has chosen do not fall under any of these categories.”

Earlier, Oikonomou said Greece was dealing with Turkish “provocations” with “calm and determination.”

“It is clear to everyone that our country has upgraded its geostrategic and geopolitical footprint as well as its deter-

rent capacity to be able at any time to defend its national sovereignty and sovereign rights,” he said.

Meanwhile, Erdogan also reiterated Turkey’s determination to launch a new cross-border offensive in Syria with the goal of pushing back Syrian Kurdish militia and creating a 30-kilometer (19-mile) buffer zone. Turkey regards the militia as an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK.

“We will never allow the establishment of terror corridors along our country’s borders, and we will definitely complete the missing parts of our security zone,” the Turkish leader said.

Erdogan continued: “We hope that none of our real allies and friends will oppose our legitimate security concerns.”

Erdogan has said that Turkey’s new offensive in Syria would target the towns of Tall Rifat and Manbij, which lie west of the Euphrates River and from where the Syrian Kurdish fighters launch attacks on Turkish targets.

Accord sur le nucléaire iranien : l'AIEA dénonce le « coup fatal » de Téhéran

L'Iran avait annoncé, mercredi, retirer de ses centrales les équipements de surveillance du gendarme du nucléaire et installer de nouvelles centrifugeuses. La France, le Royaume-Uni et l'Allemagne appellent « à mettre fin à l'escalade nucléaire ».

L'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique (AIEA) a dénoncé, jeudi 9 juin, la décision de l'Iran de retirer vingt-sept caméras de surveillance de ses activités nucléaires, craignant que ces mesures ne portent un « coup fatal » aux pourparlers sur le nucléaire iranien à Vienne. L'Iran avait informé mercredi l'AIEA de sa décision, prise en réaction à l'adoption d'une résolution critiquant Téhéran. Cette mesure « pose naturellement un sérieux défi à notre capacité à continuer à travailler là-bas », a déclaré le directeur général de l'instance onusienne, Rafael Grossi, lors d'une conférence de presse à Vienne. L'AIEA vérifie et contrôle la mise en œuvre des engagements pris par l'Iran dans le cadre de l'accord sur le nucléaire conclu en 2015, à Vienne, avec les grandes puissances.

Des pourparlers ont été lancés, en 2021, dans la capitale autrichienne pour tenter de réintégrer les Etats-Unis à ce pacte dénoncé en 2018 par l'ex-président des Etats-Unis Donald Trump et de ramener l'Iran au respect intégral de ses engagements internationaux concernant son programme nucléaire.

Berlin, Londres et Paris ont appelé jeudi soir l'Iran « à mettre fin à l'escalade nucléaire » et « à accepter maintenant de toute urgence l'accord sur la table » depuis mars, selon une déclaration commune. « Nous condamnons [la décision de Téhéran], affirment les trois pays dans ce document transmis par le ministère allemand des affaires étrangères. Cela aggrave la situation et complique nos efforts pour rétablir pleinement [l'accord de 2015]. »

« Provocations »

Washington a également fait part de son inquiétude face aux « provocations » de Téhéran, le chef de la diplomatie américaine, Antony Blinken, mettant en garde contre « une crise nucléaire aggravée » et contre un « isolement économique et politique accru de l'Iran ». Téhéran avait annoncé mercredi avoir déconnecté certaines caméras, sans en préciser le nombre, juste avant le vote au conseil des gouverneurs de l'AIEA d'une résolution rappelant formellement à l'ordre l'Iran pour son manque de coopération.

En cause, l'absence de ré-

ponses « techniquement crédibles » de l'Iran concernant des traces d'uranium enrichi précédemment trouvées sur trois sites que Téhéran n'avait pas déclarés comme ayant hébergé des activités nucléaires. Condamnant ce texte présenté par les Etats-Unis, le Royaume-Uni, la France et l'Allemagne, l'Iran a déploré un geste « politique » et « pas constructif ».

L'adoption de ce texte « ne fera qu'affaiblir le processus de coopération [avec l'AIEA] », a prévenu le ministère iranien des affaires étrangères. Le porte-parole de la diplomatie, Saeed Khatibzadeh, a défendu « le programme nucléaire pacifique », le « plus transparent au monde », de son pays.

Outre la désactivation des caméras, l'Iran a informé l'AIEA de la mise en place de deux nouvelles cascades de centrifugeuses avancées sur le site de Natanz (au centre du pays), renforçant ainsi significativement sa capacité d'enrichissement d'uranium. L'AIEA peut continuer les inspections et a encore 40 caméras sur place, mais cette mesure de Téhéran aboutit à « moins de transparence, plus de doutes », a expliqué

M. Grossi. Il a appelé l'Iran à renouer le dialogue une fois « l'émotion retombée ».

« Nous ne reculerons pas »

Jusqu'à présent, l'Iran avait pris soin d'éviter la confrontation avec l'AIEA mais, cette fois, le président ultraconservateur, Ebrahim Raïssi, s'est montré ferme. « Nous ne reculerons pas », a-t-il dit, selon l'agence officielle IRNA. Si le blocage persiste, « dans trois ou quatre semaines », l'AIEA ne sera plus en mesure de fournir les informations nécessaires au suivi du programme nucléaire iranien, a affirmé, de son côté, M. Grossi.

Selon lui, ceci « porterait un coup fatal » à l'accord de 2015, prévoyant la limitation des activités nucléaires iraniennes en échange de l'allègement des sanctions internationales, moribond depuis le retrait en 2018 des Etats-Unis, qui ont réimposé des mesures punitives à Téhéran. Un an après, l'Iran a commencé à revenir sur ses engagements, franchissant, au fil des mois des étapes inédites, tout en démentant vouloir se doter de la bombe atomique.



June 10, 2022

Kirkuk Minute June 10, 2022

Kirkuk

In another politically driven ruling, Kirkuk's Criminal Court sentenced four former provincial council members to fifteen years in prison. The five were tried in absentia and officially charged with violating Article 340 of the Iraqi Penal Code, inflicting damage on government property. The Kirkuk Criminal Court accused the four members of possessing public property vehicles and not returning them. A joint statement by four former members described the court ruling as "political," and they "have proved that their vehicles were taken away by Hashd al-Shaabi [Iranian-backed militias] on October 16th, 2017." The members accused the court and Kirkuk's administrations of not having authority over the militias resulting in political rulings against these members. On May 31st, the same court issued five years imprisonment against the former chairman of the provincial council, Rebwar Talabani, for similar charges. The convicted members participated in the independence referendum held by the Kurds in 2017, which Baghdad continues using as a pretext to crack down on the Kurds.

On June 4th, the Kirkuk Civil Defense (Fire Department) reported that fourteen acres of crops were burned in Dibis and Daquq districts within 24 hours. According to the statement, a fire broke out in the villages of Kharabay and Bay Hassan in the Dibis district, burning 12.5 acres of wheat crops. The department said "an electricity shortage" caused the fire, "which brought it under control and saved 1,200 acres of land from burning." In recent years,

ISIS (Da'esh) terrorists set fire to thousands of acres of farmlands in both Iraq and Syria.

The security forces announced the arrest of four Da'esh terrorists across the province, including a senior leader responsible for atrocities during the Yazidi Genocide.

In an interview with the Iranian-backed Ahed channel, Rakan al Jabouri, the acting governor of Kirkuk, accused Peshmerga forces and the Kar oil company of "seizing three oil wells" near Lebenah village north of Kirkuk. Al Jabouri also said Arab and Turkmen representatives are against establishing a "co-ordination center" between the Peshmerga and the Iraqi forces inside the province. Al Jabouri has been imposed on Kirkuk as an acting governor since October 16, 2017.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Kirkuk and met with its imposed governor and several leaders of non-government organizations and activists. Plasschaert discussed the possibility of holding local elections in Kirkuk and addressed UMAMI's efforts in "securing the requirements for the speedy return of the displaced to their liberated areas."

After nine years, Baghdad approved the construction of the Kirkuk green belt project, which was planned in 2014 by the former, Kurdish led administration, but at the time, the Ministry of municipalities refused to support the project due to a lack of "budget and financial

crisis." The project is to plant thousands of trees around the city—decrease the effect of dust storms and increase the green spaces in Kirkuk to more than its current 1%. Zuhair Ali, director of agriculture in Kirkuk, said Baghdad had approved the project, and the amount of three and a half billion dinars (2.2 million dollars) has been allocated for it.

According to the State Grain Company in Kirkuk, wheat production has decreased by 47% since 2019. The company has received 65,000 tons of wheat and 10,000 tons of barley from farmers compared to 151 thousand tons in 2019. The total wheat production will be 80,000 tons and 17,000 tons of grain.

After unanimous removal from the party leadership last month, the Turkish-backed Turkmen politician Arshad al-Salihi plans to form a new party. According to local journalists, al-Salihi traveled to Turkey to win support for his new initiative. Disagreements between Salihi, an ultra-nationalist, and the current Turkmen Front leader, Hassan Turan, an Islamist, reached their peak last month. Turkey has served as life support for the Turkmen parties in Iraq since 1995.

Khanaqin

According to a report by Shafaq News, 70% of farmers in Khanaqin are not willing to sell this year's wheat production to the government but offer it to the market. The report addressed that lower government prices per ton of wheat, and delays in payments, discourage farmers from selling to the authorities. Some Kurdish

farmers are yet to receive 2020 payments.

Tuz Khurmatu

On June 5, Iranian-backed militias raided the Republic neighborhood in Tuz and arrested two Kurdish men, whose fate remains unknown. According to local reports, the two Kurdish men are former Pehsmergas and argued with a son of a militia boss.

After the Turkmen Front congress last month and the takeover by the Sunni Brotherhood wing of its leadership, Shia members of the Tuz Khurmatu are angry and concerned about the changes. The new leadership plans to grant more posts and power to the Sunni Turkmen, making the Shias deflect and join Iranian-backed parties.

Shingal (Sinjar)

On June 3, Ali Abbas, spokesman for the Ministry of Immigration and Refugees, said; The repatriation plan for the displaced Yazidis has not been implemented due to budget "obstacles." He said, "as a government, we planned with international organizations to return the refugees by jointly allocating funds for this purpose, and to build houses and distribute them free of charge. However, there has been a lack of budget in Iraq this year and international organizations have faced a financial crisis and can not participate in returning displaced Yazidis to their homes." According to the spokesperson, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has also made international organizations lose funds in Iraq.

Israël-Iran : la guerre de l'ombre s'intensifie

Tandis que les morts suspectes se multiplient au sein des forces armées et des instituts de recherche de la République islamique, le premier ministre de l'Etat hébreu, Naftali Bennett, revendique de frapper non plus seulement « les tentacules » mais aussi « la tête » de la « pieuvre » iranienne.

Depuis trois semaines, les forces armées et des centres de recherche iraniens connaissent un nombre intrigant de morts violentes. L'Etat, très discret sur le sujet, a reconnu le décès à Téhéran de deux colonels des gardiens de la révolution, l'armée idéologique du pays. L'un a été assassiné le 22 mai par des tireurs à moto, le second est tombé d'un toit une semaine plus tard.

La République islamique a aussi salué le « martyr » d'un ingénieur sur le site militaire de Parchin, qui développe des missiles et des drones, et qui est accusé d'avoir abrité des recherches dans le domaine du nucléaire militaire. L'ingénieur a été victime, fin mai, d'une attaque menée par de petits drones quadricoptères. Des organes de presse locaux ont enfin rapporté la mort, le 4 juin, de deux scientifiques, dont l'un aurait été empoisonné à Yazd (est).

Cette série apparaît inédite à plus d'un titre. D'abord par la nature des cibles : les deux officiers des gardiens de la révolution n'entretenaient aucun lien avec le programme nucléaire à possible dimension militaire de l'Iran, ciblé de longue date par les services de renseignement israéliens. Surtout, ces morts ont suscité de multiples déclarations à la presse de sources de sécurité « régionales » ou explicitement israéliennes, qui laissent croire à la responsabilité de l'Etat juif.

Depuis plusieurs jours, le premier ministre, Naftali Bennett, vante lui-même les mérites d'une nouvelle « doctrine » is-

raélienne dite « de la pieuvre ». « Le temps de l'immunité, lorsque l'Iran frappait Israël encore et encore et semait la terreur dans la région par le biais de ses alliés mais demeurait sain et sauf, ce temps est fini », affirmait-il le 7 juin à la Knesset. « Nous ne jouons plus avec les tentacules, avec les alliés de l'Iran [au Liban, en Syrie, en Irak] : nous avons créé une nouvelle équation en visant directement la tête », précisait-il dans un entretien publié par The Economist, le lendemain. Ces interventions lui offrent un répit, un rare moment de consensus, alors que sa majorité parlementaire part en lambeaux.

Funérailles précipitées

Selon des médias israéliens, le colonel Hassan Sayyad Khodaï, assassiné le 22 mai, officiait au sein de l'unité 840 de la Force Al-Qods, accusée d'avoir planifié l'assassinat de citoyens israéliens en Turquie. Craignant des représailles après sa mort, Israël a demandé à une centaine de ses ressortissants présents en Turquie de quitter le pays, et a déconseillé aux touristes de s'y rendre.

Selon le quotidien Yediot Aharonot, le second officier décédé en mai, Ali Esmailzadeh, appartenait à la même unité que M. Khodaï. Les agences iraniennes ont évoqué un accident et un suicide. Mais ses funérailles précipitées ont ressemblé à celles d'ordinaire réservées aux traîtres. M. Esmailzadeh a-t-il été démasqué comme un agent du Mossad, au cœur d'une unité dont Téhéran ne reconnaît pas l'existence ?

Depuis des mois, le renseignement israélien se fait bavard. Il humilie Téhéran, en montrant qu'il opère à sa guise sur son territoire. En avril, il a publié la confession d'un prétendu assassin de la Force Al-Qods, Mansour Rasouli, qui aurait été interrogé sur le sol iranien, avant d'être relâché. L'homme se disait mandaté pour abattre un diplomate israélien en Turquie, ainsi qu'un général américain en Allemagne et un journaliste en France.

De telles révélations fragilisent Téhéran. Les Iraniens constatent, stupéfaits, à quel point leur territoire est perméable à leurs ennemis. Mais ces opérations trouvent aussi un écho à Washington et en Europe. Pour le journaliste Ronen Bergman, auteur de *Lève toi et tue le premier* (Grasset, 2020), une histoire des assassinats perpétrés par les services de renseignement israéliens, l'Etat hébreu assume le fait que les guerres contemporaines se mènent aussi dans l'espace de l'information.

Les choix israéliens critiqués

Le gouvernement a suivi de près l'usage spectaculaire que Washington a fait de son renseignement, en début d'année, afin d'alerter contre l'invasion imminente de l'Ukraine, planifiée par la Russie. Cette transparence a facilité la mobilisation des opinions occidentales, puis le rassemblement de ses alliés européens en soutien à Kiev.

Contre l'Iran, Israël cherche lui aussi à imposer un récit. Le gouvernement se dit sceptique, face aux négociations menées par Washington pour raviver

l'accord international sur le nucléaire iranien de 2015. Il craint que l'isolement de la République islamique n'en soit diminué. Il cherche à préserver ses marges de manœuvre, pour continuer à la frapper à sa guise. En mai, il s'est félicité d'avoir convaincu Washington de ne pas retirer les gardiens de la révolution de sa liste des organisations terroristes, un choix qui compromet un peu plus les négociations sur le nucléaire, qui paraissent embourbées.

Au-delà de ses succès opérationnels spectaculaires, Israël peine cependant à clarifier son objectif final. Depuis un an, on ne compte plus le nombre d'anciens responsables politiques et militaires israéliens qui le déplorent. Ils affirment que l'Etat a commis une erreur en convainquant l'ex-président américain Donald Trump de dénoncer l'accord sur le nucléaire iranien, en 2018, et en l'incitant à mener contre Téhéran une politique de « pression maximale ». Dernier en date, l'ex-patron du renseignement militaire israélien, Tamir Hayman, tout juste retraité, affirmait fin mai qu'un accord sur le nucléaire était encore dans l'intérêt d'Israël.

Entre-temps, les classes moyennes iraniennes, principale force de changement social dans le pays, ont été décimées par les sanctions américaines. Mais le régime perdure. Se dégageant de plus en plus de ses obligations vis-à-vis de l'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique, il n'a jamais paru si près de se doter de l'arme nucléaire.

Démission des élus du courant Sadr, plus grand bloc au Parlement

Les 73 députés du courant du leader chiite Moqtada Sadr, plus importante formation à l'Assemblée d'Irak, ont présenté dimanche leur démission, un geste destiné à faire pression pour qu'avance la formation du gouvernement en panne depuis les législatives de 2021.

"Nous avons accepté à contre-cœur les demandes de nos frères et sœurs, représentants du bloc sadriste, de démissionner", a annoncé le président du Parlement, Mohammed al-Halboussi, sur Twitter après avoir reçu les lettres de démission des 73 élus de Moqtada Sadr. Le leader chiite, habitué des symboles politiques, avait lui-même demandé à ses députés jeudi de "préparer" leur démission.

Les services du Parlement n'étaient pas disponibles dans la soirée pour commenter les implications constitutionnelles de cette décision. Mais selon le politologue irakien Hamzeh Haddad "le Parlement doit encore entériner" ces démissions "à la majorité absolue" pour qu'elles deviennent effectives. Or, les vacances parlementaires ont débuté jeudi et les élus ne doivent retrouver l'hémicycle qu'au mois d'août.

Ce soubresaut vient toutefois souligner l'impasse politique totale dans laquelle se trouve l'Irak, où, depuis 2003 et la chute du président Saddam Hussein, les tractations entre partis en vue de former un gouvernement et de nommer un Premier ministre jouent les prolongations. Depuis les législatives anticipées d'octobre 2021, desquelles le mouvement sadriste est ressorti grand gagnant, les deux pôles du chiisme politique -celui de Moqtada Sadr et les pro-Iran du Cadre de coordination- continuent à revendiquer une majori-



Un soutien du leader chiite irakien Moqtada Sadr tient sa photo à Bagdad, le 26 mai 2022. Photo d'archives REUTERS/Thaier Al-Sudani

rité au Parlement et le droit de nommer le Premier ministre.

Moqtada Sadr, allié à des forces sunnites et kurdes, entend briser la tradition qui prévalait et qui voulait que toutes les forces chiites soient parties prenantes dans un "gouvernement de consensus". Le clerc chiite veut un "gouvernement majoritaire" qui repousserait dans l'opposition ses adversaires du Cadre de coordination. Il n'y est pas parvenu jusqu'à aujourd'hui et, en signe de protestation, a lui-même affirmé récemment que ses députés siégeaient "dans l'opposition", laissant au Cadre de coordination l'apanage de la formation d'un gouvernement.

Le Cadre de coordination compte notamment l'Alliance de la Conquête, vitrine politique des anciens paramilitaires pro-Iran du Hachd al-Chaabi. Il rassemble 83 élus.

Faute de majorité claire et de consensus, le Parlement a échoué par trois fois depuis le début de l'année à organiser l'élection du président de la République, première étape avant la désignation du Premier ministre et la formation du gouvernement.

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At least Nine Inmates Executed in Kermanshah, Gorgan and Shiraz

In recent days, the executions of at least nine inmates in prisons across Iran have been reported.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, quoting Kurdpa, on Sunday, June 12, 2022, one inmate identified as Mehdi Kiani who was convicted of murder was executed in Kermanshah Prison.

Also, according to Iran Human Rights Organization, on Monday, June 6, 2022, six inmates who were convicted of rape were executed in Gorgan Prison.



Three of these executed inmates have been identified as Jones Jahantigh, Ali Keykhah and Ali Lakzai. Three years ago, they were arrested and convicted of rape. Reportedly,

Ali Keykhah was 18 years old at the time of the arrest and his abetting in crime was restricted to providing other defendants with food.

Iran Human Rights Organiza-

tion also reports that on Thursday, June 9, an inmate identified as Baba Sabzi, age 44 who was previously convicted of drug-related crimes was executed in Kermanshah.

The Baloch Activists Campaign reports the execution of an inmate identified as Jomeh Makaki in Shiraz on June 12, 2022. Makaki was a resident of Zahedan who was convicted of drug-related crimes five years ago. According to this report, three other unidentified inmates have also been executed in Shiraz Central Prison.



NATO Chief: Turkey Has 'Legitimate Concerns' Over Terrorism

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Sunday that Turkey has "legitimate concerns" over terrorism and other issues that need to be taken seriously.

Turkey has accused Finland and Sweden of supporting Kurdish militants and says it will not back the two Nordic nations joining NATO until they change their policies.

Speaking at a joint news conference with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, Stoltenberg stressed that "no other NATO ally has suffered more terrorist attacks than Turkey" and pointed to its strategic geo-

graphic location with neighbors like Iraq and Syria.

"These are legitimate concerns. This is about terrorism, it's about weapons exports," Stoltenberg said. "We have to address the security concerns of all allies, including Turkish concerns about the terrorist group PKK."

He spoke at Finland's presidential summer residence Kultaranta in western Finland.

After decades of military non-alignment, Russia's war in Ukraine pushed Finland and Sweden to apply to join NATO in May. Turkish President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, however, accuses the Nordic nations of supporting Kurdish militants deemed by Turkey to be terrorists and has vetoed their entry into the 30-member alliance.

"When a vital key ally as Turkey raises concerns on terrorism then of course we have to sit down and take them seriously. And that's exactly what we do," Stoltenberg said.

The demands from Ankara to Helsinki and Stockholm also include lifting restrictions on arms exports to Turkey and extraditing members of certain Kurdish organizations that are

opposed to Erdogan's government.

In the past weeks, NATO's chief has been trying to resolve the dispute but he did not disclose Sunday whether any progress has been made.

He was to attend an annual discussion panel in Kultaranta later Sunday together with Finnish and Nordic politicians, foreign and security policy experts and military representatives.

Stoltenberg will visit Sweden on Monday for talks with the Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson.

Kurdistan au féminin

14 juin 2022

Le Kurdistan à travers le regard féminin

Le pouvoir turc fabrique des preuves contre les journalistes kurdes arrêtés à Diyarbakir il y a une semaine

Les 22 journalistes kurdes arrêtés à Diyarbakir (Amed) par la police turque le 8 juin dernier sont toujours détenus en isolement et interdits d'accès à un avocat. Ils ont déclaré que le pouvoir turc était en train de préparer des preuves fabriquées contre eux.

Des journalistes sont détenus à la Direction provinciale de la sécurité depuis près d'une semaine.

Serdar Altan, coprésident de l'Association des journalistes Dicle Fırat (DFG) détenu avec les autres journalistes il y a 7 jours, a envoyé un message concernant le processus de détention. Écrivant au nom de tous les journalistes détenus, il a déclaré : « Le long processus



de détention s'est transformé en torture et en punition. Le processus a commencé à évoluer vers un processus de fabrication de preuves. Même si cela prend 80 jours, ils ne pourront rien trouver d'autre que nos activités journalistiques, nous interpellons donc le procureur de l'affaire : nous voulons voir et affronter [les

preuves] que vous avez. Ne prolongez pas plus longtemps [le processus]. Sinon, vous serez mis en cause. Nous tenons à remercier tous nos collègues, les organisations professionnelles de la presse et organisations de la société civile pour leur soutien indéfectible. »

Les 22 journalistes détenus sont : Serdar Altan, coprésident de la plateforme de journalistes (Dicle Fırat Gazeteciler Derneği – DFG), Mehmet Ali Ertaş, rédacteur en chef du journal Xwebûn, Safiye Alagaş, directrice de l'agence féminine JINNEWS, Gülşen Koçuk, rédactrice en chef de JINNEWS, Aziz Oruç, rédacteur en chef de l'Agence de la Mésopotamie (MA), journalistes Ömer Çelik, Suat Doğuhan, Ramazan Geciken, Esmer Tunç, Neşe Toprak, Zeynel Abidin Bulut, Mazlum Doğan Güler, Mehmet Şahin, Elif Üngür, İbrahim Koyuncu, Remziye Temel, Mehmet Yalçın, Abdurrahman Öncü, Lezgin Akdeniz et Kadir Bayram et les citoyens Feynaz Koçuk et Ihsan Ergülen.

HRANA
HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS NEWS AGENCY

June 15, 2022

Update on Prisoner Kamal Sharifi in Minab Prison

Political prisoner Kamal Sharifi is serving the fourteenth year out of a 30 years sentence in Minab Prison. In violation of prison rules, he was housed with violent prisoners. Moreover, he suffers from heart disease and digestive disorders, for which he has been denied adequate medical treatment.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human

Rights Activists, Kamal Sharifi is serving the fourteenth year of his sentence in a ward for prisoners of violent crimes in Minab Prison.

In March of 2021, he was dispatched to a hospital outside prison after a heart attack. After four days, however, he was sent back to prison before completing medical treatment. Also, due to damaged tendons in his foot,

Sharifi can hardly walk for which he has not received medical treatment.

Earlier, HRANA reported that Sharifi is not allowed furlough, family visitation or regular phone calls.

Kamal Sharifi was arrested in 1998 in the city of Saqqez, when Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court sentenced him to 30 years imprisonment.

On several occasions, Kamal Sharifi was arrested in 1989 and 1990 on the charges of supporting and working for the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and eventually, the Revolutionary Court of Saqqez sentenced him to one additional year of imprisonment and 40 lashes.

Kurdistan au féminin 15-06-2022

Ciwan Haco: Les artistes et intellectuels kurdes doivent appeler à l'unité

Rappelant que la Turquie se bat contre la langue et la culture kurdes, le musicien légendaire Ciwan Haco a condamné les attaques visant les acquis kurdes et ajouté: que tous les artistes, intellectuels, journalistes et sages kurdes devraient se rassembler et appeler à l'unité.

Ciwan Haco, l'un des noms importants de la musique kurde, a parlé des récentes interdictions des pièces de théâtre et des concerts en kurde en Turquie et des attaques contre la région du Kurdistan d'Irak. S'adressant à Ahmet Güneş du journal Yeni Yaşam, Haco a condamné l'interdiction des pièces de théâtre et des concerts kurdes.

Sans la langue, nous n'existons pas

Haco a déclaré : « La guerre de l'État turc contre le peuple kurde est une guerre de culture et de langue. Ils nous vivent une telle guerre. Je dis toujours que leurs problèmes et leur guerre ne sont pas notre terre. Nous vivons déjà sur notre terre. Leur guerre est avec notre langue, notre position, notre musique et notre culture. Nous les Kurdes regardons notre vie et vivons malgré tout. Ici, en tant que Kurdes, nous devons faire notre part. Maintenant, que nous y sommes, que devons-nous faire à ce sujet ? Nous devons rester sur notre langue. Nous devrions parler notre langue partout. Nous devrions parler kurde avec nos enfants. Si nous avons une langue, nous existons aussi. Si nous n'avons pas de langue, nous n'existons pas. En ce sens, notre langue est vitale.

Franchement, j'ai suivi avec intérêt le travail des artistes et musiciens kurdes de la dernière période, et je vois qu'ils font du très bon travail. Les artistes kurdes font de très bonnes choses. Je les re-



garde avec enthousiasme et je les apprécie tous. De très belles organisations, des productions de qualité sont réalisées. Le peuple kurde l'adopte également et s'y intéresse sérieusement. Je regarde et vois positivement. C'est pourquoi ils ne peuvent pas le supporter. Les Kurdes s'intéressent aux concerts, aux événements et aux pièces de théâtre comme tous les autres peuples. C'est à cela qu'ils sont confrontés. Ils ne peuvent pas accepter que les Kurdes soient heureux et possèdent leur culture. Ils attaquent tout ce que les Kurdes aiment. »

Parler en kurde

Décrivant l'interdiction des concerts d'artistes kurdes comme « obsolète », Haco a déclaré : « De tels esprits prohibitifs n'existent plus nulle part. Les États ont supprimé ces absurdités. Aujourd'hui, ils n'existent pas en Afrique, en Amérique du Nord et du Sud, en Asie ou ailleurs dans le monde. Aucun pays ne le fait. Aucun État n'interdit une langue. Cette interdiction n'existe plus sur terre. Il n'y a d'hostilité à la langue qu'en Turquie. Ils nient notre langue, notre existence, notre identité, notre musique. Notre devoir face à ces interdictions est de bien protéger notre langue. Il faut

mettre notre langue en avant. Nous allons parler kurde [dans la vie de tous les jours]. Faisons écouter de la musique kurde à nos enfants, pour qu'ils grandissent avec cette langue. Notre existence, notre être le plus important et le plus béni, est la langue, langue, langue. En ce sens, parlons notre langue et protégeons partout notre art et nos artistes. Produisons en kurde, Faisons de la musique et des arts de qualité. La suite est une gestion de lutte », a-t-il déclaré.

Appel à l'unité kurde

Évaluant les attaques contre les gains kurdes, Haco a déclaré : « Je condamne la guerre entre les Kurdes et je ne la vois pas comme une bonne chose. Je ne suis ni d'un côté ni de l'autre. Je suis un artiste de tous les Kurdes. (...) Je ne peux pas dire qui est coupable ou pas. Je respecte tous les partis kurdes. Nous, les Kurdes, ne devrions pas nous battre entre nous. Nous devons nous aimer. Nous ne devrions pas nous présenter comme des traîtres à la télévision ici et là. Chacun a combattu et servi ce peuple autant qu'il le pouvait. Puisque nous n'avons pas d'unité, nous en sommes là. Nous devons nous opposer à la guerre des Kurdes avec les Kurdes. Nous ne devrions jamais accepter le

Brakuji [fratricide]. Je vois la guerre des Kurdes contre les Kurdes comme un suicide. Tous les artistes, intellectuels, journalistes et sages kurdes devraient se rassembler et appeler à l'unité. Tout le monde devrait s'opposer à la guerre entre les Kurdes. Nos esprits et nos âmes n'acceptent pas cela. Nous devons renforcer notre fraternité. »

Nous vivons libres

« Nous devons nous défendre les uns les autres et assurer notre unité. Aujourd'hui, nous rendons heureux ceux qui nous font la guerre, nous jouons entre leurs mains. Nous ne devrions pas rendre les gens heureux dans notre propre pays. Nous qui servons le peuple kurde n'acceptons pas cela. Ce faisant, ils servent ceux qui nous persécutent. Personne n'est un traître, tout le monde a un travail, mais nous ne pouvons pas établir notre unité. Nous sommes un peuple coloré. Nous sommes plus de 50 millions sur terre. Bien sûr, nous n'avons pas à penser la même chose. Nous aurons des avis différents. Tout le monde ne peut pas penser la même chose. Il y aura ceux parmi nous qui penseront différemment. Tout le monde n'a pas à défendre un parti. Nous devons nous respecter et respecter nos différences. Arrêtons de nous traiter de traîtres et soyons constructifs. Maintenant, nous devons nous unir et lutter pour nos droits », a déclaré Haco.

Haco a poursuivi : « Le succès appartient à notre peuple, comme tous les peuples, nous vivons librement sur terre. Nous ne luttons contre aucun peuple. Nous ne sommes pas en guerre avec les Turcs, les Perses ou les Arabes. Nous voulons vivre librement dans notre propre pays. Nous voulons que les problèmes soient résolus avec amour, avec le dialogue et de manière démocratique. »

The New York Times

By David E. Sanger and Julian E. Barnes reported from Washington, and Ronen Bergman from Tel Aviv.
Eric Schmitt contributed reporting from Washington, and William J. Broad from New York.
June 16, 2022

Fears Grow Over Iran's Nuclear Program as Tehran Digs a New Tunnel Network

The conflict over the program is about to flare again as President Biden travels next month to Israel and Saudi Arabia, Iran's two biggest regional rivals.

WASHINGTON — Israeli and American intelligence officials have been watching each day as Iran digs a vast tunnel network just south of the Natanz nuclear production site, in what they believe is Tehran's biggest effort yet to construct new nuclear facilities so deep in the mountains that they can withstand bunker-busting bombs and cyberattacks.

Though the construction is [evident on satellite photographs](#) and has been monitored by [groups that track the proliferation of new nuclear facilities](#), Biden administration officials have never talked about it in public and Israel's defense minister has mentioned it just once, in a single sentence in a speech last month. In interviews with national security officials in both nations, there clearly were differing interpretations of exactly how the Iranians may intend to use the site, and even how urgent a threat it poses.

But as President Biden prepares for his first trip as president to the Middle East next month — one that will take him to Israel and Saudi Arabia, Iran's two biggest regional rivals — there is little debate that the conflict over Iran's nuclear program is about to flare again.

By most accounts, Iran is closer to being able to produce a bomb today than at any other point in the two-decade-long saga of its nuclear program — even if it is planning, as many



President Biden has not publicly discussed Iran's decision to ignore the demands of nuclear inspectors for access to a series of sites. Kenny Holston for The New York Times

national security officials believe, to stop just short of producing an actual weapon. On Mr. Biden's trip, the question of taking more extreme measures to stop Iran, as the United States and Israel have attempted before, will be high on the agenda.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said earlier this month that the country is just weeks away from being able to enrich enough bomb-grade fuel to make a single nuclear bomb — though fashioning that into a usable weapon could take at least another two years, even by the most alarmist Israeli estimates.

Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., who retired recently as the head of U.S. Central Command, where he oversaw military planning for dealing with Iran, said Tehran, at least in the

short term, was trying to leverage its nuclear capabilities as it negotiates with the United States.

"The Iranians' highest priority is using the nuclear threat to gain concessions, economic and otherwise," General McKenzie said.

But the facility could eventually prove critical to Iran if the Biden administration's efforts to revive the 2015 nuclear agreement continue to run into roadblocks. And for now, at least, efforts to reimpose limits on Iran's nuclear actions appear all but dead.

The deal, which President Donald J. Trump abandoned in 2018, limited Tehran's ability to install new centrifuges and forced it to ship 97 percent of its nuclear fuel out of the country. Mr. Biden's refusal of Iran's

demand to remove the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps from the list of terrorist organizations, along with a flow of new revenue to Tehran resulting from today's soaring oil prices, have contributed to the stalemate in the talks.

Now, the Iranians are looking for new pressure points, including the excavation of the mountain plant near Natanz. And over the past week, Iranian authorities have switched off 27 cameras that gave inspectors a view into Iran's production of fuel.

The decision to cut off the cameras, which were installed as part of the nuclear deal, was particularly worrisome to Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations agency responsible for nuclear inspections. If the cameras remain off for weeks, and it is impossible to track the whereabouts of nuclear materials, "I think this would be a fatal blow" to hopes of reviving the accord, Mr. Grossi said last week.

But this is far more than an inspection dispute. In the eyes of experts, Tehran is getting to the point of becoming what Robert Litwak, who has written extensively on the Iranian program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, called a "[nuclear threshold state](#) whose uranium enrichment program creates an inherent option — a hedge

— to produce nuclear weapons,” without actually taking the last step.

“Iran’s move at Natanz,” he said of the plant now under construction, “amps up pressure on the United States to reach a new deal by highlighting the risk of a nuclear breakout should diplomacy fail.”

A Tunnel Complex Appears in a Mountainside

For decades, a barren piece of land near Natanz has been the centerpiece of Iran’s nuclear effort. The country has always insisted that its underground “pilot plant” there is working only to produce nuclear fuel for peaceful purposes — the production of nuclear energy. The evidence, some of it stolen by Israel from a warehouse in Tehran, suggests otherwise: that Iran has had plans in place for two decades to construct a bomb, if it concluded that it was in its interest.

Though the pilot plant is underground it is not deeply buried, making it an easy target for a bombing attack — a step Israel has come close to taking on many occasions. But the largest attack on the Natanz site came not from the air but from a combined U.S.-Israeli cyberoperation, code named “Olympic Games,” which forced the plant’s nuclear centrifuges, which rotate at supersonic speeds, to spin out of control. During the Bush and Obama administrations, it destroyed hundreds of centrifuges, and set Iran’s program back by a year or more. But it was no silver bullet.

To protect its future programs, Iran began building facilities deep underground. Its biggest success so far is a site called Fordow, built under a mountain on a base run by the Revolutionary Guards. It was [exposed in September of 2009](#), early in the Obama administration, when Iran, realizing that the cover had been blown on its project, hurriedly told the I.A.E.A. of its existence before



Israel’s defense minister, Benny Gantz, took both American and Israeli government officials by surprise in mid-May when he decided to make Israel’s assessment of Iran’s capabilities public. Corinna Kern/Reuters

Mr. Obama and France’s president at the time, Nicolas Sarkozy, could announce the finding.

The new facility is close to Natanz, but it resembles Fordow, which would require the largest bunker-busting bombs in the American inventory to attack. Israel does not yet possess those bunker-busters, or have a means to deliver them.

Biden administration officials say they have been following the construction of the new facility for more than a year, but are not especially alarmed. It is still several years from completion. And they suspect its immediate purpose is to [replace a centrifuge assembly facility that Israel blew up in April 2020](#), in a particularly sophisticated attack that made clear that the Iranian program had been penetrated by insiders, who apparently planted the explosives.

The Biden administration says there is plenty of time to deal with the new facility, through negotiations if possible and by force if necessary. The project is several years from completion, and may be just another form of pressure on American negotiators. Because it is still in a nascent phase, it plays no role in any effort to estimate how long it would take Iran to complete a weapon. Instead, it is viewed as a reminder from the Iranians that they will be

ready to produce nuclear material on a vast scale, either in coming years or, if the nuclear deal is revived, by 2030, when the production limits negotiated in that agreement would largely expire.

To the Israelis, the tunnel complex is more evidence of a relentless Iranian effort to pursue a bomb capability — and, in the minds of many Israeli military and intelligence leaders, a justification for Israel’s accelerated attacks on the nuclear program and the scientists and engineers behind both Iran’s nuclear and missile programs.

Israel’s defense minister, Benny Gantz, took both American and Israeli government officials by surprise in mid-May when he decided to make Israel’s assessment public. “During these very days, Iran is making an effort to complete the production and installation of 1,000 advanced IR6 centrifuges at its nuclear facilities, including a new facility being built at an underground site near Natanz,” he said. The Iranians did not dispute the claim: they had announced, a year ago, that they would build new facilities in response to Israeli attacks.

In recent weeks, attacks and assassinations of Iranians in key military posts have picked up again, though the targets have been less well known than Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, believed to be the guiding intel-

lect behind the Iranian nuclear weapons program, who was [killed in an automated ambush Israel conducted in late 2020](#).

Construction of the new facility, Israeli officials say, began about the same time. Their estimate is that the facility is very large — much larger than needed to replace the assembly facility that was destroyed two years ago.

Several Israeli officials say they believe Iran’s ultimate objective is to use the facility to enrich uranium at a mass scale, using a family of advanced centrifuges that Iran has already started installing, on a test basis, at its older facility nearby. American officials concede the new facility is quite large, and usually well protected.

Still, the United States is not convinced Iran intends to use the facility to enrich uranium. That remains a possibility, given its size, but it is not a certainty, senior American officials said. What is more clear, these officials said, is Iran’s intention to use the facility to construct centrifuges, rebuilding facilities the Israelis have destroyed in recent years.

On the Ground, Worrying Levels of Enrichment

To Biden administration officials, the more immediate problem is that Iran has successfully pushed ahead with its enrichment of uranium to achieve a level of 60 percent purity — far higher than anything they might need for civilian nuclear power plants. And in recent years they have seen a huge investment in missiles, drones and other weapons that are used against Saudi and Israeli targets, they say.

The 60 percent level of uranium enrichment is just short of what is needed to produce a weapon, and as Iran has amassed quantities of it over the past several months, the estimates of how long it would

take to get fuel usable for a bomb have dwindled to weeks. Still, American officials also continue to believe that Iran has not taken steps to build an actual weapon — though Israeli officials express doubts. All that said, former American

officials said, Iran has the capability of building a nuclear weapon very quickly. More difficult would be miniaturizing such a device and putting it on a missile.

“They like the idea of hanging the nuclear program over us

because it produces a response,” said General McKenzie, who on Wednesday was named executive director of the Global and National Security Institute at the University of South Florida. He said the real “crown jewels” for Iran are bal-

listic missiles, cruise missiles and drones.

“And that’s where they’ve made huge strides in the last five to seven years,” General McKenzie said, “where they now realistically have overmatch against their neighbors.”



By Reuters Staff
16/06/2022

La Turquie emprisonne 16 journalistes kurdes accusés de propagande

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - La justice turque a ordonné le placement en détention provisoire de 16 journalistes kurdes interpellés le 8 juin pour diffusion présumée de propagande terroriste, ont déclaré jeudi l'association des médias MLSA et des médias locaux.

Ils étaient en garde à vue depuis huit jours à Diyarbakir, dans le sud-est de la Turquie. Cinq autres journalistes arrêtés le 8 juin n'ont pas été emprisonnés, selon le groupe Demiroren et d'autres médias turcs.

Parmi les personnes détenues figurent Serdar Altan, codirecteur de l'Association des journalistes du journal Dicle Firat, Safiye Alagas, directrice de Jin News, et Aziz Oruc, rédacteur en chef de l'agence de presse Mezopotamya.

Le 8 juin, la police de Diyarbakir, une ville à majorité kurde, a arrêté les 21 journalistes, considérant la préparation d'émissions télévisées diffusées de Belgique et de Grande-Bretagne comme de la propagande. Une enquête est en cours en parallèle sur le “comité de presse” du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan



La justice turque a ordonné le placement en détention provisoire de 16 journalistes kurdes interpellés le 8 juin pour diffusion présumée de propagande terroriste, ont déclaré jeudi l'association des médias MLSA et des médias locaux. /Photo d'archives / REUTERS /Morteza Nikoubazi

(PPK), une organisation terroriste pour Ankara.

Le tribunal de Diyarbakir, qui a prononcé les peines, s'est refusé à tout commentaire.

Lundi, 837 journalistes et 62 organisations de médias ont

publié une déclaration soutenant leurs collègues détenus contre “un coup porté à la liberté de la presse”.

Ils ont appelé l'opposition turque à être solidaire avec eux et le pouvoir judiciaire à “ne pas devenir un instrument

de l'illégalité et de la tyrannie du gouvernement”.

Reportage Daren Butler et Ece Toksabay ; version française Augustin Turpin, édité par Sophie Louet

The Supreme Court of Iraq is An Anti-Kurdish Tool

After the fall of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship in Iraq, the United States and the international community pushed for the Kurds to remain within Iraq and turn a new page after decades of persecution and ethnic cleansing by the Iraqi government. Kurdish parties subsequently became an integral part of Iraq's survival as a state. Nevertheless, since 2005, successive Iraqi cabinets have violated the constitution's special arrangements for Kurdistan.

Using a new tactic, Baghdad is exploiting the **unconstitutional Supreme Court** against the Kurds as a tool for issuing unjust rulings. On February 15, the so-called Federal Supreme Court of Iraq referenced a vague article in the constitution to justify its ruling of the oil and gas law of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) as unconstitutional and demanded that Kurdistan hand over all production from oil fields in the Kurdistan Region and other areas to the federal government. The ruling was rejected by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), who cited the fact that Iraq's constitution allows regions to explore and sell their natural resources. Baghdad's failure to adopt a fair and just oil and gas law, along with its failure to implement Article 140 of the constitution are the two principal contributors to Kurdistan's ongoing disputes with the central government since 2005. The "economic independence" used by the KRG in 2014, including producing its own oil and gas, was a result of Baghdad cutting the allocated federal budget for the KRG and slashing the salaries of the re-



gion's government employees. After its budget was cut, Iraq's Kurds faced an economic crisis which ran parallel to their brutal fight against ISIS terrorists.

In another politically motivated move, the Supreme Court **annulled** the candidacy of a Kurdish politician, Hoshyar Zebari, for the post of President, under the false pretext of corruption allegations. While Iraq ranks as one of the most **corrupt countries** globally, Baghdad largely ignores non-Kurdish politicians responsible for wasting billions of dollars and fueling poverty in an oil-rich country. The Iraqi government sees Kurdish gains as its own loss and will stoop to no level too low, including the creation of bogus cases against Kurdish politicians who they deem a threat.

Days ago, a group of Iranian-backed lawmakers filed a new case with the Supreme Court, demanding the dissolution of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), claiming that they are the main component of the KRG which **"failed to comply"** with the court's decision on the oil issue. Targeting

the oldest and largest Kurdish party is another failed attempt at undermining the KRG and silencing the Kurds.

The fact of the matter is that all the Supreme Court's rulings line up perfectly with Iran's interests. Iran is staunchly opposed to the Kurds being part of a large coalition in the Iraqi Parliament, fearing that it seeks to form a government which would run counter to Tehran's wishes. The Iranian regime has long meddled in Iraq, but since 2017, it has engineered Iraq's war on the Kurds in the disputed territories. Iran continues unleashing its radical proxies, who regularly launch drone and rocket attacks on Erbil.

Moreover, the Kirkuk Criminal Court sentenced five former Kirkuk Provincial Council members, including former chairman Rebwar Talabani, to prison. Talabani received a 6-year sentence, while each of his colleagues received 15 years. All the "convicts" were sentenced with bogus charges such as "damage" to public property. The court ruling is clearly politically motivated

since it only targeted those who participated in Kurdistan's Independence Referendum. All six of the convicted members released statements denying the charges and stating that the Iranian-backed militias stole their government property. Baghdad has continually attempted to punish those who supported Independence Referendum, when more than 92% of voters voted yes for an independent Kurdistan.

Eight months since the parliamentary elections in Iraq, Iranian-backed parties remain the primary obstacle to the formation of a new government. The irony is that these radical parties do not dare to target other elements in the parliament's largest coalition, such as the Shia Cleric Muqtada al Sadr or even the Sunni parties but focus on fighting the Kurds and rallying around the Iraqi flag.

It should be clear for the US that anti-Kurdish rhetoric by Tehran and Baghdad is against American interests just as much as it is against the Kurds. For decades, the Kurds have paid the price for being a trusted ally to the US in Iraq. Additionally, Kurds are often accused of having friendly relationships with regional powers, such as the Arab Gulf States and even the European Union. If the US and the international community do not stand behind the KRG, Baghdad will achieve its goal of demolishing the only Kurdish identity that is recognized in Iraq's constitution and the United Nations.

Sierwan Najmaldin Karim is the President of the Washington Kurdish Institute (WKI)

17/06/2022

Iran arrests dozens of teachers in Kurdish provinces

Reports indicate that security forces arrested at least 10 teachers in the western cities of Saqqez and Divandareh in Iran's Kurdish provinces hours before nationwide teachers protests were to take place on June 16.

The detained teachers have been identified as Khaled Abdollahi, Mohammad Fatahi, Soleiman Abdi, Aziz Marzi, and Salah Sorkhi, all members of the Kurdistan Teachers' Association in Saqqez and Omid Shah Mohammadi, Osman Rezaie, Heiva Qoreishi, Parviz Ahsani, and Kaveh Mohammadzadeh, who are members of the Kurdistan Teachers' Association in Sanandaj.

There is no information on why they were arrested or where they are being kept.

According to human rights activists in Iran the Intelligence Agency and the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Intelligence Department in Saqqez threatened teachers after summoning them over the phone. They were threatened with arrest and prosecution if they took part in the June 16 teachers' nationwide protests.



On June 15, informed sources said Mohammadreza Moradi, a member of the Managing Board of the Kurdistan Teachers' Association in Sanandaj, was detained by security forces.

Hengaw, a Kurdish human rights website, quoted the source as saying that Mr. Moradi was detained outside his home on the night of June 14.

The Coordinating Council of Iranian Teacher Associations,

the association that organizes teachers' protests, issued a call for more protests and demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all detained teachers.

"We declare loudly that if our colleagues are not released immediately and unconditionally, and the legitimate demands of Iranian teachers are not met, the union protests will continue," the Council said in a statement.

Iranian teachers have in the

past few years taken to the streets numerous times to peacefully protest their dire livelihood conditions.

The partial approval of a plan that would give wages to teachers according to their ranks, the non-implementation of a law that would increase the pensions of retired teachers, and the "continuous and systematic" repression of union activists have been the main focus of teachers' protests over the past year.

17/06/2022

Une attaque aérienne fait 4 morts au Sud-Kurdistan

Une attaque aérienne a visé vendredi une voiture en mouvement dans la région de Sulaymaniyah au Sud-Kurdistan (Nord de l'Irak).

Selon les premières informations, quatre personnes ont été tuées et une autre blessée à la suite d'une

frappe ciblée sur une voiture à proximité de Sulaymaniyah.

Selon des sources locales, la voiture a été visée par un drone de combat dans le village de Berlut, au nord de Kelar. D'après les premières informations, quatre personnes se trouvant dans la voiture

ont été tuées et une autre blessée à la suite de la frappe. Pour l'heure, les autorités locales n'ont communiqué aucune information sur l'origine de l'attaque.

En moins d'un mois, **10 civils, dont trois enfants, ont trouvé la mort** dans des assassinats ciblés ou

des attaques aériennes menées par la Turquie au Sud-Kurdistan. En dernier lieu, le 15 juin, un enfant de 12 ans et son grand-père ont été tués dans une **frappe de drone** visant le Conseil populaire du district de Sinunê, dans la région yézidie de Shengal.



Anyck Béraud
le 17 juin 2022

La Suède, la Turquie et l'OTAN : l'épineuse question kurde

En Suède, une députée qui est aussi kurde surveille comme le lait sur le feu ce que son pays fera comme concession pour éviter que la Turquie ne mette son veto pour bloquer sa demande d'adhésion à l'OTAN.

Elle s'appelle Amineh Kakabaveh. C'est une ancienne peshmerga, elle a été combattante kurde iranienne à l'âge de 13 ans... Députée indépendante au Parlement de Suède, elle brandit son vote comme moyen de pression sur le gouvernement suédois pour qu'il ne cède pas au chantage du président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan : sa voix est cruciale pour le gouvernement social-démocrate, minoritaire.

Amineh Kakabaveh est une femme pressée, une boule d'énergie.

La quadragénaire est fébrile quand elle nous accueille au parlement de Suède entre deux rendez-vous en s'excusant à profusion pour son retard, et quand elle nous entraîne d'un bon pas, en traversant la cafétéria pour y remplir deux verres d'eau au passage, vers une grande salle où va se dérouler notre entretien.

C'est la plus belle salle, celle où le président du Parlement tient ses réunions, lance-t-elle en embrassant l'endroit du regard avec un grand sourire.

Amineh Kakabaveh est l'une des quelque 100 000 Kurdes qui vivent en Suède. Son sourire devient moqueur quand elle assure qu'elle représente tout ce que le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan déteste.

Elle soutient que ça le rend fou de voir une femme, une Kurde,



Amineh Kakabaveh, députée indépendante, issue de la gauche. Son parcours de réfugiée l'a menée brièvement en Turquie avant d'arriver en Suède en 1992., Photo : Radio-Canada / Anyck Béraud

une socialiste en train de défendre les droits de sa communauté et les droits de la personne, ici. Dans cette Chambre, où elle a fait son entrée il y a 14 ans. À l'époque, c'était sous la bannière du Left Party (le Parti de gauche).

Pour le président Erdogan, le Parlement suédois est un repaire de terroristes, ce que dément vigoureusement Stockholm.

Et parmi ce qu'il exige de la Suède comme preuve qu'elle partage ses préoccupations sécuritaires et pour obtenir un aval à son adhésion à l'OTAN, le gouvernement turc revient à la

charge avec ses demandes d'extraditions, toujours déboutées jusqu'ici, de personnes soupçonnées d'avoir des liens avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

L'État turc est en guerre depuis des décennies avec ce parti séparatiste. Il le considère comme une organisation terroriste, tout comme la Suède d'ailleurs. L'insurrection du mouvement armé kurde et sa répression par les autorités ont fait des dizaines de milliers de morts depuis 1984.

Nervosité

La députée suédoise Amineh Kakabaveh précise que la liste des personnes réclamées à la

Suède comprend des Kurdes, mais aussi des Turcs : parlementaires, auteurs, ou encore reporters. Cette liste circule notamment dans les médias.

Il y a beaucoup d'inquiétude, par exemple chez les Kurdes politisés, assure Kurdo Baksi. Attablé devant un thé bien fort et sucré, l'écrivain et journaliste kurde, natif de Batman (sud-est de la Turquie) explique qu'il reçoit fréquemment des appels d'amis préoccupés, que leur nom soit sur la liste ou non.

M. Baksi nous demande de ne pas révéler le restaurant où s'est tenu cet entretien, par crainte de représailles visant les propriétaires lors de vacances en Turquie.

« On dit que Dieu a créé deux choses pour les Kurdes : Internet et la Suède. »

— Kurdo Baksi, écrivain et journaliste kurde

Il est l'un des signataires d'une lettre ouverte qui demande à la Suède de ne pas tomber dans le piège du président turc. Il veut que le pays reste une terre d'asile pour les Kurdes.

Bien des experts voient mal comment Stockholm pourrait accepter des extraditions vers la Turquie. Une décision qui relève des tribunaux, de toute façon.

Les opposants politiques réfugiés en Suède, eux aussi dans le viseur d'Ankara

Lenent Kenez a échappé à une extradition vers la Turquie. La Cour suprême de la Suède a rejeté cette requête, au motif que ses activités journalistiques ne constituent pas un crime.



Kurdo Baksi est un écrivain et journaliste kurde., Photo : Radio-Canada / Anyck Béraud

Abdullah Bozkurt a été agressé près de chez lui à Stockholm. L'enquête policière est en cours.

Les deux hommes s'attendaient bien à retrouver leurs noms dans la liste des personnes réclamées par Ankara.

Ils sont très critiques du président Erdogan avec leur publication *Nordic Monitor* depuis qu'ils se sont réfugiés en Suède.

Il y a aussi le fait que, lorsqu'ils étaient en Turquie, les deux journalistes travaillaient dans des médias sinon liés, du moins sympathiques, au mouvement du prédicateur musulman Fe-thullah Gülen, en exil depuis des années.

Le gouvernement turc accuse ce mouvement d'avoir fomenté la tentative de coup d'État de 2016. Une purge des Gulénistes s'est déroulée à coups d'arrestations et de fermetures.

Abdullah Bozkurt et Lenent Kenez, à Stockholm, le 1er juin 2022. Photo : Radio-Canada / Anyck Béraud
Surtout que la Suède se distingue depuis longtemps par sa défense des droits, de la démocratie et de l'égalité des genres. C'est ce que rappelle Paul Levin. Il est le directeur de l'Institut des études turques, à l'Université de Stockholm.

Et le gouvernement social-démocrate vient juste d'effectuer une difficile volte-face sur l'entrée dans l'OTAN. Il lui a fallu rassurer les critiques : entrer dans l'Alliance n'implique pas de sacrifier ses valeurs fondamentales. C'est une position difficile, ajoute le professeur.

Des observateurs et des opposants au leader turc avancent que Recep Tayyip Erdogan utilise la demande d'adhésion de la Suède à l'OTAN comme monnaie d'échange pour obtenir de l'armement dernier cri des États-Unis.

Il y a plein de tiroirs, en réalité, de négociations, explique Doro-thée Schmid, responsable du



Le secrétaire général de l'OTAN Jens Stoltenberg et la première ministre suédoise Magdalena Andersson, Photo : via Reuters / TT NEWS AGENCY

Programme Turquie et Moyen-Orient, à l'Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI), à Paris. Elle rentre tout juste (mercredi 15 juin) d'Ankara.

La chercheuse précise qu'on parle beaucoup, en Turquie, de ce bras de fer autour de l'adhésion de la Suède et de la Finlande à l'OTAN. Elle ajoute que pour Recep Tayyip Erdogan, qui a fait alliance avec un parti nationaliste, tout ce qui peut donner à voir que la Turquie se comporte comme un pays fort, comme un pays qui résiste ou qui impose ses vues à ses alliés : c'est quelque chose pour son électorat nationaliste.

Le président turc tente de relancer sa popularité en berne à un an des élections.

L'enjeu du PKK

Doro-thée Schmid prévient qu'il ne faut pas sous-estimer l'importance du dossier PKK. C'est un vrai dossier pour les Turcs.

Le professeur Paul Levin, à Stockholm, est d'accord. Il estime que ça préoccupe une bonne partie des Turcs, au-delà des partisans et du parti du président Erdogan.

L'ensemble de l'appareil sécuritaire turc qui a tenté à plusieurs reprises de faire pression sur les alliés de l'OTAN, pour qu'ils cessent de soutenir les milices kurdes en Syrie et pour qu'ils arrêtent de leur fournir des armes qui terminent aux mains de combattants du PKK en Turquie. Et d'une certaine façon, on peut

comprendre les inquiétudes des Turcs. Jusqu'à présent, ils n'ont pas obtenu gain de cause, cette fois ils en ont l'occasion, grâce à leur droit de veto, explique le spécialiste suédois des questions turques.

Le 13 juin, la première ministre suédoise Magdalena Andersson a voulu répondre en partie aux préoccupations sécuritaires d'Ankara. Une loi antiterroriste plus stricte sera en vigueur dès juillet.

Et si la Suède devient membre de l'OTAN, alors l'embargo des armes imposé à la Turquie après une attaque contre les milices kurdes en Syrie en 2019 pourrait être révisé.

L'appui des sociaux-démocrates au pouvoir en Suède aux Unités de protection du peuple (YPG), des milices kurdes qui ont participé à la défaite du groupe armé État islamique en Syrie, indispose Ankara. La Turquie considère que ces combattants posent une menace à sa sécurité, en raison de leurs liens avec le PKK, et qu'elles sont aussi une organisation terroriste. Le gouvernement turc demande donc à la Suède de rompre tout lien avec ces milices kurdes, entre autres exigences si elle veut avoir une chance d'adhérer à l'OTAN.

Pour la députée indépendante Amineh Kakabaveh, ce serait franchir une ligne rouge.

« Mon message est très clair, si le gouvernement abandonne les Kurdes, il perdra définitivement

mon vote d'ici aux prochaines élections. »

— -Amineh Kakabaveh, kurde et députée suédoise

Les sociaux-démocrates se sont hissés au pouvoir en Suède grâce à sa voix cruciale. En échange de la promesse de renforcer la collaboration avec ces milices, par l'intermédiaire de la branche politique de ces combattants.

Avec sa position, Amineh Kakabaveh ne s'est pas fait que des amis. Cela lui vaut d'être accusée de maintenir le gouvernement suédois en otage à des fins personnelles.

La députée indépendante n'a pas l'intention de se taire. Si jamais elle devait faire échouer l'adhésion de la Suède à l'OTAN, elle s'en moque. Elle est de toute façon opposée à l'idée de voir son pays côtoyer la Turquie dans cette alliance militaire.

Doro-thée Schmid, de l'IFRI, souligne que le seul mérite du veto turc, c'est de faire réfléchir à l'extension de l'OTAN. Elle précise sa pensée : Ce qui est intéressant dans ce processus, c'est que ça nous montre en fait que l'adhésion précipitée de deux pays, qui ont une culture de neutralité, à une alliance militaire dans un contexte de guerre, c'est quelque chose qui doit être pesé. En réalité, on ne peut pas considérer que c'est une chose qui se fait à la légère.

Quant à la question kurde comme telle, la chercheuse estime que la solution ne sera pas militaire et qu'il faudra régler le dossier de façon politique. Elle souligne que le PKK est une manifestation extrémiste d'une lutte pour les droits des Kurdes en Turquie (de 15 % à 20 % de la population). Le problème, ajoute Doro-thée Schmid, c'est que le président Erdogan qualifie pratiquement tous les Kurdes de terroristes [...] et ça, c'est un vrai problème qui ne sera pas résolu par un veto à l'entrée de la Suède et de la Finlande dans l'OTAN, conclut-elle.

Thursday June 16 2022

Turkey arrests 16 Kurdish journalists on «terrorism charges»

A Turkish court has formally arrested 16 Kurdish journalists on “terrorism charges” after they were detained in raids carried out in the southeastern province of Diyarbakır last week.

The Turkish authorities have not yet disclosed the accusations against the journalists as there is a confidentiality order on the investigation file.

A Turkish court on June 16 ruled for the arrest of 16 Kurdish journalists who were among the 22 people detained on «terrorism charges» in a massive operation last week in the Kurdish-majority southeastern province of Diyarbakır.

The journalists were being held in detention since June 8. Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) said that out of the 22 detained people, 16

journalists were arrested by a court order, while four journalists and two media workers were released under judicial control.

Turkish police raided on June 8 the homes of several Kurdish journalists working for the pro-Kurdish Mezopotamya News Agency, the all-female Jin News website, a production company called Pel, and the Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association.

During the raids, police officers seized computers, hard drives and other work equipment from the journalists' houses and media offices.

The detentions led to protests with Türkiye Gazeteciler Sendikası (TGS), Disk-Basın, Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti (TGC) and Gazeteciler Cemiyeti Derneği (GCD) unanimously urging for the journalists' immediate release.

The Turkish authorities have not yet disclosed the accusations against the journalists as there is a confidentiality order on the investigation file.

Turkey ranks a low 149 out of 180 countries on the Reporters Without Borders's (RSF) World Press Freedom Index, which describes it as a country in which «all possible means are used to undermine critics.»

Sunday June 19 2022

Secret witness statements form basis of accusations against arrested Kurdish journalists

Statements of secret witnesses from previous years form the basis of accusations against the recently arrested 16 Kurdish journalists, according to reporting by Halk TV.

Statements of secret witnesses form the basis of prosecutors' investigation file against the recently arrested 16 Kurdish journalists, [according](#) to reporting by Halk TV.

A Turkish court on June 16 formally ruled for the arrest of 16 Kurdish journalists on «terrorism charges» following a mas-

sive police operation in the Kurdish-majority southeastern province of Diyarbakır.

The journalists are working for the pro-Kurdish Mezopotamya News Agency, the all-female Jin News website, a production company called Pel and the Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association.

The court ruling for the journalists Safiye Alağaç and Aziz Oruç refers to witness statements taken mostly in 2018 and 2019, Halk TV said. Some of the statements reportedly belong to secret witnesses, while some belong to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) members. The statements reportedly

contain general evaluations and not any specific information about the arrested journalists.

One of the secret witnesses said in their statement on Sept. 18, 2018, «The relevant media organs are directing the public to hatred and grudge against the state.» Some of the statements even date back to 2013.

Militant group aligned with Turkey flexes muscles after fighting in northern Syria

Fighting between pro-Turkish armed factions in northern Syria subsided on Sunday after a deal was brokered by Ankara, residents said.

Eight people were killed in the conflict that has been raging in the last few days in the Al Bab region of Aleppo, they said.

The bloodshed indicates the fragility of an alliance of Turkish proxies that Ankara has used against US-backed Kurdish militias, its main adversary in Syria.

The conflict between the pro-Turkish factions has resulted Hayat Tahrir Al Sham (HTS) using fighters in Aleppo governorate, nearer to the border with Turkey, in support of one of the warring groups.

The powerful HTS, which is aligned with Turkey, is based in the neighbouring Idlib governorate. The group emerged after a merger of several radical groups including the Al Qaeda-linked Al Nusra Front, which has changed its name several times since it was founded a decade ago.

But sources in the opposition to President Bashar Al Assad in Istanbul and Amman said HTS fighters have started pulling back under the Turkish-supervised truce agreed on Sunday. "HTS needs Turkey and understands that it can only go so far in confronting it," an opposition source in Istanbul said.



The aftermath of a car bombing in Al Bab, a town in northern Syria held

by rebel factions supported by Turkey. AFP Northern and eastern Syria is the main battleground for an international effort by Russia, Iran, the US and Turkey to guard or extend spheres of influence they had carved out since the Syrian revolt began in 2011.

The four countries support, or are aligned with an amalgamation of militias, from Marxist-Leninist Kurdish groups to Sunni extremists and Shiite militants backed by Iran.

The fighting since last week mainly pitted Ahrar Al Sham, which is supported by HTS, against two other groups in the self-declared Syrian National Army, a coalition of rebel groups supervised by Turkey.

The militia organisation was formed from the remains of the rebel Free Syrian Army but has since built its ranks and rearmed with Turkish funding and training. It is mainly active in areas near the town of Al Bab, situated to

the north-east of the city of Aleppo which is under government control, and a strip of territory on the border with Turkey, encroaching on Hasakah governorate where there is a large Kurdish population.

Al Bab forms a frontline between the pro-Turkish groups and Kurdish militias, known as the People's Protection Units (YPG), in the town of Tel Rifaat. The YPG captured Tel Rifaat with Russian air support from anti-Assad rebels six years ago.

Many rebels in the Syrian National Army had moved to northern Syria, mainly from the centre and south of the country, in surrender deals made with the government, supervised by Russia, after it intervened in Syria in support of Assad in late 2015.

A main cause of the fighting among Turkish proxies has been competition over an illicit

trade comprising narcotics, oil and human trafficking between YPG-held regions and areas in Turkey's sphere of influence, opposition sources said.

Militant convoy

Two residents of the north said an armoured HTS column moved on Saturday from HTS strong holds in Idlib to the outskirts of Afrin in Aleppo governorate, in support of one of the fighting groups, an Islamist militia called Ahrar Al Sham.

"As soon as HTS moved in every other brigade made way," said one of the residents, who lives in Jindaris, a town near Afrin.

He said HTS fighters who took positions next to Ahrar Al Sham fortifications started returning to Idlib on Sunday.

Turkey deployed the Syrian National Army at least twice in the last four years to capture territory held by Kurdish militias in northern Syria, after tacit approval from Russia.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said this month that Turkey would launch a new military operation in Syria to extend what he describes as safe zones along the border.

Mr Erdogan, who did not give a date for the proposed incursion, does not appear to have Russian and US support this time.



REUTERS

June 20, 2022

By Suleiman Al-Khalidi

Truce ends clashes among Turkey-backed rebels in northwest Syria

AMMAN, June 19 (Reuters) - Clashes among Syrian rebel groups backed by Turkey ended on Sunday after they agreed to a truce, residents and rebel sources said, easing fears of wider internecine warfare among opponents of President Bashar al Assad's rule.

Rebel negotiators told Reuters that Turkey, which maintains thousands of troops inside northwest Syria, mediated a deal among Failaq al Sham, Levant Front, Jaish al Islam and Ahrar al Sham.

They are part of the Syrian National Army coalition of armed opposition groups backed by Turkey.

At least eight people were killed and scores injured on Saturday in fighting among the factions near al Bab city in northwest Syria's Aleppo province.

The clashes prompted Hayat



Members of Syrian National Army, known as Free Syrian Army, drive in an armored vehicle in the Turkish border town of Ceylanpinar in Sanliurfa province, Turkey, October 11, 2019. REUTERS/Murad Sezer

Tahrir al Sham, the former al Qaeda offshoot, to deploy in areas under the control of its rivals in the Syrian National Army, raising fears it sought to expand beyond the areas they control in Idlib province to the Afrin area.

Under the truce, the factions returned Ahrar al Sham's headquarters and moved back

to their prior positions. The accord

The northwest of Syria near the Turkish border is the last part of the country still in the hands of fighters seeking to topple the Syrian president, but control has been divided between jihadist factions and other rebels backed by Turkey.

Ideological differences divide Islamist militants from nationalist groups in the Free Syrian Army that have gathered under the banner of the Syrian National Army, which has the backing of Turkey.

Turkey with the help of the Syrian National Army has carried out four operations in northern Syria since 2016, seizing hundreds of kilometres of land. Rebel commanders say they have stepped up their readiness to back up any new incursion.

The armed opposition has been plagued by infighting since the uprising against Assad began in 2011. Turf wars have helped the Syrian president, with his Iranian and Russian allies, recover much of the territory previously held by rebels.

Reporting by Suleiman Al-Khalidi; Editing by Cynthia Osterman



Ayça Söylemez

June 2022, Monday

Application to ECtHR for mass grave, «Right to mourn» violated

After the application to the Constitutional Court regarding the mass grave found in Van, Çatak was rejected, attorney Turan Ece applied to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on behalf of Cevdet Tatar, whose brother was among those who lost their lives in the region.

The families' legal struggle regarding receiving the bones of their family members has been continuing since 2011. Their family members lost their lives during the clashes that broke out on the Andiçen highland of Kayaboğazı village of Van Çatak on October 22, 1998.

The decision of non-prosecution after 9 years

Several security officers and Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) members lost their lives in the armed clashes that erupted in Çatak, Van in 1998.

While the bodies of the deceased

security officers were collected from the battleground, PKK members' bodies were left there. According to official sources, 22 PKK members lost their lives in the clashes. However, the PKK announced they had 27 losses.

Cevdet Tatar's brother, Hozan Hogir, was among those PKK

members left on the battleground. Tatar's application to the Çatak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office to receive the remains of his brother was delayed for 9 years without any action, and a decision of non-prosecution was rendered on February 27, 2020.

A gendarmerie document that was signed by Kayaboğazı Gendarmerie Station Command Specialist Senior Sergeant F.Ö. was presented to the court regarding the case of a mass grave belonging to PKK members from 1998 and the document admits the killing of 22 people. Lawyer Turan Ece, in a statement to bianet, said that this document also shows that the gendarmerie forcibly disappeared people by killing them. In the case filed by families who wanted to receive the bones of their relatives, the court ruled that the bones should be handed over to the Sub-governor's Office because the families failed to pay the 40,000 lira «retainer fee.»

«Family of the deceased are punished»

In the application submitted by Ece to the ECtHR, it was underlined that the «right to mourn» was violated.

«It is a crime against humanity under the «1984 UN Convention



Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment» and «European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment» and therefore the statute of limitations will not apply.»

«It is clear that leaving and not returning the bodies of the illegally armed militants killed during these clashes, which started in 1984 and continued to intensify between 1990-2000, is a crime of torture.»

No statements were taken from soldiers or villagers

In the application, it was reminded that no effective investigation had been carried out by the courts and the prosecutor's office regarding the incident.

The application underlined that neither the statements of the 26 village guards mentioned in the crime scene report nor the statements of the soldiers who participated in the operation were taken. No effective investigation nor fair trial were conducted.

What happened?

In an armed conflict that erupted between the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Görentaş highland of Kayaboğazı village in Van's Çatak on October 12, 1998, 22 guerillas died according to official sources and 27 guerillas died according to the PKK. The bones of the guerillas were not submitted to their families.

Hearing that a mass grave was found in Çatak in July 2011, the

families applied to the Van Branch of the Human Rights Association (İHD), thinking that the bones might belong to their children.

Lawyers from the İHD applied to the Çatak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office and demanded that «the mass graves be opened by public means, DNA tests be done and the bones be submitted to the relatives.»

In its decision dated August 24, 2011, the Çatak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office concluded that «there was no ground for prosecution in the name of the public» and «the requests fell within the jurisdiction of the civil court.» The Erciş Heavy Penal Court upheld this decision.

Lawyer Turan Ece took the issue to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). In a written correspondence dated March 20, 2013, the ECtHR asked whether the case file which was closed with a decision of non-prosecution was taken to the civil court or not.

Following this ECtHR judgement, lawyer Ece applied to the Çatak Civil Court of Peace on April 26, 2013. A lawsuit was filed at the Çatak Civil Court of Peace upon this application.

(AS/TB)

ANF NEWS

22 Jun 2022

Xwedêda İlyas: Yazidi people will not give up struggle

Sinun People's Assembly Co-Chair Xwedêda İlyas said that they would not renounce their struggle, insisting that their will is much stronger than attacks.

After Shengal and its surrounding villages were liberated from ISIS and the Yazidis returned to their lands, public institutions were established, and life flourished again in the region. In March 2017, the people wanted to establish their own assembly in the town of Sinun for an auton-

omous and free Shengal. However, attacks launched by KDP's Roj militia against Sinun had postponed the opening of the assembly.

The People's Assembly was nevertheless established on November 15, 2017, with the participation of 44 delegates.

For the first time, the people of the region had an assembly to serve them. The KDP did its utmost to prevent the assembly from doing its job. The assembly served the public through its institutions and also resolved the most urgent problems of the people. Following the introduction of the as-

sembly, the people no longer needed state institutions, and governed themselves. This assembly, which defied the KDP's authority, became the target of the Turkish forces. On June 15, 2022, the invading Turkish state's drones attacked the assembly. 7 civilians were injured, and a 12-year-old boy

named Seleh was martyred.

«Our will is stronger than attacks»

Speaking to RojNews, Sinun People's Assembly Co-Chair Ilyas said, "Our will is stronger than their attacks, we will continue our activities. The forces that were supposed to protect us escaped, left our people alone in 2014, and abandoned Shengal in 2017 in the same way. It was obvious that they could no longer rule Shengal. The people governed themselves and established their own institutions and organizations, including popular assemblies. Our people have been attacked by Turkish forces for centuries and are now facing similar attacks. Not only we, the Yazidis, but the entire Kurdish people are faced with Turkish invasion attacks. They want to repeat what happened to us in 2014. Attacks are taking place at a time when our people are about to return to their lands. Unfortunately, the Iraqi government does nothing to stop



these attacks which prevent our people from returning to their lands."

«Iraq is not fulfilling its responsibilities»

Ilyas spoke about Iraq's attitude towards the Yazidi community; "Iraq does not fulfil its responsibilities towards our society. Thousands of our people were killed during the last mass slaughter against our people, which was caused by Iraq, and we were not protected. Further massacres seem to be very likely to happen. How much longer will

this situation continue? No one wants to protect us. We must protect ourselves. Our will is stronger than their tanks and artillery. Only a few have submitted their will to the enemy, and they work on behalf of the Yazidi's enemies. Political parties that do not want to contribute to our nation have been manipulating our people since the establishment of the autonomous administration. What mistake did Seleh make? How many more kids will be killed? We lost thousands of people because of them. Our people need to know their friends and enemies."

«People should return to their lands»

Ilyas also addressed the return of the Şengal people to their lands, stating, "Our people should stop migrating and return to their lands. The tents set up by others will not always host our people. The attacks will continue as long as we do not protect ourselves. Self-government and defence are linked to repatriation. Our people in South Kurdistan are also facing attacks. Our children are burning inside tents there, too. Our people should get rid of this rule and return to Shengal."

«We will not give up our struggle»

"We will not give up the struggle, for which we have suffered hundreds of martyrs," Ilyas concluded.

<https://anfenglishmobile.com/kurdistan/a-new-dirty-plan-for-shengal-60685>



By Steve Sweeney
June 22, 2022

PKK accuses Turkey of using tactical nuclear weapons in Iraqi Kurdistan

The outlandish claim was made despite Turkey not being a nuclear weapons state and not having been previously accused of having any nuclear weapons capacity. Turkey is a signatory to the Non-proliferation treaty, although President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has made past references to its right to acquire such weaponry.

No radiation spike associated with a nuclear blast has been reported.

He said members of the Kurdish resistance movement made the claim after they escaped from the Tepe Sor area close to the Iraqi-Turkish border earlier this month.

Mr Kalkan, who lives in a base deep inside Iraqi Kurdistan's Qandil mountains, said that Turkish army officials have admitted to using nuclear weapons in the 1990s.

Retired air force general Erdogan Karakus told the CNN Turk

news channel in a broadcast in March: "We [Turkey] have been using tactical nuclear weapons since the 1990s. In the Ukraine war, this weapon is also used. We also have these weapons and we use them."

According to the PKK official, the broadcast was then interrupted.

Turkey has been accused of hundreds of chemical attacks in its war and occupation of Iraqi Kurdistan which began in April 2021.

Credible evidence has been presented for the claims and the Morning Star has met with the victims of the alleged use of banned munitions as well as medics and regional political leaders.

Ankara has carried out a number of war crimes in its daily bombing of Iraqi Kurdistan which has targeted Kurdish villages, the UN-administered Makhmour refugee camp and a Yazidi hospital.

Mr Kalkan, who has a \$5 million (£4.1m) US bounty on his head, said there has been “absolute silence” over the chemical attacks from world bodies which emboldens Turkey in its dirty war on Kurds.

Speaking to the Morning Star, Kurdistan Communities Union spokesman Zagros Hiwa said that guerilla fighters had experienced “shockwaves from bomb blasts that do not resemble the blast of conventional bombs.”

“They say, ‘not only the cave, but all the earth was shaking when the bombs exploded.’”

“We felt a huge electric shock in our bodies, as if we had touched a high-voltage wire



KURDISTAN Workers Party (PKK) commander Duran Kalkan accused Turkey of using “tactical nuclear weapons” in Iraqi Kurdistan today as he said that lawyers were looking into the claims.

and felt as if our bodies were torn apart,” Mr Hiwa explained.

No concrete evidence has however been presented for the alleged use of tactical nuclear warheads.

Turkey is not included in the list of declared nuclear states, however, there are known to be at least 70 warheads stationed in Incirlik airbase in the south of the country.

They are held there under the

Nato weapons sharing agreement, which allows “non-nuclear” states to host the missiles under the guard of the nuclear power — in this case, the United States.

It is believed that Turkey controls around 40 of the weapons, although it would likely require US permission to use them as they are thought to be protected with Permissive Action Links.

Republican Peoples Party lawmaker Aytug Atici accused the government of “concealing the existence of B61 tactical nuclear bombs at Incirlik from the public” in December 2016, demanding immediate answers.

June 23, 2022

The New York Times

Johanna Lemola contributed reporting from Helsinki, Finland, and Christina Anderson from Stockholm.

Analysis: What Turkey Wants to Let Finland and Sweden Into NATO

Finnish and Swedish hopes of being accepted as applicants by next week’s NATO summit meeting have been dashed by a Turkish government that says it is in no hurry.

BRUSSELS — Spurred by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Finland and Sweden applied last month to join NATO, anticipating swift and smooth entry into the alliance. Instead they are in a bind, their path blocked by the unpredictable Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

With NATO’s annual summit beginning on June 29 in Madrid, their expectations to be greeted as fast-track applicants are quickly fading, after Mr. Erdogan backtracked on earlier promises not to put obstacles in their way. Ibrahim Kalin, Mr. Erdogan’s main foreign-policy spokesman, says there is no schedule for their acceptance, and has even talked of a delay of a year.

Finland is especially frustrated,



Finnish soldiers during NATO military exercises this month on an island in the Baltic Sea. Jonas Gratzner/Getty Images

mindful of its 830 miles of border with Russia. After the Feb. 24 invasion, Finland moved quickly to prepare its application, and Finnish diplomats, according to Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, checked with

all 30 NATO members in advance and got rapid green lights from them all. That included an assurance from Mr. Erdogan himself, Finland’s president, Sauli Niinisto, has said.

NATO was so confident that the invitation to both countries would go smoothly that it choreographed a series of events around a vote accepting the applications in May, which the alliance had to cancel when Turkey suddenly objected.

Mr. Erdogan has made numerous demands, mostly centering on nationalist issues with domestic impact, like Kurdish separatism and terrorism, and the extradition of some followers of an exiled opposition leader, Fethullah Gulen. Mr. Erdogan blames Mr. Gulen, who lives in the United States, for a failed coup attempt against him in 2016.

Turkey wants both Finland and Sweden to strengthen their antiterrorism laws; to extradite particular people, including a

number of Kurdish journalists; and to eliminate an informal embargo on arms sales to Turkey, imposed after Turkey's

"The speed, scope of this process depends on these nations' manner and speed of meeting our expectations."



President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Turkish Parliament last week in Ankara. Adem Altan/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

military intervention in northern Syria in 2019.

Finns are deeply frustrated but the government counsels patience, said Mr. Haavisto in an interview.

"The very same terrorist legislation is almost in all NATO countries," he said, and "we all condemn the P.K.K.," the Kurdistan Workers' Party, a group operating in Turkey and Iraq that the European Union and the United States have labeled a terrorist organization.

"So we feel that the pressure is also not only so much against Finland and Sweden, but against some other NATO countries on this issue," he added.

NATO countries should have similar criteria for all states, he said, "because otherwise we come to the situation where different NATO member states would put different criteria to applicants, and I would guess that would end up in chaos."

On Monday, there was the first meeting in several weeks of Swedish, Finnish and Turkish officials under the auspices of NATO, but the results were minimal. "We don't see ourselves limited by any timetable," Mr. Kalin said afterward.

Most of those demands have to do with Sweden and its [long-standing sympathy for Kurdish refugees](#) and the Kurdish desire for autonomy, which Turkey regards as a threat to its own sovereignty. While the West condemns the P.K.K., it has relied heavily on a Syrian Kurdish offshoot in the fight against the Islamic State. And Turkish Kurdish leaders long ago abandoned talk of independence to concentrate on autonomy and increased rights for Turkish Kurds.

Mr. Erdogan is facing elections next June, and his popularity is slipping along with the Turkish economy. The Kurdish issue is an important one in Turkey and he is playing on nationalist sentiment now, while suppressing political dissent and independent journalism.

In an interview on Swedish television, a former NATO official, Stephanie Babst, said that Mr. Erdogan's real agenda is domestic. "Primarily this is a message toward his electoral base at home," she said. "He has an election ahead of him. The economic situation in Turkey is pretty gruesome and so he wants to demonstrate leadership. He wants to demonstrate that he is a heard leader and so he is, I am afraid to say, using Sweden and Finland in

order to get his strategic messages across."

NATO's secretary-general, Jens Stoltenberg, has been careful publicly to say that every NATO member has the right to express its concerns, that Turkish terrorism concerns are "legitimate" and must be heard and responded to, and that he is confident that Finland and Sweden will become members, even if not by the Madrid summit.

But Mr. Haavisto, while preaching patience and a willingness to allay Turkey's concerns, also notes that Mr. Erdogan is annoying his allies at a time of war, when the security of Europe is in question.

"I have to say the pressure is mounting among the other



Swedish and Finnish soldiers during a NATO military exercise this month. Jonas Gratzner/Getty Images

E.U. members, or other NATO member states, that they would like to see this process going smoothly or rapidly," he said. "Speculation that there could be a one-year delay after the Turkish elections and others would be a big disappointment for many NATO countries as well, let alone for Finland and Sweden."

There is popular frustration among Finns, but it is aimed less at their leaders than at Turkey, said Charly Salenius-Pasternak of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs.

"There is a sense that this was

supposed to be easy and therefore there's frustration, that is definitely visible," he said. "People understand Turkey played a double game."

There is also some irritation with Sweden, where a minority Social Democratic government was slow to follow Finland's lead and is wary of offending its supporters ahead of elections in September by giving in to Turkish demands. Party members have a long history of supporting military nonalignment and underdog political movements, and many regard Mr. Erdogan as an authoritarian who tramples democratic rights.

"There was an expectation in Finland that Sweden can put aside party political issues and the coming elections for na-

tional security," Mr. Salenius-Pasternak said. "But it's quite clear that party politics is back."

Some in Finland fear that going "hand-in-hand" with Sweden will turn out to be counterproductive, he said, but Mr. Niinisto and Mr. Haavisto both reject that view, citing the long security alliance between the two countries and their importance to enhancing NATO's security in the north and the Baltic Sea.

Mr. Haavisto also notes that Sweden's Social Democrats have gone up in the opinion polls since the decision to join

Finland and apply for NATO membership.

The United States publicly backs the membership of Sweden and Finland, and Mr. Haavisto has regularly been in contact with Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, officials in the White House and key senators. Congress, too, has been

supportive, with the Senate already preparing hearings for an eventual ratification vote once the problems with Turkey are resolved.

The legislatures of all NATO countries must ratify amendments to the founding treaty to admit new members, a process that could take up to a year.

But Mr. Haavisto says Finland and Sweden have received solid assurances that individual NATO countries will come to their aid in the interim, if necessary, including the United States, France, Britain and Germany. "So we're feeling safe," he said. "Even at this moment there is no imminent risk to our security."

"In this time of waiting," he said, he recommended to friends that they read Tolstoy's "War and Peace."

"I started it and I hope that when I'm done with it," he said, Finland and Sweden will be members of NATO.

duvaR.english
Turkey's own independent press

June 22 2022
Serkan Alan

Turkish journalists on streets against 'disinformation law'

Turkish journalists and representatives of media organizations have rallied in the capital Ankara against a proposed law that is likely to further increase internet censorship in the country. The journalists called on the government to withdraw the bill and left their pens and pencils in front of Atatürk Statue in the Ulus district in a symbolic move of protest.

The legislation, introduced by the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, is expected to be discussed at the parliament's General Assembly next week.

Upon the call of several organizations including the Journalists' Union of Turkey and the Turkish Journalists' Association, media workers came together in front of Atatürk Statute in Ankara's Ulus district and called on the government to withdraw the proposed law that will tighten control on internet media.

Several lawmakers and representatives of democratic mass organizations showed their support by attending the protest during which slogans of "Free press, free society" and "Media cannot be silenced" were shouted. Journalists also



Hundreds of journalists on June 22 gathered in the capital Ankara, protesting against a proposed law that seeks up to three years in jail for those spreading so-called "disinformation" on the internet.

held banners reading "No to law of censorship," "Don't touch my social media," and "We want freedom of press and expression."

Turkish Journalists' Association chair Nazmi Bilgin said that they in fact had wanted to hold their protest in front of the par-

liament, but were banned from doing so.

"They think that by keeping us away from the parliament, our voice will not be raised...Do not think that we don't consider 'disinformation' as something important. But the way to stop this does not go through jail

term. There are articles in the [proposed] law that will keep the media silent. This law is against human rights, the freedom of communication and freedom of press," he said in a press statement.

Afterwards, journalists left their pens and pencils in front of the Atatürk Statue in a symbolic move of protest against the legislation.

Journalists leave pens and pencils in front of Atatürk Statue.

The draft legislation that seeks to criminalize the spread of what the government calls "disinformation" on internet, is moving toward a vote in the parliament. The bill was approved by the Justice Commission of the parliament last week.



22/06/2022

Sulaimani's key gas field targeted by rocket

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region - A rocket attack targeted Sulaimani province's Khor Mor gas field run by a UAE-based company on Wednesday. A Kurdish official told Rudaw that the attack has not impacted the production of gas in the field.

Sdiq Mohammed, head of Qadir Karam subdistrict in Chamchamal district, told Rudaw that the vital Khor Mor gas field, run by Dana Gas, came under a rocket attack late Wednesday afternoon, adding that the number of rockets fired towards the field is unclear.

Ahmed Mufti, Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) natural resources deputy minister, told Rudaw that the attack has not affected the operations of the field. He also denied the claims that employees have fled the field.

Sulaimani-based Counter Terrorism Group (CTG) [confirmed](#)



Khor Mor gas field in Sulaimani province's Chamchamal district. Photo: File/Dana Gas

the incident in a statement, saying "a Katyusha [rocket] was fired from unidentified place towards Khor Mor field but did not cause any casualties."

The force also said that they are investigating the incident.

Rudaw was told by a witness who did not want to be identi-

fied that at least one person has been injured in the attack but Sharif Rahim, deputy head of Chamchamal health directorate, said they had not reported any injuries.

Rudaw English reached out to the Dana Gas office in Sulaimani but they were not immediately available.

Khor Mor field produces 452 million standard cubic feet of gas per day, [according](#) to Dana Gas.

Rocket and drone attacks in the Kurdistan Region, mostly blamed on pro-Iran militia groups, have increased recently, targeting oil and gas fields, security forces and residential areas.

At least two rockets [targeted](#) Peshmerga positions in Nineveh province on Tuesday, stated the Kurdistan Region's counter-terrorism, without resulting in any casualties or material damage.

Turkey also has carried out several drone attacks, targeting the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and Iran carried out a missile attack against the residency of a Kurdish businessman in Erbil in March on the grounds that it included Israeli officials.



22/06/2022

Rockets target Peshmerga positions in Nineveh: Counter-terrorism

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region - At least two rockets targeted Peshmerga positions in Nineveh province on Tuesday, stated the Kurdistan Region's counter-terrorism, without resulting in any casualties or material damage.

The Directorate General of Counter Terrorism (CTD) said in a [statement](#) that the rockets were directed towards positions

of the Peshmerga on Nineveh's Nawaran front late Tuesday evening. One of the rockets landed in the mountainous areas of Shekhan district, and the other landed in Tiskhrab village near Bashiqa before reaching the Peshmerga position.

The rockets, believed to have been launched from the Bazwa area in the vicinity of Bashiqa,

did not result in any human casualties nor material damage, according to the statement.

There has not been any claim of responsibility as of yet.

Iraq and the Kurdistan Region have witnessed an increase in drone and missile attacks in recent months.

A drone targeted a car in Sulai-

mani's Kalar town carrying alleged members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) on Friday, killing at least four.

Turkish troops in Nineveh province frequently come under rocket attacks, with casualties rarely being inflicted. At least two rockets [targeted](#) Zilkhan military base near Bashiqa district, which houses Turkish troops, earlier this month.



22 June, 2022

Hunger-striking political prisoner taken to undisclosed location

Kurdish political prisoner *Keyvan Rashozadeh* has been transferred from solitary confinement in Orumiyeh Central Prison to an undisclosed location in the past few days.

Rashozadeh, who had gone on a dry hunger strike on 13 June by sewing his lips to protest against the opposition of prison officials to his request for temporary leave, had been transferred to solitary confinement by order of the prison authorities.

The political prisoner was denied the right to contact his family and receive visits during this period.

A dry hunger strike is when



someone refuses both food and water.

On 8 October 2019, security forces arrested Rashozadeh along with four other civilians named Omid Saeidi, Kamran Ghasemi, Nayeb (Massoud) Hajipour, and Abdolaziz Golmohammadi.

After a month of interrogation in the detention centre of the Ministry of Intelligence in Orumiyeh, these civilians were transferred to the youth ward of Orumiyeh Central Prison.

In December 2020, after a year of uncertainty in prison, Branch 2 of the Islamic Revolutionary

Court of Orumiyeh sentenced them to 10 years and one day in prison, each.

It charged the civilians with “acting against national security” through membership in the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan. The sentence was then commuted to seven years and six months imprisonment.

In December 2020, Rashozadeh, Ghassemi, and Saeidi went on a hunger strike for a week to protest against the uncertainty about their situation, the pressure of the intelligence ministry and the non-compliance of the prison authorities with the principle of segregation of crimes in the youth ward of Orumiyeh Central Prison.

Kurdistan au féminin

22/06/2022

Le Kurdistan à travers le regard féminin

TURQUIE: Les autorités turques détruisent le buste du poète kurde Cegerxwîn à Batman

TURQUIE / KURDISTAN DU NORD – L’administrateur nommé à la municipalité de Batman a fait démolir un buste du poète kurde Cegerxwîn décédé il ya 28 ans. Le HDP a dénoncé la guerre culturelle livrée aux arts, culture, musique, histoire et langue kurdes par le régime turc.

L’administrateur de la province kurde du nord de Batman a fait démolir un buste du poète et écrivain kurde Cegerxwîn. Le buste avait été érigé dans le parc « *Kine Em* » (qui sommes-nous) en 2007 par la municipalité de l’époque.

Presque toutes les municipalités et villes kurdes de Turquie sont sous le contrôle d’administrateurs nommés par l’État, tandis que les co-maires élus ont été suspendus par le ministère de l’Intérieur et la plupart d’entre eux ont été emprisonnés. Le monument au grand poète Cegerxwîn avait déjà été déplacé de son emplacement par des inconnus en 2014.

L’association HDP à Batman a protesté contre la démolition devant son siège en province. Les maires déchues Songül Korkmaz et Mehmet Demir ont pris part à la manifestation,

ainsi que des militantes du Mouvement des femmes libres (TJA) et de l’Initiative des mères de la paix. Songül Korkmaz a expliqué que l’administrateur suit une conception fasciste de l’État-nation basée sur le paradigme « *une langue, une religion, une nation* ». Le HDP, en revanche, considère le multilinguisme et la diversité culturelle comme une richesse, a-t-elle noté. Korkmaz a fait référence à de nombreuses mesures similaires dans d’autres localités kurdes et aux interdictions de concerts des groupes de musique kurdes. « *Le syndic est un régime fas-*

ciste qui veut effacer la culture, l’histoire, l’art et la langue kurdes de la mémoire sociale et faire oublier les intellectuels et pionniers kurdes », a déclaré le maire HDP déchu, exigeant la réinstallation immédiate du buste de Cegerxwîn.

Qui était Cegerxwîn ?

Le plus grand poète contemporain kurde Cigerxwîn (Cegerxwîn) est décédé le 22 octobre 1984. Cigerxwîn est connu pour être l’un des écrivains et des poètes kurdes les plus in-

fluents de la région du Kurdistan. Son travail a été renouvelé pour la création de centaines de chansons et a joué un rôle crucial dans la préservation du patrimoine culturel kurde.

Cigerxwîn, dont le nom civil est Şehmus Hasan, est né en 1903 dans le village de Hesarê (Hisar) au Kurdistan du Nord. A cette époque, le village appartenait à Mardin. Aujourd'hui, c'est une ville de Batman. En 1914, Cegerxwîn fuit avec sa famille les combats de la Première Guerre mondiale vers Dêrik dans le nord de la Syrie. On sait peu de choses sur les six premières années de sa vie, y compris son séjour à Dêrik. Il n'est pas non plus rapporté dans des ouvrages tels que l'Anthologie de la littérature kurde de Mehmed Uzun ou l'Histoire littéraire des Kurdes de Qenadê Kurdo. Ce-



pendant, les années là-bas ont dû être très formatrices pour son sens de la justice et de la liberté. Grâce à son travail d'ouvrier agricole et de berger, Cegerxwîn est rapidement entré en conflit avec les agahs

et les mollahs. Il a essayé de se débrouiller comme journaliste dépossédé dans l'agriculture, voulait étudier et manger. Mais c'était inutile. Il ne pouvait plus y gagner sa vie. De son séjour à Dêrik, Cegerxwîn lui-

même a déclaré: « Dêrik est une source de culture. Si je n'étais pas allé à Dêrik, et sans les beautés de la nature et de l'histoire de Dêrik, je pense que je ne serais jamais devenu poète. »

l'Opinion

Par Jared Malsin
The Wall Street Journal
22 juin 2022

La Turquie rechigne à vendre ses drones à l'Ukraine

Ankara, qui joue sur les deux tableaux, semble vouloir réduire ses ventes d'armes à l'Ukraine pour ne pas se mettre la Russie à dos

ANKARA, Turquie — Des mois après que des drones de fabrication turque ont été déterminants dans la défense ukrainienne contre l'invasion russe, le directeur de l'agence d'armement turque annonce que son pays doit se montrer plus prudent dans ses futures livraisons d'armes à l'Ukraine.

« Nous faisons bien plus attention », explique Ismail Demir, président de l'Agence de l'industrie de la défense turque et haut fonctionnaire du gouvernement du président Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Cette réflexion montre à quel point la Turquie joue de plus en

plus sur les deux tableaux dans le conflit qui oppose la Russie à l'Ukraine et s'éloigne de certains autres membres de l'Otan qui envoient toujours plus d'armes à Kiev dans l'espoir de paralyser l'assaut de Moscou contre l'Est du pays. Alors que les pays occidentaux œuvrent à isoler la Russie, la Turquie garde le contact avec le Kremlin, accepte les rentrées d'argent russe et a facilité deux cycles de pourparlers de paix qui n'ont débouché sur aucun accord.

Les drones turcs Bayraktar TB2 ont joué un rôle décisif dans la résistance initiale de l'Ukraine face à l'invasion

russe, en détruisant des convois militaires et en coulant des navires de guerre

« Il me semble que la Turquie est le seul pays qui puisse appeler les deux adversaires et les inviter à la table des négociations. Et comment le faire si vous envoyez des dizaines de milliers d'armes à un des deux camps ? », a exposé M. Demir lors d'une interview accordée au *Wall Street Journal*.

Les drones turcs Bayraktar TB2 ont joué un rôle décisif dans la résistance initiale de l'Ukraine face à l'invasion russe, en détruisant des convois militaires et en coulant

des navires de guerre. Les Ukrainiens ont célébré le succès de ces drones contre les forces russes, ce qui a contribué à améliorer le prestige de la Turquie aux yeux de l'Occident.

La Turquie s'est mis à vendre les drones TB2 à l'Ukraine en 2019, et en février 2022, les deux pays ont signé un accord pour une nouvelle livraison ainsi que pour un projet de production commune.

Selon un représentant américain, la Turquie a indiqué au mois de mars que de nouveaux drones allaient être disponibles. Lorsqu'on lui a

demandé si Ankara continuait de livrer des armes, notamment des TB2, à l'Ukraine, M. Demir a répondu : « Il se passe des choses en ce moment, mais je ne suis pas en position pour en parler, en tout cas nous sommes beaucoup plus prudents. »

Les représentants ukrainiens et turcs ont refusé de commenter toute éventuelle livraison de drones TB-2 à venir. Baykar, l'entreprise turque qui les fabrique, a annoncé début juin qu'elle ferait don d'un de ces drones à la Lituanie [après qu'un groupe de Lituaniens a collecté plus de 6 millions de dollars afin d'en acheter un à l'Ukraine.](#)

M. Demir affirme que la Turquie n'a pas hésité à vendre d'autres types d'équipements, notamment de protection, à l'Ukraine.

« Il faut que nous puissions parler aux deux camps, quelqu'un doit être assez proche des deux parties pour établir une relation de confiance », explique-t-il.

« Notre priorité est de nous assurer que la paix prévaudra », estime M. Demir.

M. Demir a fait ces commentaires au moment où des responsables ukrainiens ont exprimé leur inquiétude en constatant que la Turquie serait en train de passer doucement dans le camp de la Russie après des premières mesures concrètes de soutien de l'effort de guerre ukrainien dans les premiers jours de l'invasion.

Ces derniers jours, [l'Ukraine a](#)

[accusé la Turquie d'acheter à la Russie des céréales que cette dernière lui vole.](#) Kiev s'interroge : « Ankara est-elle en train de changer de camp ? », confie un haut responsable ukrainien.

« Pour la Turquie, les intérêts turcs passent avant tout le reste », estime-t-il.

Un représentant turc a affirmé que les inquiétudes selon lesquelles son pays était en train de changer de position dans le conflit étaient « sans fondement ».

« Nous sommes aux côtés de l'Ukraine, d'un point de vue politique, humanitaire et dans d'autres secteurs », a-t-il précisé.

Il a ajouté que la Turquie étudiait les informations fournies par l'Ukraine sur les céréales supposément volées. Les autorités russes ont fourni des documents montrant que la cargaison venait de Russie, complète-t-il.

Selon lui, « il est techniquement très difficile de déterminer l'origine géographique de céréales. »

M. Erdogan essaie de maintenir de bonnes relations à la fois avec l'Ukraine et avec la Russie — deux voisins de la mer Noire qui sont aussi des sources majeures de matières premières pour la Turquie. Certaines de ses actions ont tour à tour plu ou déplu aux deux camps.

« La Turquie présente de plus en plus la situation comme une compétition entre l'Occident et la Russie, et elle ne veut pas

se laisser happer. Aujourd'hui, la logique de neutralité est plus forte dans le pays qu'il y a trois ou quatre mois »

Bien que la Turquie n'ait pas imposé de sanctions économiques à la Russie, le pays a tout de même fermé l'accès à la mer Noire aux navires de guerre russes et interdit son espace aérien à certains avions militaires russes venus de Syrie, à la demande de l'Ukraine.

Au début, les responsables ukrainiens ont vu d'un bon œil le rôle de facilitateur de pourparlers du gouvernement turc et ont estimé que la Turquie était un pays plus neutre pour les négociations que la Biélorussie, un allié de la Russie qui l'a aidée à attaquer l'Ukraine.

Ces dernières semaines, [la Turquie a aussi cherché à négocier un accord qui aiderait à exporter des céréales et d'autres produits alimentaires vitaux d'Ukraine.](#) Quelque 20 millions de tonnes de céréales y sont bloquées à cause de l'invasion russe, ce qui nourrit les craintes d'une crise alimentaire mondiale.

La Turquie s'est éloignée du consensus occidental autour de la crise ukrainienne [lorsque M. Erdogan a décidé en mai dernier de bloquer la demande d'adhésion à l'Otan de la Suède et de la Finlande,](#) préoccupé, dit-il, par la présence de militants kurdes dans ces deux pays. Des négociations sont en cours entre les trois nations cette semaine pour tenter de résoudre ce différend.

M. Erdogan a longtemps entre-

tenu un curieux partenariat avec le président russe Vladimir Poutine, autorisant d'un côté l'achat d'armes russes tout en envoyant des forces turques se battre dans des guerres par procuration contre la Russie en Syrie et en Libye.

Ces dernières semaines, M. Erdogan a également appelé à de nouvelles opérations militaires contre les militants kurdes en Syrie, ce qui nécessite l'approbation russe compte tenu de la présence de soldats russes dans les zones syriennes spécifiques que M. Erdogan annonce vouloir attaquer.

La dynamique des champs de bataille a également changé en Ukraine, où la Russie gagne du terrain à l'est après un premier échec à atteindre ses objectifs initiaux.

« Au fur et à mesure qu'il devient clair qu'il n'y aura sans doute pas de victoire immédiate, ils commencent à se montrer plus prudents », explique Asli Aydintasbas, experte au Conseil européen des relations internationales.

« La Turquie présente de plus en plus la situation comme une compétition entre l'Occident et la Russie, et elle ne veut pas se laisser happer. Aujourd'hui, la logique de neutralité est plus forte dans le pays qu'il y a trois ou quatre mois », conclut-elle.

—Elvan Kivilcim a contribué à cet article

(Traduit à partir de la version originale en anglais par Béren-gère Viennot)

WSJ

The Wall Street Journal
Jared Malsin
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Turkish Defense Industry Grows Cautious Over Selling Weapons to Ukraine

Caution over weapons sales illustrates how Turkey has catered to both sides in the Russia-Ukraine war

ANKARA, Turkey—The head of Turkey's weapons-production agency said the country must be cautious about delivering more arms to Ukraine, months after Turkish-made drones played a critical role in the defense against Russia's invasion.

The comments show how Turkey is increasingly playing both sides of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, standing apart from some other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that are sending more weapons to Ukraine in the hope of stalling Moscow's ongoing assault on the country's east. While Western countries have moved to isolate Russia, Turkey has maintained an open line to Moscow, welcoming inflows of Russian money and facilitating two rounds of peace talks that ended without an agreement.

"Turkey is the only country I guess that can give a call to both parties and call them to the peace table. How can you do this if you send tens of thousands of weapons to one side?" Mr. Demir said in an interview with The Wall Street Journal.

Turkey's Bayraktar TB-2 drones were instrumental in Ukraine's initial resistance to the Russian invasion, blowing up military convoys and sinking warships. The drones' success against Russian forces was celebrated by Ukrainians and helped improve Turkey's standing in the West.



'We have to be able to talk to both sides, someone should be close enough to both parties, to build trust,' said Ismail Demir, the president of Turkey's Defense Industry Agency. Photo: Ahmed Deeb for The Wall Street Journal

Turkey initially sold the TB-2 drones to Ukraine in 2019, and the two countries signed a new agreement for delivery of more of the aircraft, along with plans to jointly produce the drones, in February 2022.

A U.S. official said Turkey indicated in March that more of the drones would be forthcoming. Asked if Turkey was continuing to supply weapons including TB-2s to Ukraine, Mr. Demir said: "There are things going on, but I'm not in a position to say, but we are much more careful."

Ukrainian and Turkish officials have declined to comment on any further deliveries of TB-2 drones. Baykar, the Turkish company that makes the drones, said earlier in June that it would donate one of the drones to Lithuania after a group of Lithuanians raised more than \$6

million to buy one for Ukraine.

Mr. Demir said Turkey had no hesitation over selling other types of equipment, such as protective gear, to Ukraine.

"We have to be able to talk to both sides, someone should be close enough to both parties, to build trust," he said.

"Our priority is to make sure that peace prevails," said Mr. Demir.

Mr. Demir's comments came as Ukrainian officials have expressed concern that Turkey is gradually shifting its position toward Russia, after initially taking concrete steps to support Ukraine's war effort in the early days of the invasion.

In recent days, Ukraine has accused Turkey of buying stolen wheat from Russia. A senior

Ukrainian official said Ukraine is asking itself: "Is Turkey switching sides?"

"Turkey's interests come first for Turkey," the senior Ukrainian official said.

A Turkish official said the concerns about the country shifting its position on the conflict were baseless.

"We stand by Ukraine in political, humanitarian and other fields," the official said.

The official also said Turkey is processing information Ukraine had provided about the allegedly stolen grain. Russian authorities supplied documents saying the cargo had originated in Russia, the official said.

"It is technically very difficult to determine the geographic origin of grain," the official said.

Mr. Erdogan has tried to maintain good relations with both Ukraine and Russia—two Black Sea neighbors that are major sources of commodities for Turkey. He has made moves that have pleased and displeased both sides.

Though Turkey didn't impose economic sanctions against Russia, the country shut off access to the Black Sea for Russian warships and closed Turkish airspace to certain Russian military flights from Syria following a request from Ukraine.

Ukrainian officials initially welcomed the Turkish government's role as a facilitator of peace talks, saying that Turkey was a more neutral site for the negotiations than their original location in Belarus, a Russian ally that aided in the assault on Ukraine.

In recent weeks, Turkey has also sought to broker a deal that would help export grain and other vital food products from Ukraine. As much as 20 million metric tons of grain has been trapped in Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasion, raising fears of a global food crisis.

Turkey broke with the Western consensus on the Ukraine crisis when Mr. Erdogan decided in May to block Sweden and Finland's application to join NATO over concerns about the presence of Kurdish militants in the two countries. The three countries are continuing negotiations to try to resolve the dispute this week.

Mr. Erdogan has long had an unusual partnership with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, authorizing purchases of Russian weapons while also sending Turkish forces to fight proxy wars against Russia in Syria and Libya.

In recent weeks, Mr. Erdogan has also called for a new military operation against Kurdish militants in Syria, an action that would likely require Russian approval because of the presence of Russian soldiers in the specific areas of Syria that Mr. Erdogan says it plans to attack.

The battlefield dynamic has also shifted in Ukraine, with Russia making gains in the east after failing to achieve its early objectives.

"As it becomes clear that there may not be an immediate victory, they're starting to become more cautious," said Asli Aydin-

tasbas, a senior policy fellow with the European Council on Foreign relations.

"Turkey increasingly characterizes this as a contest between the West and Russia and does not want to get caught in that. The logic of neutrality is stronger in the country now than three or four months ago," she said.

Elvan Kivilcim contributed to this article.

Write to Jared Malsin at jared.malsin@wsj.com



23/06/2022

Musa Anter case: Next hearing scheduled for 15 days before statute of limitations expires

The latest hearing of the case concerning the 1992 assassination of the Kurdish journalist and author Musa Anter took place yesterday (June 21).

The case was previously merged with the main case regarding the Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism (JİTEM), an organization held responsible for thousands of extrajudicial killings in the country's predominantly Kurdish regions during the conflict in the 1990s.

The Ankara 6th Heavy Penal Court adjourned the hearing until September 15. The case will drop in October due to the statute of limitations.

It was revealed at the hearing that the Security Directorate had not responded to a written request by the Ministry of Justice for information about the killing of the defendant Cemil Işık in Germany.

The Human Rights Association (İHD) and the Lawyers for

Freedom Association (ÖHD) requested to participate in the case.

"The İHD was founded in 1986. So, it existed in Turkey as of the date of the crime. Because of that, we think it was



harmed by the crime. The İHD has struggled for democracy since the day it was founded.

"Anter's passing is an event that the Kurdish people are very sad about. Not only Anter but also many people were

killed in unsolved murders and many villages were burned down in that period. So, that period of Turkey needs to be shed light on."

Alişan Şahin, a lawyer with the ÖHD, said they want to

"shoulder responsibility" against impunity by taking part in the case.

Nuray Özdoğan, a plaintiff attorney, underscored the risk that the case might be dropped.

"We repeat our statements for you to give a verdict regarding the criminal statute of limitations. [The case] was tried to be dropped due to the statute of limitations with deliberate actions," he said. "We say that the statute of limitations cannot be disputed. We expect your court to reach a conclusion by evaluating the social circumstances of this murder."

"At this point, we have been waiting for the defendants to stand trial for 30 years," he said, repeating the request for the separation of Anter's case from the JİTEM case.

"If you reject our request, the statement of Aygan [Abdülkadir, a defendant] should not be waited for. His crimes are already proven. Our demand is the immediate punishment of the defendants," he added.

Announcing its interim decision, the court rejected the two associations' demands for participating in the case because

they were «not directly affected by the crime,» in line with the prosecutor's opinion.

The court also rejected to separate the Anter case and ruled that the next hearing should take place on September 15.

About Musa Anter

Author, journalist and activist. Assassinated in the southeastern Diyarbakır city in 1992.

On September 20, 1992, Musa Anter attended the Culture-Art Festival in Diyarbakır, signed

his books. An armed attack was launched against Anter and his nephew, journalist-writer Orhan Miroğlu in Cumhuriyet Neighborhood. Anter died, Miroğlu was wounded. The attack was allegedly conducted by Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism Organization (JITEM), a controversial wing and intelligence agency of the gendarmerie.

It was during the 1937-38 Dersim Revolt that he was taken into custody for the first time. He was among the founders of Revolutionary Eastern Culture

Hearths, the Labor Party of People, Mezopotamya Cultural Center and Istanbul Kurdish Institute.

After leaving the Faculty of Law in the third year, Musa Anter started writing for Şark Postası and Dicle Kaynağı. He was imprisoned in 1959 because of his Kurdish poem «Qimil/Kırmıl» published on İleri Yurt newspaper. Anter was also faced with life imprisonment in the lawsuit known as 49s. He was arrested in 1963, sent to exile in 1967 and imprisoned after the military

coups in 1971 and 1980.

Throughout his life, Anter wrote for İleri Yurt, Dicle-Fırat, Barış Dünyası, Deng, Yön, Azadiye Welat, Yeni Ülke, Özgür Gündem, Rewşen and Tewlo. He also published seven books and one Kurdish-Turkish Dictionary.

Born in Mardin in 1920, Musa Anter completed his secondary and high school education in Adana and studied law at İstanbul University.

(HA/VK)

Le Monde

Par Ghazal Golshiri
le 23 juin 2022

En Iran, la classe moyenne malmenée par une inflation galopante

La hausse vertigineuse de produits alimentaires et l'augmentation des loyers provoquent des manifestations presque quotidiennes à Téhéran et dans le reste du pays.

Il y a quelques mois, lorsque Parvin, 40 ans – qui s'exprime sous un pseudonyme pour des raisons de sécurité – a cherché à louer un appartement à Téhéran, les prix de l'immobilier l'ont plongée dans un profond désarroi. Le marché se révélait inaccessible, même dans les quartiers très modestes du centre et du sud de la capitale iranienne. Jusqu'en 2017, l'année de son départ avec ses parents dans une autre ville d'Iran, elle y louait pourtant un appartement « décent ». Aujourd'hui, ses recherches ont échoué.

Parvin a dû accepter la proposition d'une amie, propriétaire de son logement, de s'installer chez elle à condition de payer la moitié des charges. « Sans son aide, je n'aurais jamais pu avoir un toit à Téhéran », dit cette assistante sociale, titulaire d'un master, qui touche 10 millions de tomans (300 euros) par mois.



Dans une boucherie de Téhéran, le 15 juin 2022. ATTA KENARE / AFP

Selon le Centre des statistiques iranien, l'indice d'appauvrissement, qui combine le taux de chômage et le taux d'inflation, a atteint son plus bas niveau depuis vingt-cinq ans. Fin mars, l'inflation annuelle atteignait 40,1 % (contre 36,4 % un an plus tôt) et le chômage 9,2 %, des chiffres sous-évalués selon de nombreux économistes.

Fruits, légumes, riz, produits laitiers, œufs et viande rouge ont connu une hausse vertigineuse. D'autant plus qu'en mai, le gouvernement du président ultraconservateur Ebrahim Raïssi a ordonné la suppression des subventions sur certains produits alimentaires, dont la farine, multipliant le prix du pain et des pâtes. La devise iranienne ne cesse de

plonger. Au 19 juin, 1 dollar valait 32 000 tomans, cinq fois plus qu'en 2018.

Ces derniers jours, ces taux records ont poussé certains commerçants à descendre dans les rues de Téhéran. Des protestations qui s'ajoutent aux rassemblements, presque quotidiens, dans tout le pays, d'enseignants et d'ouvriers contre la cherté de la vie.

Pression économique durable

Parvin calcule au plus près ses dépenses. « Je ne vais dans les épiceries que pour faire du lèche-vitrine, je regarde les prix et j'en sors les mains vides », dit-elle. Célibataire, elle n'a plus les moyens de prendre le taxi pour se déplacer et doit emprunter les transports en commun. Elle ne va plus au restaurant. Au travail, elle voit passer un nombre inédit de retraités venant quémander de l'aide pour pouvoir

payer continuer à payer leurs appartements. « Avant, j'avais pourtant assez d'argent pour sortir, voyager, m'occuper de moi. Plus maintenant, se désolé-t-elle. Je vis au jour le jour, sans pouvoir me projeter. »

Afin de pouvoir boucler ses fins de mois, Saïd (un pseudonyme, également), comptable dans un restaurant et producteur, avec sa femme, de fromage, a décidé de fabriquer de la bière artisanale, chez lui, pour certains amis proches. Un commerce risqué en République islamique d'Iran, où l'alcool est interdit. A ce jour, les revenus mensuels du couple atteignent au mieux 600 euros : « Pour une famille

de trois personnes comme la nôtre, ma femme, notre fils de 18 mois et moi, cela n'est pas suffisant. Depuis le mois d'avril, les prix du fromage et du lait ont doublé. Dans ce contexte, nous essayons de prendre soin de nos appareils électroménagers, précise Saïd. Si notre machine à laver venait à tomber en panne, je devrais déboursier deux mois de revenus pour la remplacer. Cela viendrait à nous changer de statut social. »

Selon Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, professeur d'économie à l'université Virginia Tech, en Virginie (Etats-Unis), « L'Iran a déjà connu des situations de forte inflation ; ce qui différencie la si-

tuation actuelle, c'est le fait que les gens pensent que cette pression économique n'est pas passagère mais qu'elle va s'installer durablement ». Pour cet expert, la nouvelle donne est d'abord liée au fait que les négociations pour raviver l'accord de 2015 sur le programme nucléaire de Téhéran s'enlisent.

Washington, qui a quitté unilatéralement le « deal » en 2018, semble réticent à retirer les gardiens de la révolution (l'armée idéologique du pays) de sa liste noire, condition exigée par Téhéran. De son côté, l'Iran accélère son programme atomique. « Si l'accord nucléaire est sauvé, l'Iran pourrait récupérer de 80 à 100 milliards de dollars [d'actifs

gelés à l'étranger en raison des sanctions]. Or, pour le moment, le gouvernement de Raïssi n'a pas eu de succès sur ce point », souligne M. Salehi-Isfahani.

Dans deux mois, Saïd devra renégocier son loyer avec le propriétaire. « L'Etat parle d'une augmentation annuelle [maximale] de 25 % pour les loyers, mais personne ne la respecte », explique-t-il. Il est fort probable que lui et sa famille seront obligés de quitter leur logement. « Notre seul espoir est que nous puissions envoyer notre fils chez son oncle, aux Etats-Unis, avant son service militaire, à 18 ans, soutient Saïd. Pour nous, il est trop tard pour migrer et vivre ailleurs. »



23/06/2022

Kurdish musicians condemn bans on their language on World Music Day

A group of Kurdish musicians from Istanbul's Mesopotamia Cultural Centre (MKM) gathered in Istanbul's lively

On World Music Day, a group of musicians from Istanbul's Mesopotamia Cultural Centre (MKM) gathered on the lively İstiklal Avenue to hold a musical protest against the recent repressive measures taken by Turkish authorities on Kurdish-language arts and music in the form of bans against concerts and plays.

The group of Kurdish musicians sang several songs in Kurdish, including legendary Aram Tigran's Zîmanê Kurdî ("Kurdish Language").

"Around the world, people make music and experience music freely," MKM artist Talat Yeşil said in a speech in Kurdish. "Unfortunately, in these lands home to at least 20 million Kurds, concerts are banned for being in Kurdish. Plays get banned for being in Kurdish."

Speaking in Turkish, Engin Cengiz, another MKM artist, said the group decided to hold a celebra-



İstiklal Avenue to hold a musical protest against the recent repressive measures on Kurdish-language arts on 21 June World Music Day.

tion on World Music Day "so music can be free, in all languages, in all societies".

"Every society's language is as good as the mother's milk for

them, it is pristine, it is beautiful. We want freedom for all languages and all music," he said.

Kurdish-language arts have been facing increasing pressure in re-

cent months, with several high profile concerts and plays facing cancellations from public and private venues throughout May.

La CJUE examine le recours du PKK contre la liste des organisations terroristes

La CJUE s'est penchée mercredi sur le recours du PKK contre son inscription sur la liste européenne des organisations terroristes en 2020 et 2021.

Une nouvelle audience a eu lieu mercredi 22 juin devant la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) à Luxembourg concernant la classification du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) comme organisation terroriste. Au total, trois procédures en lien avec le PKK sont en cours devant la CJUE. En 2018, la Cour de justice de l'UE a jugé que le mouvement de libération kurde avait été inscrit à tort sur la liste des organisations terroristes entre 2014 et 2017. Le Conseil européen a fait appel de ce jugement. Dans le même temps, le PKK a déposé un recours contre les listes de 2018 à 2020. Les deux procédures ont été jointes par le tribunal, la [première audience](#) ayant eu lieu le 31 mars.

L'audience de mercredi portait sur les listes de 2021 et 2022. La « liste terroriste » est en principe

mise à jour tous les six mois. Cependant, la motivation de l'inscription du PKK sur la liste n'a pas changé. L'avocate néerlandaise Tamara Buruma, qui représente le PKK dans la procédure, a évoqué lors de l'audience le bombardement incessant des régions kurdes par l'armée turque et souligné que le PKK n'attaquait pas les civils et réagissait de manière proportionnée. Par conséquent, a-t-elle soutenu, les actions du PKK ne peuvent être qualifiées de terroristes.

Buruma a ajouté que la plupart des arguments présentés par le Conseil de l'UE étaient relatifs à des faits remontant à plus de cinq ans et qu'ils ne pouvaient donc être invoqués dans le cadre de la mise à jour de la liste. L'avocate a contesté l'argument selon lequel le PKK aurait mené des « activités terroristes » au sein de l'UE. À cet

égard, elle a fait valoir que le PKK agissait dans le cadre légal. Par ailleurs, elle a évoqué les effets nocifs de la liste sur la diaspora kurde vivant en Europe, arguant que la classification du PKK comme organisation terroriste était utilisée comme moyen de pression contre les réfugiés kurdes et qu'elle avait un impact considérable sur la vie des Kurdes en Europe. Dans le même temps, cette liste offre une forme d'impunité aux dirigeants turcs, a-t-elle souligné.

Référence au jugement belge

En outre, la défense du PKK a expliqué que l'inscription de l'organisation sur la liste en 2001 était basée sur la position de la Grande Bretagne. Cette dernière n'étant plus membre de l'UE, la situation doit être réévaluée, a-t-elle plaidé. L'avocate néerlandaise a conclu en déclarant qu'il était probable-

ment plus difficile de retirer une organisation de la liste que de l'y inscrire. Cependant, a-t-elle fait remarquer, un [tribunal belge a récemment déclaré que le PKK n'était pas une organisation terroriste](#). Et d'appeler les juges européens à tenir compte de cette décision.

Quant à la représentation du Conseil de l'UE, elle a de nouveau énuméré les actions reprochées au PKK, la plupart des événements cités étant des attaques contre des objectifs militaires. Une attaque de drone du PKK contre un objectif militaire a également été citée pour justifier la qualification terroriste. Lors de l'audience du 31 mars, la Cour avait reproché au Conseil de l'UE de faire du « copier-coller » en produisant toujours les mêmes arguments malgré l'annulation des inscriptions précédentes.



23/06/2022

Afrin... Twenty gunmen brutally attack members of a Kurdish family in the Afrin region

As part of the continuous and systematic violations against the remaining Kurdish civilians in the Afrin region of Syrian Kurdistan, a Kurdish family was subjected to a brutal attack by Al-Sharqiya Army gunmen due to a simple dispute that occurred between the Kurdish family and a gunman seizing another Kurdish house in the village of Jenderes town.

The Human Rights Organization in Afrin said: Twenty armed men and civilians from the Al-Sharqiya Army brutally assaulted members of a Kurdish family - the citizen Aziz Hamo, 50 years old, nicknamed the Koresh family - in the Sindanke village of Jenderes town, and expelled the family from their home and took over the house.

The reason for the attack is that a gunman who took over the house next to the house of the citizen "Aziz" asked him to close the water taps to increase the flow of water to him, but the Kurdish citizen refused to do so, which prompted the gunman to gather about 20 people, who attacked him and severely beat him and his son, and then they ex-

pelled the Kurdish family, which consisted of 8 members, from the house and took possession of it completely.

For his part, a special source told ARK: The file reached the Grievances Response Committee in Afrin, and no clarification was issued by the Committee until the preparation of this news.



Akeel Abbas
Jeudi 23 juin 2022

Irak : une fois de plus, Moqtada al-Sadr met tout le système politique en émoi

La démission massive des députés sadristes pourrait bien être un pari du leader chiite pour obliger l'Iran à se plier à ses exigences. Mais pour lui comme pour l'Irak, les enjeux sont très élevés

La récente démission des parlementaires du bloc sadriste au Parlement irakien, sur ordre de leur chef politique, le leader chiite Moqtada al-Sadr, a pris tout le monde par surprise.

Ce choix de renoncer au pouvoir institutionnel conféré par une position de plus grand bloc parlementaire avec 74 sièges, à la tête d'une alliance majoritaire d'environ 182 sièges qui a encore des chances raisonnables de former le prochain gouvernement, semble au pire insensé et au mieux très risqué.

Un examen plus attentif peut révéler qu'une stratégie bien calculée suit son cours et que la surprise n'en est qu'un élément.

Le rival des sadristes, le Cadre de coordination, majoritairement pro-iranien, a reçu en guise de cadeau inattendu une quarantaine de sièges parlementaires laissés vacants par les sadristes.

Soixante-quatre nouveaux députés ont prêté serment ce 23 juin au Parlement irakien pour remplacer les élus démissionnaires du leader Moqtada al-Sadr faisant d'une coalition de partis chiites pro-Iran la force la plus importante dans l'hémicycle.

Un nombre suffisant pour diriger le processus de formation du gouvernement et entamer l'âpre lutte qui se déroule habituellement pour le partage du butin.

Les nombreux conflits internes



Des partisans de Moqtada al-Sadr assistent à la prière du vendredi sous une fresque représentant le leader chiite (à droite) à Sadr City, à l'est de Bagdad, le 17 juin 2022 (AFP)

qui minent le Cadre de coordination, oubliés lors de sa confrontation de six mois avec les sadristes, rendront très difficile la formation d'un gouvernement sans une intervention iranienne significative.

Celle-ci serait nécessaire pour discipliner le bloc politique et contraindre les sunnites et les kurdes réticents, diabolisés par les factions pour leur précédente alliance avec Sadr, à rejoindre un nouveau gouvernement d'unité nationale fragile voué à ne pas tenir longtemps sans les sadristes.

Une initiative iranienne

La prochaine action de l'Iran pourrait être décisive. La République islamique sait bien qu'un gouvernement sous domination chiite sans les sadristes lui causera des ennuis et pourrait en-

traîner un retour des manifestations de rue, à une échelle bien plus grande que celles de 2019 et 2020.

L'influence de l'Iran et de ses alliés irakiens au sein du Cadre de coordination, ouvertement contestée par les sadristes ces derniers mois, sont devenus la cible des manifestants.

L'Iran pourrait être amené à revoir sa position pour satisfaire Sadr et accepter la perte de certains alliés afin d'éviter des pertes plus importantes par la suite

La colère de l'Iran à l'encontre de Sadr après les démissions parlementaires est évidente. Les médias iraniens proches de Téhéran l'accusent d'être un « briseur d'unité ».

Selon des initiés interrogés par

Middle East Eye, les responsables politiques chiites s'attendent à une initiative iranienne pour « résoudre la crise » et contribuer à maintenir les sadristes dans la politique institutionnelle tout en les tenant éloignés de la politique de rue. Cela reviendrait à accepter la demande de Sadr, qui souhaite un gouvernement à majorité sadriste.

Selon ces initiés, l'Iran avait déjà accepté cette proposition des sadristes mais avait exigé des garanties pour se prémunir contre un démantèlement des milices pro-iraniennes et la poursuite des efforts de lutte contre la corruption qui fragilisent les acteurs du Cadre de coordination, notamment l'ancien Premier ministre Nouri al-Maliki.

Sadr a refusé de donner de telles garanties. Aujourd'hui, les sadristes ayant quitté le Parlement, l'Iran pourrait être amené à revoir sa position pour satisfaire Sadr et accepter la perte de certains alliés afin d'éviter des pertes plus importantes par la suite.

C'est là que l'importance du timing entre en jeu. Sadr a agi stratégiquement au terme de la première session parlementaire de quatre mois, avant une pause d'un mois. Bien que le président du Parlement, Mohammed al-Halbousi, ait formellement accepté les démissions des sadristes pour les rendre officielles et définitives – à la demande de Sadr lui-même –, celles-ci ne sont pas irréversibles.

Dans les voies opaques de la politique irakienne, les accords comptent plus que la lettre de la loi. Ces démissions ne seront irréversibles qu'une fois les nouveaux parlementaires – arrivés deuxièmes lors du scrutin – intronisés. Cela ne se produira pas avant le début de la nouvelle session parlementaire, le 9 juillet.

Si les intronisations sont prévues plus tard, cela laisse encore plus de temps pour conclure des accords.

L'apparence de légalité et d'irrévocabilité sur laquelle Sadr a insisté participe à la pression exercée en vue d'un accord qui réponde aux exigences des sadristes. L'Iran et le Cadre de coordination ont suffisamment de temps pour travailler sur cet accord s'ils veulent éviter d'être confrontés à un choix plus difficile plus tard.

Manque de vision

Si cet accord n'aboutit pas, le Cadre de coordination devra diriger des efforts visant à former un nouveau gouvernement d'unité nationale – une tâche qui sera cette fois-ci très difficile.

Les plus grandes faiblesses du Cadre de coordination deviendront des obstacles : l'incapacité de ses membres à travailler ensemble et le manque de vision qui l'a amené à détériorer ses relations avec des alliés ethno-sectaires potentiels, les partis kurdes et sunnites qui se sont alliés à Sadr.

Les responsables politiques du Cadre de coordination accusent régulièrement ces partis de collaborer avec Israël et de semer la discorde parmi les chiïtes.

Sa branche armée a même bombardé Erbil, la capitale régionale kurde, ainsi que des sièges de partis sunnites. La formation d'un gouvernement d'unité nationale nécessiterait la participation de ces partis.

Le processus de formation d'un gouvernement pourrait être



Les forces de sécurité irakiennes dispersent des manifestants protestant contre la politique du gouvernement en matière d'emploi, près du Parlement, dans la zone verte de Bagdad, le 7 juin 2022 (AFP)

compliqué par la notion de « tiers invalidant », liée au quorum des deux tiers requis pour élire le président de la République. Ces partis peuvent l'employer pour empêcher la formation d'un gouvernement et contraindre le Cadre de coordination à des concessions difficiles.

Cela impliquerait l'absence de 109 députés à la session parlementaire de l'élection présidentielle, un chiffre qui n'est pas difficile à atteindre. Le Cadre de coordination a fait de ce tiers handicapant un outil de chantage contre l'alliance tripartite dirigée par les sadristes.

Cet outil sera probablement utilisé contre lui cette fois-ci.

L'ultime option des sadristes, si l'Iran et le Cadre de coordination n'accèdent pas à leurs exigences, est de passer par la rue pour forcer les deux pays à accepter ce qu'ils auront refusé par le biais du Parlement.

Si les sadristes parviennent à se réconcilier avec le mouvement de protestation qu'ils ont autrefois ciblé avec une campagne de diffamation et des attaques armées qui ont tué des dizaines de manifestants, ils seront en mesure de créer une force redoutable dans la rue en

capitalisant sur la **colère croissante de la population** à l'égard de la classe politique défaillante, dirigée désormais par le Cadre de coordination.

Cette alliance potentiellement puissante, un objectif atteignable pour les sadristes, constitue le meilleur pari pour les deux camps – les manifestants de la « révolution d'octobre » et les sadristes – s'ils souhaitent déloger la classe politique actuelle.

Si le Cadre de coordination parvient à mettre en place un nouveau gouvernement, celui-ci sera probablement faible et dysfonctionnel et répétera les échecs habituels des précédents gouvernements d'unité nationale, avec des services publics médiocres, un manque d'opportunités économiques, une corruption accrue et une absence de comptes à rendre.

Sous un tel gouvernement et cette fois avec une opposition de rue organisée, il suffirait de la bonne étincelle pour déclencher des protestations et forcer le départ du nouveau gouvernement.

En fin de compte, le plus grand défi des sadristes n'est peut-être pas le Cadre de coordination, mais la maîtrise des forces

redoutables qu'ils contribuent à déclencher

Néanmoins, le plus gros problème pour les sadristes pourrait se présenter au « moment de la victoire ». La plupart des manifestants non sadristes veulent renverser l'ensemble du système politique. Pendant que l'objectif des sadristes est de se débarrasser de leurs rivaux politiques chiïtes par le biais de nouvelles élections anticipées, avec une victoire plus importante pour s'assurer un gouvernement à dominante sadriste.

En fin de compte, le plus grand défi des sadristes n'est peut-être pas le Cadre de coordination, mais la maîtrise des forces redoutables qu'ils contribuent à déclencher.

- **Akeel Abbas** est un universitaire et journaliste irakien. Il est titulaire d'un doctorat en études culturelles de l'Université Purdue.

Les opinions exprimées dans cet article n'engagent que leur auteur et ne reflètent pas nécessairement la politique éditoriale de Middle East Eye.

Traduit de l'anglais (original) par VECTranslation.

Réfugiée à Nice, Pinar Selek condamnée à perpétuité par la Turquie

Elle est sous le choc. Abasourdie. Pinar Selek, sociologue turque de 50 ans, enseignante-chercheuse à l'université Côte d'Azur, a appris mardi soir par ses avocats turcs sa condamnation à perpétuité pour un attentat qui n'en était pas un. Une peine prononcée par la cour suprême, 24 ans après une explosion, survenue sur le marché aux épices d'Istanbul, qui avait fait sept morts et 121 blessés.



Pinar Selek. (Photo Frantz Chavaroche)

Acquittée quatre fois

« Cette condamnation est politique. Elle n'a rien à voir avec le droit. J'ai été condamnée pour mes recherches. On a inventé une histoire pour criminaliser ma condamnation », réagit Pinar Selek, jointe ce mercredi par téléphone. À l'époque âgée de 27 ans, la jeune femme, féministe, écrivaine, antimilitariste, venait d'effectuer des recherches sur la communauté kurde.

Emprisonnée, torturée pour qu'elle lâche le nom de ses contacts kurdes – ce qu'elle a toujours refusé – elle avait appris en prison qu'un homme, qu'elle ne connaît pas, avait assuré avoir commis un attentat avec elle, au nom du PKK (parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan, une organisation politique armée kurde). Malgré quatre acquittements, la justice a persisté, d'appel en appel. En 2017, la cour de Cassation turque, la plus haute autorité, a

requis contre Pinar Selek la prison à perpétuité. Depuis plus de nouvelle.

« Ce jugement n'est pas seulement injuste et insensé mais des plus inhumains, dans la mesure où, dans le dossier, il y a de nombreux rapports d'expertise qui établissent qu'il s'agissait d'une explosion due à une fuite de gaz. On n'a pas pris une seule fois ma déposition sur cette question. On ne m'a pas posé une seule question sur ce sujet », détaille-t-

elle dans un communiqué rédigé avec ses avocats.

« Je lutterai jusqu'à la fin »

« Le procès avait été lancé s'appuyant uniquement sur la déposition d'Abdülmeçit O. qui avait déclaré que nous avions agi ensemble, et qui, par la suite, a renié sa déposition au tribunal car elle avait été extorquée sous la torture. Cette personne a été acquittée avec moi et son acquittement fut définitif et l'appel est demandé uniquement pour mon acquittement. Ce jugement n'a donc rien à voir avec le droit. Comme les motifs du jugement ne sont pas encore publiés, je ne peux pas commenter davantage. Je lutterai, nous lutterons contre cette injustice jusqu'à la fin. » Combative, la sociologue turque est déterminée à se battre jusqu'au bout. Elle compte saisir la cour constitutionnelle et la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme. « Je n'ai pas le choix ».

Le Point

Par Guillaume Perrier
 24/06/2022

Turquie : 24 ans de harcèlement judiciaire contre l'universitaire Pinar Selek

C'était le 9 juillet 1998, il y a quasiment un quart de siècle. Une explosion survenait au bazar égyptien d'Istanbul, un marché aux épices de l'époque ottomane prisé par les touristes, au bord de la Corne d'Or. Sept personnes furent tuées. Très vite, les autorités privilégient la piste d'un attentat à la bombe. Et le

11 juillet, Pinar Selek est arrêtée dans le cadre de l'enquête. La jeune sociologue turque, 27 ans à l'époque, fille d'un grand avocat turc, est torturée par la police au cours de sa garde à vue. Mais au cours de l'interrogatoire, l'universitaire n'est pas questionnée sur l'explosion du bazar égyptien. « J'ai été arrêtée en raison de

mes recherches académiques et on m'a demandé les noms des personnes sur lesquelles je faisais ces recherches », témoigne aujourd'hui la sociologue. La police tente de lui extorquer les noms de ses interlocuteurs. Elle n'en livre aucun.

À la fin des années 1990, Pinar

Selek travaille sur le traitement des minorités en Turquie. Militante féministe, engagée en faveur du droit des personnes transsexuelles et pour la cause des Kurdes, elle s'immerge au sein des communautés marginalisées et les bas-fonds d'Istanbul. Un « crime » dont elle subit encore les conséquences 24 ans après.

54 acquittements

« Depuis le début de cette affaire, j'ai reçu l'aide de près de 200 avocats pour ma défense. Cela a entraîné beaucoup de déplacements, cela m'a coûté très cher. Mais surtout, ils m'accusent de choses contre lesquelles j'ai lutté toute ma vie. C'est comme si on condamnait une bonne sœur pour prostitution », lâche l'enseignante, désormais rattachée à l'université de Nice. Car l'attentat du bazar égyptien était en réalité? un accident. Plusieurs rapports d'experts ont en effet abouti à la conclusion que l'explosion était due à une fuite de gaz, dans un four



Pinar Selek, sociologue a obtenu la nationalité française en 2017, ici au Festival du livre de Mouans-Sartoux, dans le sud de la France, le 6 octobre 2019. © ERIC DERVAUX / Hans Lucas / Hans Lucas via AFP'

à pizza? Malgré cela, les accusations sont maintenues jusqu'à aujourd'hui.

Mardi 21 juin, Pinar Selek a appris de la bouche de ses avocats qu'elle était de nouveau condamnée à une peine de prison à perpétuité dans ce dossier qui semble ne jamais vouloir se refermer. « On cherche visiblement à me faire taire, poursuit l'universitaire. Cette condamnation est politique. Elle est totalement éloignée de toute logique de droit. » Elle illustre en tout cas la manière dont l'appareil judiciaire turc s'est transformé en machine à réprimer les opposants.



24 juin 2022

OSDH : Trois jeunes hommes sévèrement torturés par les gardes-frontières turcs au nord de la Syrie

Mercredi soir, les forces turques ont brutalement torturé trois jeunes hommes, alors qu'ils tentaient de traverser la frontière avec la Turquie depuis la région d'Amudê, au nord-est de la Syrie, a rapporté l'Observatoire syrien des Droits de l'Homme (OSDH).

Selon l'observatoire, les gardes-frontières turcs ont arrêté et torturé les trois jeunes hommes en les frappant avec des objets tranchants sur différentes parties du corps, avant de les renvoyer en territoire syrien.

L'OSDH a noté que les gardes-frontières turcs avaient à de nombreuses reprises **torturé**, voire **tué**, des citoyens syriens qui tentaient de traverser la frontière clandestinement, fuyant les conflits en Syrie.

Selon les informations publiées par l'organisation de défense des droits humains, 12 personnes, dont trois enfants, ont été tuées et 20 autres blessées par les gardes-frontières turcs



Sentinelles turques à la frontière turco-syrienne

depuis le début de l'année 2022, dans différentes régions frontalières du nord de la Syrie.

Journalists in İstanbul express solidarity with arrested Kurdish journalists

«We won't explain that our friends are journalists, because they were arrested because they are journalists. The operation carried out with baseless claims and mise-en-scene is obvious.»

These words are from a demonstration for solidarity with the 16 journalists who were [arrested last week](#) in the predominantly Kurdish-populated province of Diyarbakır.

Journalists wanted the release of their colleagues at the event organized by the Mezopotamya Women Journalists Platform (MKGP) and the Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG).

Members of the DİSK Press Union and the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA), as well as Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) deputy Musa Piroğlu were among those who attended the demonstration.

Showing pictures of their arrested colleagues, journalists chanted slogans, «Oppression can't intimidate the press» and «Free press, free country.»

Reading out a statement, Diren Yurtsever, an editor for Mezopotamya Agency (MA), said the government is in a



crisis and intends to intimidate the entire society.

[CLICK - Turkey's ruling alliance further clamps down on press freedom as its support falls below critical threshold](#)

«The ruling power, which is trying to reinforce its power through elections and war-mongering, aims to intimidate the media that it cannot control,» she said. «For these exact reasons, on June 8, a day that will go down in history as a shame and disgrace, 20 Kurdish laborers of the free press were detained. After eight days in detention, our 16 friends were arrested unfairly and unlawfully. As if it wasn't enough, the pro-government media targeted our friends with mise-en-scenes and fiction.

«We won't explain that our friends are journalists, be-

cause they were arrested because they are journalists. The operation carried out with baseless claims and mise-en-scene is obvious. What is being targeted is not only our friends, it's not only their freedom and journalism, or journalism itself! It's much more than that!»

«Systematic arrests»

Speaking after the statement, Candan Yıldız of the DİSK Press Union said the arrests are not only the Kurds' problems, as the «censorship bill» discussed in the parliament is not only journalists' problem.

«Journalists are fighting for the right to information in Turkey's east and west. They are fighting for Berkin [Elvan], Ceylan [Önkol], human rights, to show what is not wanted to be shown. And then they face oppression and get arrested.

«Journalists in the region are faced with a systematic state policy. In the '90s, they were killed, now, they are systematically arrested. All efforts to tell the truth to the people will pay off. We stand with our Kurdish journalist friends.»

«They can't stop reporting»

HDP deputy Musa Piroğlu said, «They try to silence the Kurdish press. Sixteen journalists faced the oppression of the state because they convened the truth to the people. And this oppression was reflected in the censorship law. Just as the imprisonment of Kurdish journalists is not only the Kurds' problem, what is brought to the parliament is not only the journalists' problem.

«They are trying to silence as a whole. Those who cannot stop reporting are trying to arrest those who report. If the press is silenced, then the people are silenced and blindfolded. The struggle of the free press has never stopped. They showed us that the oppression had spread to the entire country, but we have shown since Ape Musa and the bombed newspaper that we are not defeated. You can't turn down our voice, you can't make us bow down.» (HA/VK)

24-06-2022

Jurist: international silence gives impetus to Turkey to use chemicals

A jurist considered that inaction by the UN to deter Turkey pushes it to go on in using the chemical weapons against the guerrilla fighters in Southern Kurdistan saying this amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Turkish occupation state uses chemical weapons against the guerrilla fighters in the Medya Defense Zones in Southern Kurdistan in addition to highly advanced military weapons and technologies and those internationally prohibited ones.

According to recent figures issued by the Media Office of the Peoples' Defense Forces, the HPG, Turkish occupation forces used chemicals weapons and bombings against the guerrilla fighters in the Medya Defense Zones some 779 times since it escalated the military attacks and operations since April the last.

According to the jurist Hesên Misto the Convention



Prohibiting Chemical Weapons signed in 1993 and it came into effect in 1997 to preserve the international peace and security and it stipulates all kinds of chemical weapons be prohibited and dismantled.

According to Misto the use of chemical weapons in Southern Kurdistan is a breach

of the international regulations "that these weapons are destructive and affects ecology and life".

Misto indicated that the inaction by the United Nations in deterring Turkish occupation state gives it impetus to go on with more crimes though they are dangerous, "if the reports

filed to the Executive Committee in the organization it could caution the state uses it and in case it did not respond to the warning of the Secretary General of the UN, the Security Council intervenes to refer to the article Seven of the United Nations Charter.

Misto attributes the inaction by the United Nations and the concerned international organizations relevant to the human rights to political and economic interests and to the contracting parties and the parts concerned with the conventions prohibiting use of chemical weapons.

L..A | ANHA



24-06-2022

Security forces arrest three in al-Hol security operation

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region - Security forces in northeast Syria (Rojava) launched an operation in the infamous al-Hol camp on Friday arresting several people suspected of carrying out assassinations as violence continues to surge in

the camp, a conflict monitor reported.

The notorious al-Hol camp in Rojava's Hasaka province continues to experience violence, with assassinations in the camp largely attributed to Is-

lamic State (ISIS) affiliates.

As a result of the security campaign, three suspects were arrested within the squalid camp, which has reported five deaths since the beginning of June, according to the UK-based Sy-

rian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR).

The camp has been branded a breeding ground for terrorism, with Kurdish and Iraqi authorities describing the sprawling camp as a «ticking time

bomb,» saying the situation in the camp is «very dangerous» with ISIS sleeper cells roaming the area.

Security forces frequently launch operations to arrest ISIS affiliates at the camp.

SOHR has previously blamed the deteriorating situation in the sprawling camp on the international community's unwillingness to repatriate its nationals housed in the camp over security concerns.

Iraqi nationals make up the bulk of the camp's population.



SDF keep watch in the vicinity of al-Hol camp on March 30, 2021. Photo: AFP

On Monday, an Iraqi official told Rudaw that a batch of 150 Iraqi families will be repatriated from the facility in early July, and will be held in al-Jada camp in Nineveh province.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) arrested droves of ISIS fighters and their families when they overran ISIS's last stronghold in Syria in March 2019. Many of these people were taken to al-Hol, which is now home to around 56,000 people – mostly women and children of different nationalities.



24/06/2022

Kurdistan Region remains 'first choice' for Iraqi Christians: Erbil Archbishop

ERBIL (Kurdistan 24) – The Kurdistan Region remains the “first choice” destination of Iraq's dwindling Christian population, Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda of the Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil told Kurdistan 24 on Thursday.

Warda made the remark in a discussion about the ongoing dangers faced by Iraqi Christians. He noted that the Kurdistan Region had become a haven for the minority after its population rapidly decreased in post-2003 Iraq. Many of these Christians resettled in the villages of Zakho and Duhok and Erbil's Christian-majority Ankawa district, Warda said.



Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda is pictured at Myeondong Cathedral in Seoul, South Korea, Oct. 12, 2016 (Photo: Aid to the Church in Need/Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil)

In addition to finding sanctuary in the Kurdistan Region, members of the religious community have also found job opportunities in many sectors, he said.

While there is no official tally on the current number of Christians in Iraq, it's

believed that the total number is less than 250,000.

Warda noted that the Christian community in the Kurdistan Region wants more services from the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

Decades of political instability, persecutions, and civil strife have contributed to the mass departure of the Christians from Iraq. In 2014, the bloody rise of ISIS displaced thousands from the country.

In the three-year fight against the terror group, the Kurdistan Region has hosted over a million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Kurdistan Region Prime Minister Masrour Barzani said his government spends over \$1 billion annually on services for displaced people living in the camps of the Kurdistan Region.



nadiasinitiative.org

Olivia Wells

24-06-2022

Nadia Murad Meets with German Parliament to Urge Formal Recognition of Yazidi Genocide

Recently, Nadia Murad met with the President of the German Parliament, Ms. Bärbel Bas, in Berlin to urge the parliament to officially recognize the Yazidi Genocide and support efforts to stabilize security and service provision in the Sinjar region.

Nadia delivered remarks to the petition committee and had discussions with members of parliament about the importance of officially recognizing the Yazidi Genocide. She also implored the government to shift focus to more sustainable



ways to ending the Yazidis' protracted displacement, such

as investing in their homeland. Nadia emphasized that IDP

camps provide inadequate living conditions and are destabilizing the Yazidi community.

Acknowledging atrocities also means acknowledging the responsibility to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Germany has led efforts to prosecute ISIS members for genocide and sexual violence. Formal recognition will strengthen the collective efforts to end the culture of impunity.



24-06-2022

Turkey claims death of PKK commander in operation in Sulaimani

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region - Turkey on Friday claimed the killing of a commander of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in an intelligence operation in Sulaimani province, state media reported.

Turkey's state-owned Anadolu Agency **identified** the commander as Delal Azizoglu, code-named «Raperin» while attributing her death to a National Intelligence Agency (MIT) operation in Sulaimani.

However, Ankara did not disclose further details on the date of the operation nor where in Sulaimani was it exactly conducted.

The PKK has not confirmed the commander's death.

Turkish drones have **targeted** Sulaimani province twice from May 21 to June 17, killing at least two PKK members.

The MIT **said** they had killed PKK commander Mehmet Dogan in one of the attacks, which targeted Sulaimani's Aghjalar sub district last month.

The aforementioned offense **received** condemnation by Sulaimani province's ruling Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

A Turkish drone last week **targeted** a car carrying PKK members in Garmiyan administration's town of Kalar in Sulaimani, killing the deputy chairman of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria's (AANES) executive council.

The PKK is an armed group fighting for the increased rights of Kurds in Turkey and designated a terrorist organization by Ankara.

Despite Ankara's denial, the assaults have previously led to civilian casualties who are often

caught in the crossfire in the Region.

International Crisis Group **says** that the Turkey-PKK conflict has killed at least 597 civilians and 266 «individuals of unknown affiliation» since July 2015.

Ankara has **received** widespread criticism from Baghdad, Erbil, and the international community for violating Iraq's sovereignty. Its recent operation in Duhok province, dubbed Claw-Lock, has been condemned by Iraqi officials, who labeled it as a «hostile» and «provocative» violation of the country's sovereignty.

Ankara University uses profiling files from MIT to justify post-coup purge of academics

Ankara University, where more than 100 academics were fired by government decrees in the aftermath of an abortive putsch on July 15, 2016, has been using profiling documents received from Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MIT) to justify the academic purges in court, Turkish Minute reported.

Following the failed coup, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) government carried out a massive purge of state institutions under the pretext of an anti-coup fight, summarily removing over 130,000 public servants, including more than 7,000 academics, from their jobs for alleged membership in or relationships with "terrorist organizations" by emergency decree-laws subject to neither judicial nor parliamentary scrutiny.

More than 100 academics were purged from Ankara University, the majority of whom were "Peace Academics," 1,128 academics who signed a declaration in early 2016 calling on the government to halt operations by security forces in southeastern Turkey, restore peace to the country and return to the negotiating table to restart shelved talks to find a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue.

The Kurdish issue, a term prevalent in Turkey's public discourse, refers to the demand for equal rights by the



country's Kurdish population and their struggle for recognition.

The "Peace Academics" attracted widespread criticism from the government at the time, with many of the signatories being fired, sentenced to prison or subjected to overseas travel bans.

The purged academics at Ankara University waited long years for the State of Emergency Procedures Investigation Commission (OHAL Commission), which was established in January 2017 for appeals against measures taken by the Turkish government during a two-year state of emergency declared in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt, to reinstate them, Duvar said, adding that the commission refused to do it.

According to Duvar, the academics then filed a lawsuit against their dismissal at administrative courts, and Ankara University, as part of its defense, sent those courts the profiling documents it received from MIT in 2016, which included personal information on 59 of the university's academics and other staff members, to justify the purges.

After Erkan İbiş and Abdülkadir Güreer, Ankara University's rector and vice rector at the time, respectively, wrote to MIT in 2016 requesting information about the academic and other staff, the intelligence organization sent them profiling files marked "classified" on 59 individuals, which included personal information regarding their union activities, panel discussions and other events they attended and their spouses or

children's membership in unions and political parties, Duvar said.

The documents also included some warnings, according to Duvar, one of them saying, "This information, which is of an intelligence nature, cannot be used as legal evidence."

The academics decided to launch a lawsuit against the university administration for using the profiling documents including "expressions trying to accuse them" of criminal actions as legal evidence, accusing the administration of violation of personal data protection laws.

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Quand les chants kurdes rencontrent l'opéra, avec Pervîn Chakar Salle Cortot

La soprano Pervîn Chakar, accompagnée de Juliette Journaux au piano et d'Arsen Petrosyan au duduk, propose un récital mêlant chants du Kurdistan et airs d'opéra à la Salle Cortot, organisé par l'Institut kurde de Paris.

Le concert n'est pas encore commencé mais déjà, sur la scène de la Salle Cortot, le piano attend, imposant ; il rencontrera ce soir le duduk, hautbois traditionnel essentiellement arménien et tous deux, ensemble ou à tour de rôle, accompagneront la chanteuse au fil du programme – programme qui, lui aussi, rassemble mélodies françaises, opéra et opérette, mais aussi chansons et airs traditionnels kurdes, ainsi qu'un air arménien et l'autre, assyrien. Un cocktail qui pourrait surprendre mais qui s'enchaîne particulièrement bien, par le choix des morceaux, par la douce présence du piano qui les lie aisément et la voix de la soprano qui, indifféremment, use de sa technique lyrique dans chaque pièce.

La jeune pianiste Juliette Journaux reprend donc chacun de ces morceaux en proposant un jeu doux, appliqué et précis, doté d'une appréciable fluidité et d'une agréable pétulance lors des chansons orientales, lesquelles sont justement arrangées pour son instrument et proposent de longs préambules lui laissant également la part belle. Le duduk d'Arsen Petrosyan n'est pas en reste, bien qu'il soit parfois couvert par le piano – cela n'empêche pas, toutefois, de profiter de la belle tenue du hautbois, à la



fois sobre et nuancée et ce notamment dans certains solos, comme dans la pièce du chante arménien Komitas où son souffle s'élève et embaume la

Caccini, qui lui permet de faire montre d'emblée d'une voix riche, sensuelle et puissante. C'est le timbre qui frappe d'abord, par la profusion de



salle d'une mélancolie lointaine. La rencontre entre les deux instruments n'est pas évidente au début, mais finit par s'accorder.

La soprano Pervîn Chakar apparaît sur scène vêtue d'une robe traditionnelle kurde, ici blanche et constellée de perles et pierres brillantes. Elle entame le concert par une belle adresse au public en langue kurde et s'ensuit l'*Ave Maria* de

ses couleurs, explorant une palette aux teintes automnales. Le soprano est rond, profond, d'une agréable clarté et doté de beaux aigus (quoiqu'ils oscillent, une fois ou deux, dans des hauteurs trop élevées). Le chant est également caractérisé par son aisance, remarquable dans certains chants kurdes où soudain, il surgit à pleine voix sous la forme d'une plainte, comme dans le superbe *Heyran Jaro* (« Mon

douloureux amour ») où elle chante ses souffrances et son chagrin, ou s'apaise pour entamer la mélancolique *Kelesho*.

Elle reprend, de même, *Les Chemins de l'amour* de Poulenc et *Je te veux* de Satie (un beau succès parmi le public), quoiqu'ici, la diction française soit plus difficile – ce qui n'empêche pas son émotion, qu'elle insuffle par ailleurs dans chaque pièce (quoiqu'avec, parfois, un certain surjeu). L'allemand de « *Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiß* » est quasi-impeccable en revanche et la soprano y exécute même une petite danse joyeuse, accompagnée en rythme par le public qui tape dans ses mains – et ainsi recommencera-t-il à la fin du concert, enjoint par la chanteuse à la rejoindre dans les derniers morceaux.

Le public, en effet, est particulièrement enthousiaste, mû d'autant plus par la connivence qu'il partage avec la chanteuse, laquelle s'adresse à lui à la fois en kurde et en anglais, notamment pour le remercier de sa présence ici – et il accueille en retour chaque air d'un tonnerre d'applaudissements, en particulier le triomphal « *Meine Lippen sie küssen so heiß* » – et pour finir, d'une *standing ovation*. Enfin s'achève le concert et, sans formalités, chacun peut venir discuter avec les interprètes et les féliciter.

Puis c'est le retour à la nuit – mais brillent encore, dans la pénombre, les lueurs musicales de cette soirée voyageuse.

Images de l'utilisation d'armes chimiques par l'armée turque au Kurdistan d'Irak

L'agence de presse Firat News (ANF) a diffusé des images témoignant, une fois de plus, de l'utilisation d'armes chimiques par l'armée turque dans un tunnel creusé par la guérilla kurde dans les montagnes du Sud-Kurdistan (nord de l'Irak).

Selon un communiqué publié le 14 juin par les Forces de Défense du Peuple (HPG, branche armée du PKK), la Turquie a utilisé des armes chimiques au moins 779 fois en deux mois dans les zones tenues par la guérilla, au sud du Kurdistan (nord de l'Irak). Cela fait une moyenne de 13 attaques par jour avec des agents de guerre chimique, précise le communiqué. L'utilisation d'armes chimiques contre les positions de la guérilla se poursuit. Bien que la guérilla kurde ait fourni diverses preuves et témoignages de ces crimes de guerre, aucune réaction ne se fait entendre au niveau international.

Dans la vidéo diffusée par ANF, on peut voir un combattant kurde équipé d'un masque à gaz montrer une poudre noire et blanche. « C'est un produit qui a une odeur très forte. Il attaque le système respiratoire et provoque une détresse respiratoire. Les traces sont bien visibles », explique le guérillero en montrant les murs noircis du tunnel.

On entend ensuite un message radio de la guérilla : « Ce n'est pas l'armée turque



qui nous combat aujourd'hui, ce sont les armes chimiques et la technologie de l'OTAN ». Le guérillero évoque également l'utilisation par la Turquie de systèmes radar et d'armes chimiques dans les bombardements. « Le gaz qui a pénétré dans les tunnels continue de faire son effet, dit-il, et l'on ne peut donc entrer dans le tunnel qu'avec un masque à gaz. »

Les combattantes contraintes de se couper les cheveux

« Le produit colle aux vêtements et aux cheveux. Nous avons des méthodes pour nous protéger des gaz. Cependant, les circonstances ne permettent pas de changer de vêtements tous les jours. Toutes les combattantes ont dû se couper les

cheveux », poursuit le message radio.

Continuant à parcourir le tunnel, le combattant montre un produit de couleur jaune visible sur la paroi. « Lorsque le vent souffle, la poudre se mélange à l'air et fait à nouveau effet », dit-il. Montrant ensuite une flaque de couleur jaunâtre au sol, il précise qu'elle s'est formée le jour même. « Ce produit jaune est inodore, il provoque l'engourdissement », poursuit-il.

Déclarations du PKK sur les armes chimiques

« Nous sommes confrontés à un régime qui utilise des armes chimiques à grande échelle. Mais rien n'est fait au niveau international pour mettre fin à ces crimes de guerre. Les témoignages indiquent

même l'utilisation d'armes nucléaires tactiques », a déclaré Duran Kalkan, membre du comité exécutif du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), dans une interview diffusée sur Medya Haber TV le 21 juin.

Dans un discours adressé aux guérilleros le 16 juin, le commandant des HPG Murat Karayilan, qui est également membre du comité exécutif du PKK, a averti que la Turquie intensifierait encore l'utilisation d'armes chimiques. Deux semaines auparavant, Karayilan avait déclaré dans une interview accordée à ANF : « En ce moment, les forces turques se concentrent sur les armes chimiques. Nos camarades sur le terrain ont relevé jusqu'à présent sept variétés d'agents chimiques : noir, jaune, argent, vert et inodore, brun, rouge avec une odeur de savon et blanc. Nous ne pouvons décrire ces agents que par leurs couleurs. Ils [l'armée turque] ont des dizaines de milliers de soldats, une force aérienne, des troupes terrestres, mais aucune volonté. Ils veulent obtenir des résultats en utilisant des armes chimiques. C'est ainsi que cette guerre est menée. »

In Strasbourg, deputies and associations denounce new threats against the Kurds

“Since March 25, 2021, we have had no news from Abdullah Ocalan, neither from him nor from his fellow prisoners”, explains Raziye Ostürk, the Kurdish leader’s lawyer, who came to Strasbourg to once again alert the Council of Europe and the deputies of 46 countries present for the session of the parliamentary assembly, on the deterioration of the conditions of detention of Abdullah Ocalan on the prison island of Imrali in the Sea of Marmara. This is not the first time in 23 years that he has been imprisoned there, that the leader of the PKK has been kept incommunicado. This was already the case between 2011 and 2019. Since then, his lawyers have simply been able to meet him on August 7, 2019, and Ocalan had a 4-minute telephone conversation with his family in 2020. “In 2021, we filed a request before the European Court of Human Rights to request that the isolation of Ocalan end, but no decision has been rendered since,” deplores the lawyer. She also denounces the fact that after the European Court of Human Rights condemned Turkey in 2014 for having imposed on Ocalan an irreducible life prison sentence, without the possibility of parole – the life sentence is prohibited by the European Convention on Human Rights – nothing has been done by the Council of Europe to force Turkey to reconsider its decision. “Abdullah Ocalan is in the same situation as Nelson Mandela was. His detention is a fundamental violation of human rights, and

nothing is being done to change that,” says Irish Sinn Féin MP Paul Gavan, who came with around fifteen other MPs from the Parliamentary Assembly to demonstrate before the Council of Europe for the release of the Kurdish leader. “International institutions like the Council of Europe must assume their responsibilities and ensure that decisions are implemented. Turkey is part of the Council of Europe, it is a signatory to international conventions”, adds Raziye Ostürk, recalling that beyond the case of Ocalan, it is all political prisoners whose rights are flouted in Turkey. “Turkey started not respecting the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights concerning Ocalan, but then it continued on the case of Demirtas (Selahattin Demirtas, leader of the pro-Kurdish party HDP, imprisoned since 2016, and whose release the European Court of Human Rights demands, editor’s note) and of Kavala (Osman Kavala, political prisoner sentenced to life imprisonment whose immediate release the ECHR also demands, editor’s note). Ocalan’s imprisonment has opened the door to all other political imprisonments,” said the lawyer. “Freedom for Abdullah Ocalan is not just an objective for the Kurds, it concerns everyone because it is a question of political rights, human rights and the rights of peoples,” said Adem Uzun, member of the National Congress of Kurdistan, who recalls that the various institutions of the Council of Europe such as the Committee against Torture,

the parliament, or the ECHR, have the possibility of holding Turkey to account, which is part of these institutions, and that they can go visit Ocalan in his prison. The Council of Europe’s Committee against Torture last visited Ocalan in April 2016.

Threats to Rojava

The other concern of deputies and Kurdish organizations comes from the military operations launched by the Turkish army in northern Syria and Iraq. “Since April 14, the Turkish army has entered Iraqi Kurdistan, and it is not a simple border security operation as it claims. There is a significant presence of the PKK in this region, and it is the armed forces of the PKK which are targeted, the only forces which fight for the rights of the Kurdish people”, notes Agit Polat, the spokesman of the Kurdish Democratic Council in France. For him, the Kurdish armed organization has nothing to do with a terrorist group, although it is classified as a terrorist organization by the European Union and NATO. “Turkey’s threat to northern Iraq and Syria is not just dangerous for the Kurds. Erdogan’s regime wants to eliminate the Kurds and occupy their countries to replace them with a population of radical Islamist mercenaries. This occupation completely changes the balance of this region between Christians, Armenians, Syrians, Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmens who have lived together for centuries,” explains Adem Uzun. This is why today, the PKK represents an important force on

the geopolitical chessboard of the Middle East, particularly because of the victorious struggle it led against Daesh. “Whether they like it or not, European countries will have to have relations with the PKK”, believes Agit Polat, even if he notes that for the moment, the international context favors the Erdogan regime. “Unfortunately, Turkey is a great strategic partner of all Western countries and it is a member of NATO, and a member of the Council of Europe, so often these organizations do not want to put more pressure on Turkey because that they need it. This is why our struggle is difficult, but the MEPs who come to support us like today, help us to break this unfavorable current”, explains Fayik Yagizay, the HDP representative to the European institutions in Strasbourg. Especially since with the economic crisis hitting Turkey, the wind is no longer so favorable to Erdogan today as the elections to be held in 2023 approach. “outside the borders to galvanize nationalism in Turkey and make people forget the internal situation”, analyzes Agit Polat who also regrets France’s wait-and-see attitude in the face of new threats against the Kurds. “It’s been 5 or 6 years since the Quai d’Orsay made a statement on the situation of the Kurds. It is unworthy to remain silent in the face of the abuses committed by Turkey. We need a new strategy. France does not have an inclusive vision of the Kurdish question”, denounces the spokesman of the Kurdish Democratic Council in France.



Wladimir van Wilgenburg
25-06-2022

Former Syrian Deputy PM says Russia will not allow Turkey to attack SDF

Qadri Jamil, former Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and head of the Syrian opposition's Moscow Group, told Kurdistan 24 that Russia will not allow Turkey to attack the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in northern Syria.

Jamil is originally Kurdish from Damascus and heads the Popular Will Party, which previously signed a memorandum with the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Council (SDC), the political counterpart of the SDF, in 2020.

"This is not the first time that Turkey has posed a threat to Syria," said Jamil, who also serves as the secretary of Syria's People's Will Party. "These threats are meaningless and out of order, and no attack will be made."



Qadri Jamil, former Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and head of the opposition's Moscow Group talks to Kurdistan 24 (Photo: Kurdistan 24).

"Our stance against these Turkish threats is clear: We will oppose any attempt to occupy Syria. Russia's position is also positive, and they are working politically to stop attacks," he told Kurdistan 24's Khoshawi Muhammad.

"No new operation will be carried out because Russia will not allow it and wants to solve

it through a political solution."

Since late May, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly threatened to launch a new operation against the SDF in the cities of Manbij and Tal Rifaat to dislodge the Kurdish-led forces there.

In the past, Turkey has carried out three military operations to

prevent territorial expansion by Kurdish-led forces.

However, such an operation might not be possible without a Russian or US green light. Both of these countries have publicly opposed a new Turkish operation.

Moreover, Iran has voiced public objections to such a new operation. Damascus has also publicly voiced opposition to any Turkish incursion.

Special Russian Presidential Representative for Syria Alexander Lavrentyev told reporters on June 16 that they "call on our Turkish partners and are urging them to refrain from such military actions on Syrian soil."

Additional reporting by Khoshawi Muhammad

Kurdistan au féminin

25/06/2022

La Méditerranée à travers le regard français

Le Rojava commémore les victimes du massacre de Kobanê commis par DAECH le 25 juin 2015

ROJAVA – KOBANÊ – Le 25 juin 2015, des terroristes de l'État islamique massacraient 253 civils et combattants kurdes dans le village de Berxbotan et dans le centre-ville de Kobanê pour se venger de la défaite que les forces kurdes leur ont infligée.

Chaque année, le 25 juin, les habitants de Kobanê et de tout le Rojava rendent hommage aux 253 victimes innocents

tués par des terroristes islamistes il y a 7 ans.

Ce jour du 25 juin 2015, des mercenaires du groupe terroriste l'État islamique (DAECH / ISIS) portant les uniformes des YPG sont entrés dans les maisons et ont massacrés sauvagement les civils, dont des enfants, des vieillards et des femmes. Le massacre a eu lieu cinq mois seulement après la libération de Kobanê, en jan-

vier 2015. Une grande victoire remportée par les YPG et YPJ qui avait marqué le début de la fin de l'État islamique. Le massacre a eu lieu 10 jours après la libération de Girê Spî.

Lors d'une déclaration du Conseil exécutif du canton de Kobanê le 21 juillet 2015, la commission d'enquête a révélé que 253 civils avaient perdu la vie dans le massacre, dont 27 civils du village de Barkh

Batan, en plus des 273 blessés par les balles des mercenaires.

Pour leur part, les forces kurdes ont annoncé que 30 combattants des Forces de sécurité intérieure et des YPG/YPJ sont tombés lors des opérations de nettoyage de la ville et de la campagne par les mercenaires, qui ont duré 3 jours consécutifs.



kurdistanhumanrights.org

25/06/2022

Kurdish woman taken back to prison without proper treatment

A Kurdish woman prisoner named **Saada Khedirzadeh** was returned to Orumiyeh prison on 22 June before her treatment was completed after she gave birth by caesarean section.

The hospital medical staff reportedly reacted to the prison officers when they tied Khedirzadeh's hands and feet to the hospital bed at the instruction of prison authorities.

The officers were forced to remove the handcuffs and fetters after the objections.

Khedirzadeh, who has been detained for eight months, is held in a non-hygienic environment in the women's ward of



Orumiyeh Central Prison during her pregnancy.

She was also denied specialised medical care due to the

opposition of the intelligence ministry and prison officials.

The civilian went on a hunger strike for 11 days this month to protest against the continuation of her uncertain situation in prison.

She had ended her hunger strike due to the promise of the prison authorities to release her on bail, but so far, for unknown reasons, the Mahabad court has refused her temporary release.

Khedirzadeh suffers from kidney, heart, and lumbar disc diseases at the same time.

Security forces arrested Khedirzadeh in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan province, on 14 Oc-

tober 2021. She was transferred to a security detention centre in Orumiyeh.

After 12 days of interrogation, she was transferred to Orumiyeh Central Prison. She is currently being held in the women's ward of the prison.

Amnesty International issued a statement stating that Khedirzadeh had not been allowed access to a lawyer since her arrest.

Amnesty said: "Her detention is contrary to the standards of a fair trial and is considered arbitrary under international law because she has been detained for a long time without knowing the reasons for her detention and has been denied access to a lawyer."

ANF NEWS

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26/06/2022

Yazidi Justice Committee to present report on the genocide by ISIS

The **Yazidi Justice Committee (YJC)**, founded in early 2020, has been investigating since March 2020 allegations of genocide committed against the Yazidis from early 2013 by the armed group, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) and the Republic of Iraq (Iraq).

The Yazidi Justice Committee (YJC) was formed in early 2020 as an *ad hoc* body of the following organisations: Accountability Unit; Women for Justice; International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI); Bar Human

Rights Committee of England and Wales; and Geoffrey Nice Foundation.

YJC's primary objective was to determine whether the alleged violations of international law relating to genocide can be brought before a court of law in order that States who may be legally responsible for the commission of, or failure to prevent, the possible genocide of the Yazidis, are held accountable in addition to individual perpetrators.

In fulfilling its objective, YJC has been assessing evidence of whether any States have

failed to comply with their obligations under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) with respect to the alleged genocide of the Yazidis in Iraq and Syria. This evidence relates to a number of States Parties to the Genocide Convention who do not maintain any 'reservations' to the Convention.

It is YJC's view that for the Genocide Convention to have any meaning at all, holding States legally accountable for their failure to uphold their obligations is the only way to en-

force the obligations to prevent and punish genocide under Article I of the Genocide Convention.

On 6 July 2022, YJC will publish the findings and conclusions of its two-year long investigation in a report entitled "State Responsibility and the Genocide of the Yazidis". The Report will be published at a side event to the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion and Belief hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office between 5-6 July in London.

In the forthcoming Report, YJC based its findings on publicly available reports, findings and decisions extensively documented by independent investigative efforts conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and corroborated by reputable international human rights organisations and other credible sources. The Report utilises all publicly available evidence to substantiate its analysis, identifying relevant methodology behind the evidence sources, to make factual and legal findings. The Report's preliminary findings are likely to be further, and possibly significantly, substantiated by large repositories of evidence held privately and confidentially by States and international organisations such as organs of the United Nations.

The YJC's Research Committee have been meticulously assessing whether the crimes com-



mitted against the Yazidis, predominantly by ISIS, could constitute genocide and if so, whether certain States are or were, on the facts, responsible for failing to discharge their obligations under the Genocide Convention

to prohibit, prevent and prosecute the crime.

The publication of the Report will take place at 14:00-16:00 UK in the House of Lords and a live stream (Zoom) will be

available. The launch of the Report is co-sponsored by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Prevention of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity and the APPG on the Yazidis.

Kurdistan au féminin

Le Kurdistan à travers le regard féminin

kurdistan-au-feminin.fr

26/06/2022

Manifestation kurde à Düsseldorf contre la guerre turque et ses armes chimiques au Kurdistan

DUSSELDORF – Le samedi 25 juin, une manifestation monstre a réuni des milliers de Kurdes venus de toute l'Europe à Düsseldorf contre la guerre turque menée au Kurdistan et les armes chimiques.

Des milliers de manifestants sont descendus samedi dans les rues de Düsseldorf pour envoyer un message contre la politique de guerre de la Turquie au Kurdistan. Le comité d'organisation comptait environ 20 000 personnes qui ont participé à la manifestation organisée par l'initiative « *Défendre le Kurdistan* ». L'arrière-plan de la manifestation kurde organisée sous le slogan « *Contre l'occupation turque et l'utilisation d'armes chimiques* » est l'invasion par

la Turquie de la région du Kurdistan d'Irak (Kurdistan du Sud), qui se poursuit depuis le 17 avril. Selon les guérillas, des armes chimiques interdites par le droit international sont régulièrement utilisées. Les attaques d'artillerie et de drones de l'armée turque contre le Rojava et la région yézidie de Shengal, au cours desquelles de nombreuses personnes ont été blessées ou tuées ces dernières semaines, ont également été au centre des préoccupations.

Sever : Probablement aussi des armes allemandes dans la guerre contre le Kurdistan

Les participants à la manifestation sont venus de toute l'Allemagne et d'autres pays

européens. Après un rassemblement d'ouverture bruyant et militant, les manifestants ont défilé depuis Elisabethstraße dans les rues du centre-ville sous une mer colorée de drapeaux et de bannières. Au lieu de destination de la manifestation, le parc du Rhin du Nord près du pont Theodor Heuss, un programme scénique avec des concerts et des discours politiques attendait. Les coprésidents de l'organisation faitière allemande des associations kurdes, KONMED, ont lancé le programme. Zübeyde Zümrüt a salué la foule avec ces mots : « *Le Zap est en résistance, Abdullah Öcalan est en résistance. Nous sommes aujourd'hui à Düsseldorf pour saluer ces luttes légitimes.* »

Se référant aux exportations d'armes allemandes vers la Turquie, Engin Sever a déclaré : « *Il est considéré comme probable que les armes produites en République fédérale d'Allemagne soient à nouveau utilisées dans la guerre d'agression contre le Kurdistan du Sud. La société kurde n'accepte pas le partenariat de guerre germano-turc. Notre position est claire : mettre fin à la guerre au Kurdistan, la paix maintenant et la liberté pour Abdullah Öcalan.* »

Le médecin Wilk met en garde contre les conséquences d'une nouvelle guerre d'agression contre le Rojava

Yüksel Koç de l'organisation para-

pluie européenne kurde KCDK-E a qualifié la manifestation de « *réponse correcte* » à l'Organisation pour l'interdiction des armes chimiques (OIAC) et à l'OTAN, qui maintiennent constamment leur silence malgré les preuves de crimes de guerre commis par la Turquie au Kurdistan du Sud. Le Dr Michael Wilk, un médecin de Wiesbaden qui s'est rendu à plusieurs reprises au Rojava pour apporter une aide humanitaire, était également à Düsseldorf. Wilk a mis en garde de toute urgence contre les conséquences d'une nouvelle guerre d'agression turque dans le nord de la Syrie et a évoqué les terribles événements que la population locale a déjà vécus lors des guerres d'agression passées de la Turquie et de ses partenaires islamistes dans la région. « *Alors que les médias et l'attention du public se concentrent sur la guerre en Ukraine, les drones turcs mènent des attaques quotidiennes sur le Rojava, le Shengal et le nord de l'Irak* », a déclaré le Dr Wilk.

Syndicaliste britannique : Liberté pour Öcalan !

Le directeur international et de



la recherche du syndicat anglo-irlandais Unite the Union, Simon Dubbins, a également pris part à la manifestation. S'exprimant lors du rassemblement de clôture, il a exprimé « *l'entière solidarité* » avec le peuple kurde au nom de l'ensemble du syndicat. « *Dans les années 90, nous nous sommes positionnés aux côtés de nos amis d'Afrique du Sud. Aujourd'hui, le peuple kurde nous montre l'endroit où nous battre.* » À la fin, Dubbins a appelé à « *Liberté pour Abdullah Öcalan!* ». Le syndicat britannique the Union, qui est l'un des plus grands syndicats du Royaume-Uni avec 1,5 million de membres, mène égale-

ment la campagne la liberté pour Abdullah Öcalan.

YJK-E : retirer immédiatement le soutien politique de la Turquie

Parmi les autres orateurs figurait Ayten Kaplan, porte-parole de l'Association des femmes kurdes d'Allemagne (YJK-E). Kaplan a appelé la communauté internationale à « *retirer immédiatement son soutien politique* » au gouvernement turc parce qu'Ankara veut commettre un génocide. Kaplan a décrit l'agression turque contre les Kurdes comme un « *symbole de la peur des occupants du Kurdistan* ». Kaplan

a également critiqué le gouvernement allemand, en particulier la « *criminalisation de presque toutes les activités kurdes* » en Allemagne. « *Pourtant, la société kurde ne veut que la paix, la liberté et la démocratie* », a déclaré Kaplan.

Mizgin Çiftçi : Les droits humains ne sont pas négociables

Mizgin Çiftçi, un politicien local du parti DIE LINKE en Basse-Saxe, a également critiqué le gouvernement fédéral pour sa tolérance envers les actions illégales du gouvernement AKP à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la Turquie. Qu'il s'agisse des guerres d'agression contre le Kurdistan du Sud et le Rojava, de l'utilisation d'armes chimiques contre la guérilla et la population ou du retrait de la Convention d'Istanbul, les droits humains ne sont pas négociables, a déclaré Çiftçi.

La musique était assurée par des musiciens et des groupes du mouvement culturel kurde TEV-ÇAND. ANF



Frédéric Encel
26/06/2022

Russie, Chine, Turquie : trois puissances animées par le même révisionnisme

Si certains Etats revendiquent toujours certains territoires perdus au gré de l'Histoire, aucun ne montre toutefois l'irréductible du Kremlin.

Quel point commun y a-t-il entre la guerre russe en Ukraine, les pressions chinoises à Taïwan et dans les archipels de mer de Chine méridionale, et les provocations turques dans les eaux territoriales grecques et chypriotes ? Le révisionnisme. En géopolitique, une puissance révisionniste (terme à ne pas confondre avec le né-

gationnisme) cherche à réviser des traités et des accords internationaux qu'elle se représente comme iniques et lui ayant été préjudiciables, notamment sur le plan frontalier.

A l'heure actuelle, l'expression la plus violente de ce révisionnisme provient évidemment de Moscou. Pour Vladimir Poutine et les nationalistes russes, le

grand désastre remonte à la chute de l'Union soviétique - voire, pour les plus dogmatiques, à celui du dernier empire tsariste en 1917 -, le président russe ayant toujours affirmé qu'il s'était agi de « la plus grande catastrophe géopolitique du XXe siècle ». De fait, la déclaration d'indépendance unilatérale des pays baltes et des trois républiques

transcaucasiennes dès 1991, puis l'accession à la souveraineté, dans le cadre concerté de la Communauté des Etats indépendants, des Républiques d'Asie centrale ou de la Moldavie, a disloqué l'empire, mais c'est bien l'indépendance de la Biélorussie, et surtout de... l'Ukraine, qui allait exaspérer le nationalisme russe. Car à ses yeux, cet immense

espace (pourtant déjà indépendant de 1917 à 1922) incarne le berceau non seulement de la Russie originelle, mais aussi de sa religion nationale, l'orthodoxie. En dépit de sa reconnaissance officielle par la Russie d'Eltsine en 1991, son successeur en niera la légitimité et l'authenticité avant de lancer ses troupes la «libérer» de la décadence occidentale et du «nazisme», voilà quatre mois. Ce révisionnisme russe s'était déjà illustré en 2008 en Géorgie avec l'arrachement de l'Abkhazie et de l'Ossétie du Sud et le soutien à des régimes inféodés (avant annexion prochaine ?) en Biélorussie et en Transnistrie (Moldavie orientale). Reste à savoir jusqu'où il est prêt à aller dans cette révision du passé...

Dans les trois cas, un certain prosaïsme

Pour la Chine, le siècle dit «de l'humiliation», qui couvre la période allant de la première guerre de l'opium de 1835 aux ultimes menées occidentales des années 1940, constitue l'un des thèmes revanchistes majeurs du pouvoir communiste depuis la proclamation de



Le président chinois Xi Jinping (d) reçoit son homologue russe Vladimir Poutine à Pékin, le 4 février 2022. [afp.com/Alexei Druzhinin](https://www.afp.com/Alexei-Druzhinin)

la République populaire en 1949 par Mao Zedong aux discours récents de Xi Jinping. Ce siècle aura correspondu aux traités inégaux. De 1841 à la Première Guerre mondiale, Londres, Paris, Berlin, Washington et Tokyo imposent sous menace militaire à la dynastie mandchoue des Qing déclinante des concessions et autres conditions commerciales très défavorables. Or, si les stigmates de ces traités ont disparu, il n'en est rien s'agissant de celui d'Aïgoun signé en 1858 avec la Russie tsariste, lequel prive la Chine de vastes zones de Mandchourie

et de Sibérie orientale situées à l'est du fleuve Amour, et d'une immense façade maritime. Naturellement, au regard de la puissance russe, Pékin ne revendique officiellement pas ces territoires, mais, au nom du rejet de ces humiliations passées, le régime mène une politique impérialiste du Cachemire aux archipels Spratley et Paracel en passant par l'archipel nippon des Senkaku (ou Diaoyu), et, naturellement, Taïwan.

Quant au pouvoir islamo-nationaliste d'Erdogan, il voue aux gémonies le traité de Lau-

sanne de 1924 qui, s'il marqua la reconnaissance par les puissances occidentales de la pleine souveraineté turque, laissa sous souveraineté grecque l'essentiel des zones insulaires et archipélagiques des façades méditerranéennes du nouvel Etat.

Dans les trois cas, on notera qu'un certain prosaïsme accompagne la quête identitaire respective des trois régimes. D'une part, ceux-ci revendiquent un retour frontalier à des temps fort différents (les Tsars, l'empire des Qing, Atatürk) ; d'autre part les zones convoitées s'avèrent fort bien pourvues en ressources naturelles (blé, pétrole, gaz). Bien sûr, d'autres Etats entretiennent une mémoire douloureuse liée à des pertes territoriales actées ; la Bolivie n'a jamais digéré son éviction de la côte Pacifique au profit du Chili, l'Argentine revendique les Falkland (las Malvinas), la Syrie a longtemps souhaité récupérer le sandjak d'Alexandrette des mains de la Turquie. Mais ces aspirations ne prennent plus la forme d'un irrédentisme assumé. Tandis qu'en Ukraine, il tue chaque jour abondamment...



REUTERS

June 26, 2022

Turkish police prevent Istanbul Pride from going ahead

Turkish police blocked hundreds of people from gathering for Istanbul's annual Pride parade on Sunday and detained dozens after local authorities banned the march from going ahead again this year.

Thousands of people used to attend Pride marches on Istanbul's main Istiklal Avenue but in recent years the

government led by President Tayyip Erdogan and his Islamist-rooted AK Party has toughened its stance on LGBTQ+ freedom.

Homosexuality is not a crime in Turkey, but hostility to it is widespread and the police crackdown on the parades have been increasingly tougher over the years.

On Sunday, police in riot gear prevented access to Taksim Square and blockaded many streets in the nearby Cihangir neighbourhood, where people tried to convene. Public transportation in the area was also shut down.

Local authorities in the Beyoglu district banned all Pride Week events between June 20-26, saying they could

lead to public unrest due to society's sensitivities.

The Istanbul Bar Association said peaceful demonstrations cannot be banned.

Small groups of people carrying rainbow and transgender flags gathered briefly where they could on Sunday and chanted slogans before police dispersed and

chased them through the streets, forcibly detaining some.

«Discrimination is a crime, the rainbow is not,» one group chanted, while some others read statements to mark Pride week.

Last year Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly labeled some university students «LGBT deviants», while Erdogan praised his party's youth wing for not being «LGBT youth».

Student from the Middle East Technical University in Ankara



Police officers detain activists to prevent them from marching in a pride parade, which was banned by local authorities, in central Istanbul, Turkey June 26, 2022. REUTERS/Umit Bektas

were prosecuted for attending Pride marches in universities but were acquitted.

A trial against Istanbul's Bogazici University students over an image that combined Islamic imagery and rainbow flags displayed during an art exhibition on campus is ongoing.

Reporting by Umit Bektas, Bulent Usta and Ali Kucukgocmen, Editing by Raissa Kasolowsk



27/06/2022

par Robin Emmott et Humeyra Pamuk
Reuters

L'OTAN veut convaincre la Turquie sur la Suède et la Finlande

Les dirigeants de l'Otan, réunis pendant trois jours en sommet à Madrid à compter de mardi, vont exhorter le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan à lever son veto aux candidatures de la Suède et de la Finlande, sur fond de volonté des Occidentaux de montrer à la Russie et à la Chine leur détermination.

A lors que l'offensive de la Russie en Ukraine est entrée dans son cinquième mois, le sommet intervient à un moment crucial pour l'Alliance transatlantique, après les errements du retrait d'Afghanistan et les discordes internes durant le mandat de l'ancien président américain Donald Trump, qui a menacé de retirer les Etats-Unis de l'Otan.

Si les négociations au sein d'une organisation souvent minée par les tensions se poursuivent, ont indiqué des diplomates, les dirigeants espèrent aussi convenir de fournir à

l'Ukraine une aide militaire supplémentaire, d'accroître les dépenses communes en matière de défense, de lutter avec davantage de fermeté contre l'émergence militaire de la Chine et de placer davantage de soldats en état d'alerte pour protéger les pays baltes.

L'Espagne, pays hôte, veut par ailleurs que l'Otan ne se détourne pas de son flanc méridional, afin de faire face aux flux migratoires dans la région et aux groupes armés qui sévissent au Sahel.

«Nous allons faire davantage pour nous assurer que nous

pouvons défendre chaque centimètre du territoire des alliés, à tout moment et contre toute menace», a déclaré le secrétaire général de l'Otan, Jens Stoltenberg, lors d'un discours la semaine dernière.

Bien que des représentants britanniques et américains ont affiché leur opposition à la demande des pays baltes d'avoir des troupes de l'Alliance déployées de manière permanente dans la région, il est attendu qu'un compromis soit trouvé lors du sommet sur la promesse de l'envoi de renforts rapides.

SCEPTICISME SUR UN ACCORD À MADRID AVEC ANKARA

Alors que l'Otan n'a aucune obligation à défendre l'Ukraine, qui n'en est pas membre, l'offensive lancée par la Russie le 24 février a provoqué un virage géopolitique, des pays jadis neutres comme la Finlande et la Suède cherchant désormais à intégrer l'Alliance, tandis que l'Ukraine a formellement obtenu le statut de candidat à l'Union européenne.

Le possible élargissement de l'Otan est un scénario que le président russe Vladimir Poutine veut éviter.

«Cela envoie un message important à Poutine. Et cela renforcerait, je pense, l'Alliance de manière significative», a déclaré le sénateur américain Angus King en référence à la Finlande et la Suède à l'issue d'un voyage en Finlande, Lettonie et Turquie.

Toutefois, l'unité de l'Alliance est mise à l'épreuve par la Turquie, qui reproche à la Finlande et à la Suède leur soutien à des groupes kurdes

qu'Ankara considère comme des terroristes.

Un représentant du gouvernement turc impliqué dans les négociations entre la Turquie, la Finlande et la Suède a déclaré à Reuters, de même que Jens Stoltenberg, qu'il serait difficile de parvenir à un accord lors du sommet de Madrid, fixant comme condition préalable que Stockholm et Helsinki répondent aux préoccupations d'Ankara.

Deux diplomates de haut rang de l'Otan disent voir dans cette querelle des motivations politiques. La ligne adoptée par Recep Tayyip Erdogan s'avère populaire en Turquie, en amont de l'élection présidentielle de juin 2023, alors qu'il cherche à mettre en question les priorités des Etats-Unis et des Européens.

Il est possible que le président américain Joe Biden s'entretienne avec son homologue

turc en marge du sommet afin de réclamer à Recep Tayyip Erdogan davantage d'avancées avec la Suède et la Finlande, dont les dirigeants seront aussi présents à Madrid.

(Reportage Robin Emmott et Humeyra Pamuk, avec Sabine Siebold, Andrea Shalal et Belen Carreno à Madrid, Jonathan Spicer et Orhan Coskun à Ankara; version française Jean Terzian)

TurkishMinute
Your way of understanding Turkey

27/06/2022

Turkish police raid homes of members of pro-Kurdish HDP, detain 36 on terror charges

Turkish police raided the homes of members and officials of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and the headquarters of an art association on Monday, detaining 36 on terrorism charges, local media reported.

According to the Mezopotamya news agency, the Adana Chief Public Prosecutor's Office issued detention warrants for 38 people.

Interior Minister Süleyman Soyulu said 36 people were detained in the operation against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

In a statement on social media, Soyulu said, "In the operation carried out in Adana under the coordination of the chief public prosecutor's office and the police, 36 out of 38 people are in custody."

Police raided the Binevş Culture and Art Association headquarters and locations in Adana, Mersin and Diyarbakir.



Among those detained on Monday were HDP Adana Provincial Co-Chairs Helin Kaya and Mehmet Karakış and Seyhan Municipality Deputy Mayor Funda Buyruk.

Residents of the homes that were raided spoke to Mezopotamya and said the police broke down the doors despite their pleas not to, and some claimed they were beaten and strip-searched during the raids.

"In the early morning hours, many of our colleagues, including our provincial co-chairs Mehmet Karakış and Helin

Kaya, were detained. We will not surrender, we will not give up," the HDP Adana office tweeted.

The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), together with its ally, the far-right Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), have long portrayed the HDP as the political front of the outlawed PKK, which is designated as a terrorist group by Turkey, the EU and the US, and has been waging an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984 that has claimed tens of thousands of lives. The party denies links to the

PKK and says it is working to achieve a peaceful solution to Turkey's Kurdish issue and is only coming under attack because of its strong opposition to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's 19-year rule.

The political and legal assault on the HDP, which intensified after a truce between Kurdish militants and the AKP government broke down in 2015, grew even stronger after Erdoğan survived a coup attempt in July 2016 that was followed by a sweeping political crackdown.

The party currently faces a closure case on charges of "attempting to destroy the indivisibility between the state and the people."

Hundreds of HDP politicians, including the party's former co-chairs, are behind bars on terrorism charges, while most of the 65 HDP mayors elected in the predominantly Kurdish Southeast in 2019 have been replaced by government-appointed trustees.

OTAN : la Turquie donne son accord à l'intégration de la Finlande et de la Suède dans l'Alliance atlantique

La Turquie a notamment obtenu la « pleine coopération » des deux pays dans la lutte contre le PKK. Les pays de l'OTAN vont pouvoir « inviter » officiellement les deux pays nordiques à rejoindre l'Alliance, a annoncé son secrétaire général.

La Turquie a obtenu les gages qu'elle demandait. Obstacle depuis la mi-mai à l'entrée de la Suède et de la Finlande dans l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique nord (OTAN), Ankara a fini par lever son veto mardi 28 juin, ont annoncé l'Alliance et les trois pays.

« Je suis ravi d'annoncer que nous avons un accord qui ouvre la voie à l'entrée de la Finlande et de la Suède dans l'OTAN » et qui répond aux « inquiétudes de la Turquie sur les exportations d'armes et sur la lutte contre le terrorisme », a déclaré le secrétaire général de l'Alliance atlantique, Jens Stoltenberg. Les pays de l'OTAN vont pouvoir « inviter » officiellement mercredi ces deux pays nordiques à rejoindre l'Alliance, a-t-il ajouté.

L'entrée formelle des deux pays, qui doit être ratifiée par les parlements des 30 Etats membres de l'Alliance, est un long processus qui prend des mois.

Cet accord, confirmé en premier lieu par la présidence finlandaise, a été obtenu après plusieurs heures de discussions entre le président turc, Recep Tayyip

Erdogan, son homologue finlandais, Sauli Niinistö, et la première ministre suédoise, Magdalena Andersson. M. Stoltenberg était présent en tant que médiateur.

La Turquie a « obtenu ce qu'elle voulait »

La Turquie bloquait l'adhésion de la Suède et de la Finlande car elle les accusait d'abriter des militants du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), qu'elle considère comme « terroriste ». Elle dénonçait également la présence dans ces pays de partisans du prédicateur Fethullah Gülen, soupçonné d'avoir orchestré une tentative de coup d'Etat en Turquie en juillet 2016.

La Turquie exigeait aussi la levée des blocages d'exportations d'armes décidés à son encontre par Stockholm après l'intervention militaire turque dans le nord de la Syrie en octobre 2019.

A l'issue des discussions, présidence turque a fait savoir que « la Turquie a obtenu ce qu'elle voulait ». Les deux pays candidats se sont engagés à « la pleine coopération

avec la Turquie dans la lutte » contre le PKK, ainsi que contre les mouvements qui lui sont affiliés. La présidence turque précise aussi que les deux nouveaux entrants prendront « des mesures concrètes pour l'extradition des criminels terroristes » de leurs territoires et pour « interdire les activités de collecte de fonds et de recrutement du PKK et de ses affiliés » chez eux.

Helsinki et Stockholm s'engagent également à « faire preuve de solidarité avec la Turquie dans la lutte contre le terrorisme sous toutes ses formes », est-il précisé dans ce texte. De même, les deux capitales se sont accordées pour ne « pas imposer de restrictions ou d'embargo sur les industries de défense », a poursuivi la présidence turque.

« Elan puissant »

Ankara s'est aussi félicitée du fait que le mouvement Fetö du prédicateur Fethullah Gülen, installé aux Etats-Unis et que M. Erdogan tient pour responsable de la tentative de coup d'Etat de 2016, soit reconnu comme « une organisation terroriste » au même titre

que le PKK, les Unités de protection du peuple (YPG, branche armée du Parti de l'unité démocratique syrien) et les autres. La Turquie n'a cependant pas formulé « de demande particulière de concessions aux Américains » pour lever son opposition à l'élargissement de l'OTAN, a assuré mardi un haut responsable de la Maison Blanche.

Magdalena Andersson a salué une « étape très importante pour l'OTAN » car les deux pays nordiques, qui ont décidé d'abandonner leur neutralité depuis l'invasion russe de l'Ukraine, « seront pourvoyeurs de sécurité au sein » de l'Alliance.

Ce feu vert d'Ankara à l'entrée des deux pays nordiques a aussi été immédiatement salué par un haut responsable de la Maison Blanche, selon lequel il donne un « élan puissant » à l'unité occidentale en cette période troublée par la guerre en Ukraine.

Le premier ministre britannique, Boris Johnson, a estimé de son côté que l'adhésion des deux pays nordiques allait rendre l'Alliance « plus forte et plus sûre ».

Turkey lifts block on Finnish and Swedish NATO bids

MADRID — Turkey has lifted its objection to the NATO membership applications by Finland and Sweden, paving the way for the two countries to join the military alliance.

The three countries signed a memorandum of understanding in Madrid on Tuesday evening, ahead of a summit of NATO leaders.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted a shift in public opinion across northern Europe toward NATO, leading Helsinki and Stockholm to formally apply for membership in mid-May. But the Turkish leadership, citing concerns over the countries' alleged support for Kurdish groups and arms embargoes, blocked the process.

On Tuesday, following weeks of talks, the three countries reached a deal, clearing the biggest hurdle holding up Finland and Sweden's NATO bids. The progress is a blow to Russia's stated ambition of rolling back NATO's growth through its war in Ukraine. "In NATO, we have always shown that whatever our differences, we can always sit down, find common ground and resolve any issues," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg proclaimed at a press conference following the signing ceremony.



Sweden's PM Magdalena Andersson shakes hands with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan | Henrik Montgomery/AFP via Getty Images

"Our joint memorandum underscores the commitment of Finland, Sweden and Türkiye to extend their full support against threats to each other's security," Finnish President Sauli Niinistö said in a statement. "Us becoming NATO allies will further strengthen this commitment."

The deal has several components, the NATO chief said.

For starters, he said, Helsinki and Stockholm are committing "to fully support Türkiye against threats to its national security."

Stoltenberg singled out the PKK, a Kurdish militant group that Turkey, the U.S. and the EU have classified as a terrorist organization. Both countries will work on "cracking down on PKK ac-

tivities," he added, and will enter "an agreement with Türkiye on extradition."

The two Nordic countries will also "have no arms embargo" against Turkey, Stoltenberg noted.

Beyond the points Stoltenberg highlighted, the memorandum text revealed that Finland and Sweden had also agreed not to "not provide support" to YPG, a Kurdish militia in Syria, nor to the movement affiliated with the exiled cleric Fethullah Gülen. The U.S. has not placed the terrorist label on these entities.

And in a passage likely to stoke some controversy in Finland and Sweden, the memorandum pledges that the two countries "will address Türkiye's pending deportation or extradition

requests of terror suspects expeditiously and thoroughly," clarifying that it must be done in line with European treaties.

As a result of Ankara's move, NATO leaders gathering in Madrid can now make a formal decision on Wednesday to invite Finland and Sweden to join the alliance.

Then the process will move to each individual NATO country, where all 30 parliaments must ratify the expansion. Because of those logistics, Stoltenberg declined to put a specific timeline on the two countries formally joining the alliance.

Still, Stoltenberg conveyed confidence that NATO would soon grow and touted the "advanced, well-developed" military capabilities both countries would bring to the alliance.

Finland and Sweden are both strategically located for NATO. Finland shares a long border with Russia in the north and Sweden sits across the Baltic Sea from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — three countries pressing for more NATO support in the face of Russian threats.

"It will really strengthen our presence in that part of the world," Stoltenberg said.



meta-defense.fr
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La Finlande et la Suède pourront rejoindre l'OTAN, mais les concessions à la Turquie sont élevées

La Turquie faisant l'objet de nombreuses sanctions européennes suite à son intervention en Syrie, en Libye et ses déploiements de forces en Méditerranée Orientale face à la Grèce et Chypre, le président Erdogan savait que la demande d'adhésion de la Finlande et de la Suède serait, pour lui, un formidable moyen de pression pour atténuer ces sanctions, et pour forcer la main aux deux pays scandinaves dans leur soutien aux mouvements kurdes. En tenant ferme sur son opposition à l'adhésion des deux pays à l'Alliance Atlantique, R.T Erdogan est en effet parvenu à ses fins, et si les communiqués officiels se félicitent de la levée du veto d'Ankara pour ces adhésions, ouvrant la voie à un processus accéléré d'adhésion afin de répondre à la menace russe grandissante, Stockholm et Helsinki, mais également les Américains très probablement, ont du céder à de nombreuses exigences turques, dont certaines n'iront pas sans poser certains problèmes dans leur mise en oeuvre.



Star du salon Eurosatory 2018, le programme de char lourd turc Altay est à l'arrêt depuis que certaines technologies européennes ont été mises sous embargo vers la Turquie

Les exigences turques portaient sur plusieurs points, qui toutes ont été acceptées par les suédois et les finlandais lors des négociations qui se sont tenues en marge du sommet de l'OTAN de Madrid. En premier lieu, Ankara exigeait la fin de l'embargo suédois sur les livraisons de systèmes d'armement vers la Turquie, et que les deux pays scandinaves entament une coopération technologique de défense avec l'industrie turque. Cette demande est significative, puisque dans certains domaines, elle permet de contourner [les sanctions mises en oeuvre par d'autres pays européens](#)

[qui handicapent l'effort industriel et technologique de défense](#) engagé par R.T Erdogan depuis une quinzaine d'années. C'est notamment le cas pour les technologies navales et de propulsion sous-marine, ainsi que pour certains matériaux composites et alliages de haute technologie qui font défaut en Turquie pour la poursuite de certains programmes, comme le char Altay.

En second lieu, la Suède et la Finlande s'engagent à ne plus soutenir les mouvements politiques kurdes du YPG, et à mener une poli-

tique ferme contre les organisations terroristes kurdes qui menacent la Turquie, en particulier le PKK. Or, Helsinki et surtout Stockholm avaient pris des positions bienveillantes vis-à-vis de la diaspora kurde, en accueillant notamment des leaders du YPG et des Peshmergas. Ce point sera particulièrement critique en Suède, puisque le gouvernement de Magdalena Andersson n'a résisté à une motion de censure il y a quelques semaines uniquement grâce au soutien de [la député Amineh Kakabaveh d'origine Kurde](#) et elle-même ancienne Peshmerga, celle-ci ayant clairement signifié que [ce soutien politique était conditionné à un soutien national suédois à la cause kurde](#). En outre, Ankara a obtenu de Stockholm et d'Helsinki la garantie que les deux pays scandinaves répondraient favorablement aux demandes d'extradition turques concernant d'éventuels leaders de mouvement terroristes, ce qui n'ira pas sans poser d'importantes vagues de protestation dans les deux pays, au niveau politique comme au niveau social.



29/06/2022

Les Kurdes, victimes collatérales de l'élargissement de l'Otan

L'Otan, lors de son sommet à Madrid qui se poursuit jusqu'à jeudi, a validé les candidatures de la Suède et de la Finlande. La Turquie bloquait le dossier jusqu'à présent, mais a levé son veto. Après des concessions des deux candidats sur la question des Kurdes.

À première vue, l'élargissement désormais possible de l'Otan à la Suède et la Finlande est une bonne nouvelle pour l'Alliance de défense occidentale, face à la menace russe. Mais il y a donc un prix à payer. Et les Kurdes vont sans doute en faire les frais. Pour valider les candidatures suédoise et finlandaise, il fallait l'unanimité au sein des membres de l'Otan. La Turquie, qui est l'un des membres les plus puissants de l'Alliance Atlantique, a donc posé ses conditions. Et obtenu gain de cause sur plusieurs sujets, en particulier sur le soutien apporté à la minorité kurde, par les deux pays nordiques.



Le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan (C) est accueilli par le secrétaire général de l'Otan Jens Stoltenberg (G) et le Premier ministre espagnol Pedro Sanchez lors du sommet de l'Otan, à Madrid, le 29 juin 2022. (PIERRE-PHILIPPE MARCOU / AFP)

Pour Ankara et pour une grande partie de la population turque, le PKK, le principal parti kurde, est une organisation terroriste, impliquée dans de multiples attentats en Turquie. Même chose pour ses filiales dans le Nord de la Syrie voisine, le PYD et l'YPG. Pour lever le blocage turc, la Finlande et la Suède, qui soutiennent de longue date la cause kurde, ont donc accepté de «manger leur chapeau»: de fermer les sites kurdes et d'interdire les manifestations kurdes sur leur sol, d'extrader des militants kurdes vers la Turquie, de ne plus apporter aucun soutien au PYD et à l'YPG en Syrie; et de mettre fin à leur embargo sur les livraisons d'armes à la Turquie.

En un sens, les Kurdes paient donc l'addition de l'élargissement de l'Otan. D'ailleurs Ankara n'a pas perdu de temps. La Turquie, dès mercredi 29 juin au matin, a réclamé à la Suède et à la Finlande, l'extradition de 33 personnes, dont 17 militants kurdes (6 en Finlande et 11 en Suède). Autant de personnes qu'elle entend juger pour terrorisme, et dont les noms avaient déjà été transmis aux deux pays nordiques. Pour la Finlande et plus encore la Suède, le sujet est embarrassant. Sur ses 10 millions d'habitants, la Suède compte au moins 100.000 réfugiés kurdes. Et 8 députés du Parlement suédois sont d'origine kurde. L'un de ces députés, ou plutôt l'une puisque

c'est une femme, Amineh Kabaveh, avait même un accord avec la Première ministre social-démocrate Magdalena Andersson : elle a soutenu sa nomination, en échange d'une coopération suédoise renforcée avec le parti kurde en Syrie, PYD. En fait, la pilule est amère pour tout le mouvement kurde, qui s'est un peu chargé du sale boulot à la place des Occidentaux, ces dernières années en Syrie, en combattant le terrorisme du groupe État Islamique. Les Kurdes ont d'ailleurs toujours la charge aujourd'hui de ces camps où sont détenus la plupart des anciens terroristes islamistes, bien que nombre d'entre eux soient des Européens. Pour le président turc en

vanche, c'est un succès diplomatique. «Nous avons obtenu ce que nous voulions», déclare la présidente turque. Elle crie victoire. Et c'est vrai, c'est tout bénéfique pour l'actuel président Recep Teyyip Erdogan, à moins d'un an des élections générales en Turquie. Confronté à une inflation galopante (plus de 70%) et à une opposition bien décidée à le chasser du pouvoir, Erdogan vient de marquer des points. Il a tenu tête aux Occidentaux, su faire monter les enchères via l'Otan. Et obtenu gain de cause sur le sujet ultrasensible des Kurdes, sujet qui fait globalement consensus dans une Turquie très nationaliste. Erdogan est le vainqueur politique de cette phase d'élargissement de l'Otan.

Erdogan says Sweden's, Finland's NATO memberships not done deal

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made clear that Sweden and Finland's NATO accession was far from a done deal a day after shelving threats of a veto and allowing the Nordic countries' [memberships to proceed](#).

"The agreement that was signed is just a beginning, an invitation. What is of essence is that promises that were made are put into action," Erdogan said at a news conference in Madrid today on the sidelines of the NATO summit. He was referring to a document that he signed Tuesday with the Swedish premier and Finnish president in which both agreed to end their support for the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) and its political arm, the Democratic Unity Party (PYD), which Turkey says pose a threat to its national security. In exchange, Turkey agreed to withdraw threats to block their memberships in the alliance.

Why it matters: Turkey could still, in theory, put the kibosh on the Scandinavians because approval of their membership needs to be put before the legislatures of NATO states before

becoming final. "This deal won't materialize unless it's approved by our parliament," Erdogan warned. "Sweden and Finland must remain faithful to their pledges; otherwise, it is out of the question that [their memberships] would be brought before [the Turkish] parliament."

Erdogan said Turkey would be scrutinizing Finland's and Sweden's actions with an eagle eye, adding that they had pledged to extradite 73 "terrorists" wanted by Turkey. Many are believed to be associated with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the Pennsylvania-based Sunni preacher Fethullah Gulen, who is accused of masterminding the [2016 putsch](#) to overthrow Erdogan.

However, it remains to be seen whether Finnish and Swedish prosecutors see eye to eye with Turkey on what defines a terrorist, and there are already loud grumbles from left-wing parties in Sweden. One is pressing for delisting the PKK as a terrorist outfit.

Biden effect: President Joe Biden, who met with Erdogan in Madrid yesterday, called the Turkish leader on Tuesday

before doing so, ostensibly to convey the importance of letting Finland and Sweden join the alliance in the face of Russian aggression in the region.

That call, along with pressure from NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on Sweden to accommodate Turkey's demands, unlocked a two-month impasse. Turkey hailed the outcome as a win. In fact, Turkey saved itself from a further meltdown in its relations with Washington. Had Erdogan not relented, the Biden administration would have pulled its support for the transfer of [F-16 fighter jets to Turkey](#), which needs to be approved by Congress.

Therefore, should Turkey revert to playing hardball on the Nordic accession, the administration could change its tune on the F-16s, as it may should Erdogan make good on his threats to invade northeast Syria again.

Biden denied any linkage, telling reporters there was no "quid pro quo" to sell F-16s to Turkey if it dropped its opposition on Finland and Norway. "I said back in December, as you recall, we should sell them the F-

16 jets ... modernize those jets as well," Biden said. "I need congressional approval to be able to do that, and I think we can get that," Biden added.

Getting to yes: Biden will need to persuade several dissenting senators, notably Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), who is known to be the stiffest opponent of selling any military hardware to Turkey. Menendez has a large ethnic Armenian constituency and an ethnic Armenian spouse, Nadine Arslanian.

Turkey's indirect military intervention on the side of Azerbaijan helping it defeat Armenia in a brief but bloody war in late 2020 will not have helped the senator's mood. Moreover, Turkey's claims that it now wants to establish diplomatic ties with Armenia and reopen its sealed borders with the tiny landlocked nation are ringing increasingly hollow. Turkey has long said that it would only do so if Armenia withdrew from occupied Azerbaijani lands. Those lands — and more — were wrested back with the help of Turkish drones. Nearly two years on, the borders remain shut and diplomatic ties unestablished.

DAGENS NYHETER. June 26, 2022

Kurdo Baksi: The settlement with Turkey is an embarrassing moment in Swedish history

Tuesday's announcement that Turkey says yes to a Swedish NATO membership comes with unpleasant reservations. Kurdo Baksi fears police storms in the pigsty, that Swedish Kurds will be forced on board aircraft with destination Ankara and inquiries via Interpol.

A new nightmare awaits the Swedish Kurds?

After the assassination of Prime Minister Olof Palme, Sweden's Kurds were subjected to a gigantic witch hunt. It was not until decades later that the PKK was released from all suspicion during a well-publicized press conference.

When I was reached on Tuesday evening by the news of a conditional Turkish yes to a Swedish and Finnish membership in NATO, I remembered the nightmares of the eighties: Terrible scenarios were played out in me: police storms in the swine flu, Swedish Kurds who, despite being granted a refuge here, are forced on board aircraft with destination Ankara or Istanbul, crying children and girlfriends,



photo : Ali Lorestani, Henrik Montgomery/TT

Kurds who never again dare to holiday outside Sweden's borders because Ankara is looking for them via Interpol.

I know what I'm talking about. Long before Russia invaded Ukraine and the Social Democrats turned on the NATO issue, I began to receive calls from innocent Kurds affected by the new terror law that came into force in 2020 and which was intended to punish pro-violence Islamists. On July 1, the law will be tightened further, but so far it has mainly been used against Kurds who have secured the security of the Western world through their acclaimed war against the Islamic State (IS). How did Morgan Johansson and the

Social Democratic government think?

38 Swedish Kurds who came to Sweden for love or to work have during the past two years been told that their residence permit will not be extended despite the fact that they have children in Sweden and behaved exemplary. Behind the refusals are, according to information from those affected, messages from Säpo to the Swedish Migration Board that these people have connections to the PKK, because they posted pictures of the PKK flag or PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan on their social media. Swedish police act, just like Turkish, based on the principle of guilt by association.

For two years, these Kurds have tried to make their voices heard in the Swedish media, but no one cares. Kurds are punished, everywhere on earth. They have no embassies, no lobbyists, no blackmail tools either against Sweden or against another state. Kurds can be sacrificed, especially if one fears the despot in the Kremlin and seeks refuge in NATO.

Tuesday's announcement in Madrid that Turkey says yes to a Swedish NATO membership comes with unpleasant reservations. Among other things, the Swedish arms embargo against Turkey, a country that is now waging a war inside Iraqi Kurdistan, will be lifted. Turkey also threatens to invade Syrian Kurdistan at any time. How can Sweden boast of human rights when Swedish weapons will kill Kurds?

No, I will forever regard Tuesday's Swedish settlement with Turkey as an embarrassing and capitulated moment in Swedish history. And I sleeplessly worry that the nightmare of the eighties will be repeated.

Amineh Kakabaveh, l'égérie suédoise du Kurdistan

Députée sans étiquette, cette ancienne peshmerga, d'origine kurde iranienne, est citée par le président turc Erdogan pour justifier son refus d'accepter l'adhésion de la Suède à l'OTAN. ([Read in English](#))

Son téléphone portable n'arrête pas de sonner. Députée indépendante, Amineh Kakabaveh n'a ni secrétaire ni assistant parlementaire. C'est elle qui gère ses rendez-vous. Elle avait prévu de faire l'interview à la cantine du Parlement, mais se ravise et propose d'aller dans son bureau, « pour ne pas être dérangée ». Il est 11 heures, mardi 21 juin, et tous les journalistes politiques suédois la traquent, pour savoir si elle va soutenir le budget du gouvernement social-démocrate de Suède, le lendemain – ce qu'elle fera.

Cette popularité soudaine, Amineh Kakabaveh la doit à un étrange concours de circonstances, dû à son départ du parti de la gauche, en août 2019. Entre deux blocs, pourvus de 174 sièges chacun, l'ancienne combattante peshmerga, d'origine kurde iranienne, marxiste et féministe, se retrouve en position de faire et défaire les majorités au Parlement. Mais c'est la candidature de la Suède à l'OTAN qui la projette sur le devant de la scène.

A peine le royaume avait-il déposé sa demande d'adhésion, le 18 mai, que le président turc Recep Tayyip Erdogan annonce qu'il y mettra son veto. Il accuse la Suède d'héberger des « terroristes » et constate que certains « siègent même au Parlement ». Parmi les huit députés d'origine kurde, Amineh Kakabaveh se sait visée. Le 20 mai, dans une interview à la radio suédoise, l'ambassadeur de Turquie à Stockholm,



Amineh Kakabaveh, à Stockholm, Suède, le 7 juillet 2021. CHRISTINE OLSSON / EPA / MAXPPP

Emre Yunt, confirme. Il dénonce l'accord qu'elle a passé avec les sociaux-démocrates, le 23 novembre 2021, avant l'élection de Magdalena Andersson au poste de premier ministre. En échange de son vote, la députée a obtenu notamment que le parti juge « inacceptable » le fait que des « acteurs étatiques » – comme la Turquie – qualifient les sympathisants des milices kurdes syriennes (YPG, Unités de protection du peuple) de « terroristes ». M. Yunt ne cache pas qu'il souhaiterait la voir extradée en Turquie, « si c'est possible », dit-il, avant de se rétracter le lendemain.

« **Couardise** » de « **la classe politique** »

« *J'ai d'abord cru que c'était une blague, je ne suis même pas turque* », s'esclaffe la députée, petite robe colorée et sandales compensées, une cascade de boucles noire lui

dégringolant sur les épaules. Mais les propos de l'ambassadeur ne l'étonnent pas. Depuis qu'elle utilise régulièrement son temps de parole au Parlement suédois comme tribune pour dénoncer la répression des Kurdes par le régime d'Erdogan, Amineh Kakabaveh est devenue l'une des bêtes noires du président turc.

En Suède, terre d'exil pour 100 000 Kurdes, originaires de Turquie, de Syrie, d'Iran et d'Irak, ses positions étaient relativement consensuelles, jusqu'à la candidature du pays à l'OTAN. Depuis, son statut de députée sans étiquette et l'influence qu'elle a su en tirer suscitent l'agacement de ses collègues et la haine, sur les réseaux sociaux, où ses opposants se délectent de l'expression « *sauvage politique* » – « *polititisk vilde* » – utilisée pour qualifier un député indépendant. « *Mais j'ai aussi reçu*

des milliers de messages de soutien », affirme-t-elle.

Amineh Kakabaveh est contre l'adhésion de la Suède à l'OTAN. Elle dénonce la « *couardise* » de « *la classe politique* » suédoise, prête à faire des concessions à Erdogan et « *à s'allier à une dictature pour en combattre une autre* ». Concernant la levée des restrictions sur les livraisons d'armes à la Turquie, envisagée

par Stockholm, elle s'insurge : « *Ces armes seront utilisées pour massacrer les Kurdes. Chaque jour, Erdogan bombarde le nord de la Syrie et tue des civils.* »

Dans son bureau au Parlement, le décor témoigne de son engagement militant, qui la tient éveillée la nuit. Sur le mur est accroché un immense portrait de Che Guevara. En dessous, le drapeau violet du HDP, le parti de la gauche prokurde en Turquie, est étendu sur une chaise. Elle montre une flamme en bois, sculptée par des femmes palestiniennes, dans sa bibliothèque. A côté, trône le diplôme que l'hebdomadaire *Fokus* lui a remis, quand il l'a couronnée « Suédoise de l'année » en 2016. Son autobiographie – *Pas plus grande qu'une kalachnikov* (non traduit) – est rangée parmi d'autres livres.

Egalité entre hommes et femmes

Devant le Parlement, le 7 juin, elle a raconté une anecdote. Quand elle est arrivée en Suède en 1992, à 19 ans, en tant que réfugiée, elle a passé un contrôle médical. « *Il y avait un élément, dans mon sang, que les médecins ne parvenaient pas à identifier. Au bout d'un certain temps, j'ai compris que c'était des traces de gaz moutarde, ce que les analyses ont confirmé.* » L'agent chimique a été utilisé par l'armée de Saddam Hussein, lors du massacre de Halabja, dans la province du Kurdistan irakien, en mars 1988. « *Cinq mille Kurdes ont été tués et j'ai perdu 70 de mes camarades pendant l'attaque,* raconte-t-

elle. *L'oppression des Kurdes, je l'ai dans mon corps.* »

Deuxième enfant d'une fratrie de huit, Amineh Kakhbaveh est née dans un village près de Saqqez, dans le Kurdistan iranien. Son père vend des animaux, sa mère s'occupe de la maison. Les enfants travaillent au champ ou font de la couture. Selon son passeport, elle est née en 1970, mais dit avoir « *quatre ans de moins* ». Toute petite déjà, elle rêve de devenir peshmerga : ces combattants kurdes, qui acceptent les femmes dans leur rang et imposent le respect dans les villages. « *Quand ils venaient, les hommes arrêtaient de battre leurs femmes et les pères de marier leurs enfants.* »

En Iran, les islamistes ont pris

le pouvoir en 1979. Un jour, un haut gradé débarque dans le village et impose à son père de la marier, ou elle sera « *tuée, après avoir été violée* ». Amineh a 13 ans. Son père est arrêté, torturé. Son frère de 15 ans, emprisonné pour avoir caricaturé l'ayatollah Khomeiny. Quand il rejoint l'organisation kurde d'extrême gauche Komala, elle part avec lui. Après des peshmergas, elle découvre « *l'égalité entre hommes et femmes* ». Les plus âgés donnent des cours d'éducation politique aux plus jeunes. Elle participe à des combats, mais ne tue personne.

Après avoir vu trop de ses camarades périr, elle se réfugie en Suède, où elle apprend à lire et écrire, s'inscrit à l'univer-

sité et décroche un master en action sociale internationale. A gauche de la gauche, célibataire, sans enfant, elle est aussi une farouche laïque. Fondatrice de l'association Ni putes, ni soumises en Suède, elle s'attire les critiques acerbes de son parti, quand elle prône l'interdiction du voile dans les écoles ou dénonce la progression de l'intégrisme religieux, dans les banlieues suédoises. Sans formation politique, elle ne pourra pas se représenter aux élections du 11 septembre, mais compte poursuivre son combat, peut-être sur la scène internationale.

Anne-Françoise Hivert
(Stockholm (Suède),
correspondante régionale)



Medyanews.net
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Lawyer testifies to being beaten by Turkish troops in military headquarters

Lawyer Harika Günay Karataş says that the military headquarters where the villagers and lawyers were beaten is notorious for systematic torture as is the commander in charge who has previously ordered torture against Kurds.

A lawyer who was subjected to violence at a gendarmerie (a military force with law enforcement duties among the civilian population) headquarters in Turkey's Kurdish-majority city of Yüksekova (Gever) on Sunday [said](#) that this was the second time within a year lawyers have been subjected to violence on instructions by the same gendarmerie officer, and that the headquarters the officer was in command of already had a reputation for systematic torture.

Lawyer Harika Günay Karataş, the branch co-chair of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), filed a criminal

complaint against the troops who harassed her and dragged her on the ground, and beat her colleague Fırat İke, when the two came to the gendarmerie headquarters to provide legal services for villagers who were [detained](#) during a military operation.

Speaking to Mezopotamya News Agency, she explained what happened:

"Villagers who were out in the field to cut grass were taken into custody. When we heard about it, I went to the gendarmerie headquarters with Fırat İke. We were told that the villagers in custody were not actually under arrest, and that they merely

came to provide information; but that was legally an arrest, anyway. When we said that we wanted to talk to the villagers, one was brought into the room even as he was subjected to a beating. When we tried to intervene, we were treated in just the same way."

"The gendarmerie headquarters in question is already famous for practices of torture. The gendarmerie officer Bayram Konak, who gave instructions for torture in the recent incident, had given similar instructions in another incident last August to have a colleague of mine beaten, and for the detained villagers to be subjected to torture."

She continued:
"We were subjected to violence as we were dragged out of the headquarters. My colleague received a rough beating inside the guardhouse. They grabbed my arms and legs, and dragged me on the ground. I had bruises all over my body. I was subjected to discriminative insults."

Lawyer Fırat İke said:

"This treatment by the state against Kurds is not something new. Just as they try to liquidate the political movement, they are trying to do the same thing to lawyers. They want to liquidate us and leave the Kurds defenceless."



Simon Johnson
June 28, 2022

Sweden's Kurds fear they may pay price for NATO bid as Turkey fumes

STOCKHOLM, June 28 (Reuters) - Kurds in Sweden's large diaspora are worried they will become a pawn in the negotiations over Stockholm's ambition to join NATO if the West makes concessions to win Turkish support.

Sweden, along with Finland, applied for NATO membership in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with their bids warmly welcomed as a «historic moment» by alliance chiefs.

But they have faced opposition from Turkey, which has been angered by what it says is their support for Kurdish militants and arms controls on Ankara over a 2019 incursion into Syria.

«We don't want the Kurds to be on the negotiating table,» Shiyar Ali, the Scandinavian representative of the mainly Kurdish regions of northern Syria, said.

Any bid to join NATO, which holds a three day summit this week, requires backing from each of its 30 members. Turkey has been a NATO ally for over 70 years.

Sweden's 100,000-strong Kurdish diaspora and Stockholm's support for Kurds' rights has long been points of friction in relations with Ankara.

«Sweden has been a thorn in Turkey's side, criticising Turkish human rights abuses, there is a strong and vibrant Kurdish diaspora in Sweden, parts of which is sympathetic to the PKK,» Paul Levin, director at the Institute for Turkish Studies at Stockholm University, said.

«All these things fly in the face of the Turkish perspective on these issues that the PKK and their affiliates are an essential



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan holds a news conference during the NATO summit at the Alliance's headquarters in Brussels, Belgium June 14, 2021. REUTERS / Yves Herman/Pool

national security threat to Turkey.»

The PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) has been waging an insurgency in Turkey since 1984 in which more than 40,000 people have been killed.

Sweden has long outlawed the PKK and says it only provides humanitarian aid to Syria and refugees in the region, mainly through international organisations.

At the same time as the NATO talks, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has threatened a launch a fresh incursion into northern Syria to recapture towns held by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, which are backed by Washington.

The Kurdish YPG militia are a key part of the SDF that controls large parts of north Syria and is regarded by Washington as an important ally against Islamic State. Ankara sees it as an extension of the militant PKK, branding it a terrorist group, while Western governments do not.

Aside from its anger with the two Nordic countries, Turkey has long been infuriated by other support for the YPG, notably from the United States, France and Germany.

UNCERTAIN ROAD

All that has worried some Kurds, who fear they may pay the price to placate Turkey and secure Sweden's place in NATO.

Facing a prison sentence, Osman Aytar, an ethnic Kurd, fled Turkey for Sweden in the 1990s.

«Kurds have been betrayed many times in history,» said Aytar, a 62-year-old associate professor in social work at the Malardalen University in eastern Sweden.

«Maybe Erdogan is betting that he can invade new parts of Rojava (the mainly Kurdish regions of northern Syria) and the West will be quiet just because of this NATO membership issue. If the West just shuts its eyes, he will be happy.»

Sweden's government declined to comment on ongoing talks

with Turkey. Ankara's embassy in Stockholm also declined to comment. NATO has said the security concerns raised by Turkey are legitimate.

The complex web of issues has put the Sweden government - admired around the world for its promotion of human rights and support for minorities - in a tough spot.

Only this month, the government survived a no-confidence vote with the help of a former Kurdish peshmerga fighter, who has demanded continued support for Kurds, further angering Ankara.

A lengthy and uncertain road to NATO membership would undermine Nordic security and weaken the alliance's hand in the Baltic.

But meeting Turkey's demands - which remain unclear - would damage Sweden's reputation and could complicate the fight against Islamic State.

«We are worried that the Kurds become victims of the politics,» Ahmed Karamus, the Swedish co-chair of the Kurdistan National Congress, a Kurdish umbrella group, said.

While the Swedish Kurds spoken to by Reuters are confident the government will stand up to Turkey, the negotiations are an uncomfortable reminder of that the security of the autonomous area is dependent on the goodwill of others.

«I hope and I believe that Sweden will not make concessions that we will be ashamed of later,» Aytar said.

Reporting by Simon Johnson; Additional reporting by Maya Gebeily in Beirut; Editing by Alison Williams

IS 'SECURITY' THE REASON? : Cutting of trees continues in Şırnak for two years

HDP Şırnak Deputy Hasan Özgüneş has submitted a parliamentary inquiry to the Parliament regarding the cutting of trees in Şırnak province.

The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change granted mineral exploration permits for 20 regions in southeastern Turkey, covering Şırnak city center, Cizre, Uludere, İdil, Beytüşşebap, and Silopi districts, without even requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

Trees in Şırnak and other mostly Kurdish-populated cities have been cut down for «security» reasons for a long time.

On the subject, People's Democratic Party (HDP) Şırnak Deputy Hasan Özgüneş has submitted a parliamentary inquiry to the Parliament.

He has asked who is responsible for cutting the trees and what activities were carried out after the tree felling.

«The destruction has been continuing for two years»

Özgüneş has stated the following in the inquiry:

«According to the news and the statements of eyewitnesses, for the last two years, security guards have been cutting trees, especially in the regions indicated as Cudi, Gabar, and



Photo: MA

Besta. Previously, thousands of decares of trees were cut in the rural areas of Dağkonak, Cevizdibi, Anmış, Üçkiraz, and Kemerli, located on the slopes of Mount Cudi.

«The same situation continued in Şerevan, Cemiller,

Özgüneş has stated that, in addition to the damage to the ecosystem, the cutting of trees, which is usually carried out for «security» reasons in the Şırnak province, destroys the living spaces and livelihoods of the locals. He has quoted a



HDP Şırnak Deputy Hasan Özgüneş

Xirbekbesta, Töşemi, and Deloser locations in the Besta region. Despite our warnings, this plundering of nature and tree cutting has been continuing for two years.»

citizen named Fatma Kabul, who lives in the Ayvan village.

«We can't even pick beets»

In her statements in the Mesopotamia Agency, Kabul has said:

«We want to return to our village and live there. It is torture to us. We miss our village life so much. But now the trees in our mountains are being cut down. We do not want our trees to be cut down and our nature to be plundered. The guards are cutting down our trees, while our mountains are being attacked. We cannot even go to our villages and collect beets. When we go, the guards and soldiers block us. Our call to the guards is this: Stop cutting trees now. Let the attacks and tree cutting end.»

Economic resources of the people

Özgüneş has also drawn attention to the necessity of establishing a Parliamentary Investigation Commission on the tree cuttings in Şırnak:

«The people's income from agriculture and animal husbandry are destroyed. Authorized institutions silently watch this situation. A Parliamentary Investigation Commission must be established to investigate the reasons for this destruction of nature, and to protect our forests.» (TY/TB/SD)



franceinfo avec AFP
le 29/06/2022

Trois questions sur le feu vert finalement donné par la Turquie pour l'adhésion de la Finlande et de la Suède à l'Otan

Ankara a obtenu de nombreuses concessions de la part d'Helsinki et de Stockholm, notamment en matière de lutte contre des organisations classées terroristes par la Turquie.

Un feu vert, mais à quel prix ? Après plusieurs semaines de négociations, la Turquie a fini par lever son veto à l'entrée de la Finlande et de la Suède dans l'Otan, mardi 28 juin. L'annonce a été faite à la veille d'un sommet de l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique nord à Madrid, consacré à l'Ukraine et pendant lequel le processus d'adhésion des deux pays nordiques sera lancé. Ankara accusait jusqu'à présent Stockholm et Helsinki d'abriter des militants de l'organisation kurde PKK, que la Turquie considère comme une organisation «terroriste». Explications.

1 - Pourquoi la Turquie bloquait-elle l'adhésion de la Suède et de la Finlande à l'Otan ?

Le président turc, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, reprochait à ces deux pays d'abriter des membres du PKK, le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan. Le PKK, qui milite pour l'autonomie du Kurdistan turc, est classé comme organisation terroriste par la Turquie, les Etats-Unis et l'Union européenne, mais pas par la Suède ni par la Finlande. Stockholm a notamment accueilli depuis 1980 de nombreux réfugiés politiques, «dont une bonne partie est soupçonnée par la Turquie d'être des militants

du PKK», expliquait en mai Elise Massicard, spécialiste de la sociologie politique de la Turquie contemporaine, à France 24.

Surtout, Ankara accusait les deux pays de n'avoir approuvé, au cours des cinq dernières années, aucune des demandes d'extradition des personnes qu'elle accuse d'être membres d'organisations terroristes, notamment de partisans du prédicateur Fethullah Gülen, soupçonné d'avoir orchestré une tentative de coup d'Etat en juillet 2016. Enfin, le président turc réclamait la levée de l'embargo sur les ventes d'armes à la Turquie, imposé en 2019 par la Suède, la Finlande et plusieurs autres pays, après l'offensive d'Ankara contre des militants kurdes en Syrie.

2 - Quelles concessions Ankara a-t-elle obtenues ?

«La Turquie a obtenu ce qu'elle voulait», c'est-à-dire la «pleine coopération» des pays nordiques contre le PKK et ses alliés, a déclaré la présidence turque dans un communiqué. Dans les faits, la Suède et la Finlande ont signé un mémorandum* trilatéral, dans lequel elles s'engagent «à soutenir totalement la Turquie contre les menaces à sa sécurité nationale». Les deux pays,

qui ont accordé de nombreuses concessions à Ankara, y affirment notamment que le PKK «est une organisation terroriste» et s'engagent à «lutter contre les activités du PKK».

La Suède et la Finlande promettent également de mettre en place «un accord d'extradition avec la Turquie» et d'examiner «de manière rapide et approfondie (...) les demandes de déportations ou d'extraditions de la Turquie qui sont en attente», à condition qu'elles respectent «les traités européens», rapporte le site d'actualité européen Politico*. Les deux pays s'engagent aussi à «ne pas apporter d'aide» aux Unités de protection du peuple (YPG), une milice kurde en Syrie, ou au mouvement associé à Fethullah Gülen, Fetö. Ankara a d'ailleurs annoncé son intention, mercredi, de réclamer à la Finlande et à la Suède l'extradition de 33 personnes.

3 - Quelles sont les réactions à cet accord ?

Le secrétaire général de l'Otan, Jens Stoltenberg, s'est félicité de l'accord, jugeant que l'organisation envoyait «un message au président Poutine», relève Bloomberg*. Il a ajouté que si le chef d'Etat russe «voulait moins d'Otan,

il en a finalement plus, à ses frontières». Les Etats-Unis ont, eux aussi, salué la levée du veto turc. Pour le Premier ministre britannique, Boris Johnson, l'adhésion des deux pays nordiques va rendre l'Alliance «plus forte et plus sûre».

La Première ministre suédoise, Magdalena Andersson, a salué une «étape très importante pour l'Otan». Mais de nombreuses réactions indignées se sont fait entendre dans son pays. L'accord inquiète notamment la communauté kurde du pays, qui compte près de 100 000 personnes. «Le gouvernement sacrifie les Kurdes de Suède pour devenir membre de l'Otan», s'est ainsi scandalisée la députée socialiste Linda Snecker, citée par Le Monde.

Le président finlandais, Sauli Niinistö, semblant anticiper des réactions négatives, a quant à lui affirmé dans un communiqué* que, malgré l'accord, «la Finlande continue naturellement de fonctionner conformément à sa législation nationale», notamment en matière «de lutte contre le terrorisme, d'exportations d'armes et d'extraditions».

* Les liens suivis d'un astérisque sont en anglais.

OTAN : le gouvernement suédois accusé de trahir les Kurdes

Au lendemain de la signature d'un mémorandum avec Ankara, le gouvernement suédois est critiqué sur son flanc gauche pour s'être incliné face à la Turquie.

La Suède « *n'a pas cédé à Erdogan* », martelait, mercredi 29 juin, la ministre suédoise des affaires étrangères, Ann Linde, depuis Madrid, alors que de nombreuses voix, à gauche surtout, fustigeaient l'accord, signé la veille, avec la Turquie et la Finlande, ouvrant la porte de l'OTAN aux deux pays nordiques. La cheffe de la diplomatie est priée de venir s'expliquer devant les députés, dès son retour d'Espagne.

Au Parlement, les réactions les plus virulentes émanent du parti des Verts et du Parti de gauche, alliés du gouvernement social-démocrate et opposés à la candidature suédoise à l'OTAN. Avant que la demande d'adhésion soit officialisée, le 18 mai, les deux formations avaient notamment mis en garde contre les risques de s'allier à la Turquie. Aujourd'hui, elles voient leurs craintes confirmées.

« *Nous passons d'une tradition de travail pour le maintien de la paix à une situation où nous nous inclinons devant un régime autoritaire, qui a une si longue liste de violations des droits de l'homme sur sa conscience* », s'est insurgée la porte-parole des Verts, Märta Stenevi. Le député du Parti de gauche Hakan Svenneling estime que l'accord passé avec Ankara « *réduit au silence la voix de la Suède pour les droits des Kurdes dans la région, mais aussi pour la démocratie et les droits de l'homme en Turquie* ».

La Société suédoise de paix et d'arbitrage, une ONG, ne ménage pas non plus ses critiques : « *En cédant aux exigences, le gouvernement suédois permet à la Turquie, un régime antidémocratique qui ne respecte pas les droits de l'homme et qui a violé le droit international par son agression militaire illégale contre la Syrie, de contrôler la politique étrangère suédoise* », dénonce Gabriella Irsten, l'une de ses responsables.

Extraditions rejetées depuis deux ans

Parmi les points qui suscitent le plus de craintes : l'engagement d'Helsinki et de Stockholm à traiter « *de manière approfondie* » les demandes d'extraditions de personnes soupçonnées de terrorisme par Ankara, « *en tenant compte des informations, des preuves et des renseignements fournis par la Turquie* ». Depuis Madrid, la première ministre, Magdalena Andersson, a assuré que son gouvernement suivrait « *la législation suédoise et les conventions internationales* » et rappelé que la Suède n'extradait jamais ses ressortissants. « *Si on ne se consacre pas à une activité terroriste, il n'y a aucune raison d'être inquiet* », a-t-elle observé.

Au même moment, à Ankara, le ministre de la justice, Bekir Bozdogan, annonçait que son gouvernement, « *dans le cadre du nouvel accord* », allait demander à la Finlande l'extradition de « *six membres du PKK* [le

Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan, classé comme terroriste par la Turquie et la Suède] *et six membres de Fetö* [le mouvement du prédicateur Fethullah Gülen qu'Ankara désigne comme terroriste] », et à la Suède, celle de « *dix membres du Fetö et onze du PKK* ».

Si les informations fournies par la Turquie sont de nature à « *entraîner l'expulsion de ces personnes conformément à la loi suédoise, cela se produira bien sûr* », a promis M^{me} Andersson. Le journaliste suédois d'origine kurde Kurdo Baksi s'étonne : « *Parmi les Kurdes que la Turquie veut voir expulser de Suède, trois vivent à l'étranger, un est mort, et tous sauf un ont la nationalité suédoise.* » Il rappelle que, ces deux dernières années, Stockholm a rejeté toutes les demandes d'extradition vers la Turquie ayant un motif politique, ce qui n'empêche pas les 100 000 Kurdes installés en Suède de « *se sentir trahis* », dit-il.

Reprise des exportations d'armes

Sur la liste, le journaliste turc et militant des droits de l'homme Ragip Zarakolu, réfugié en Suède depuis 2013, assure au quotidien *Dagens Nyheter* qu'il n'a « *pas peur* » et parle de « *harcèlement* » de la part d'Ankara. En 2018, la Turquie avait tenté d'obtenir son extradition, l'accusant d'être un sympathisant du PKK. La Cour suprême suédoise avait refusé. D'autres sont plus in-

quiets de figurer sur la liste.

Lire aussi : [La Turquie lève son veto sur l'adhésion de la Suède et de la Finlande à l'OTAN](#)

La reprise des exportations d'armes vers la Turquie, alors même qu'Ankara menace de lancer une offensive militaire dans le nord de la Syrie, suscite la controverse. Même chose concernant l'engagement de Stockholm et d'Helsinki à « *ne pas fournir de soutien* » au Parti de l'union démocratique kurde en Syrie (PYD) et sa branche armée (YPG) pourtant alliés des Occidentaux en Syrie.

Le Parti social-démocrate est accusé d'avoir trahi sa promesse : en novembre 2021, il avait passé un accord avec la députée indépendante d'origine kurde, Amineh Kakabaveh, promettant une coopération accrue avec le PYD, en échange de son vote pour élire M^{me} Andersson. Dénonçant le « *sacrifice des Kurdes pour l'adhésion à l'OTAN* », M^{me} Kakabaveh appelle à une motion de défiance contre Ann Linde. Mais il faudrait encore que trente-cinq députés la soutiennent, ce qui semble peu probable, sachant que 88 % des parlementaires sont favorables à l'OTAN – contre seulement 53 % des Suédois, selon un sondage réalisé début mai.

Lire aussi : [La Syrie, clé des divergences entre la Turquie et ses alliés occidentaux](#)

DAGENS NYHETER.

Marit Sundberg
June 29/2022

Kakabaveh on the NATO settlement: A day of sorrow for Sweden



Amineh Kakabaveh. Foto: Lisa Mattisson

Member of Parliament Amineh Kakabaveh is deeply disappointed with Sweden's NATO settlement with Turkey and calls it a betrayal of the Kurds. At the same time, she threatens to arouse distrust of Foreign Minister Ann Linde (S).

- They sell everything for a membership in NATO. It is a day of sorrow for Sweden, she says.

Since Turkey on Tuesday promised to release its NATO veto after a settlement that includes extradition, counter-terrorism and the abolition of the arms embargo, she says that the Swedish government has deceived the Kurds.

- This is a betrayal of the Swedish government, NATO countries and Stoltenberg who deceive an entire group that liberated themselves and

the whole world from daesh. Especially when it comes to the women's struggle, which Sweden claims to support. Thousands of women have sacrificed themselves to liberate the world from daesh, she says, referring to the terrorist group IS.

Kakabaveh already has an agreement with the government that Sweden will continue to support the Kurdish militia YPG, which fights the terrorist group IS in Syria, and deepen cooperation with its political branch, the party PYD. But according to the NATO agreement, Sweden and Finland will not provide support to the YPG or PYD, the latter being, according to Turkey, a cover for the PKK.

- The United States supports these movements and many other countries do the same. If Sweden does not dare to

say it directly, they can give the support to the United States, which can send it on, she says.

This spring, the newspaper Turkiye Gazetesi accused five Kurdish Swedish women of collaborating with the PKK, a group that Turkey and the EU have classified as terrorist. The terrorist accusation was repeated by other newspapers in the media sphere controlled by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

At a press conference after Tuesday's NATO settlement, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said that Finland and Sweden are ready to work with Turkey on future extraditions of terror suspects.

- Stoltenberg himself feels warm and safe. He does not know how the rest of us es-

caped from our lives, imprisonment and executions, says Amineh Kakabaveh.

At the same time, she believes that Sweden will legally never be able to extradite people who have fled persecution and risk imprisonment in Turkey.

In summary, Kakabaveh believes that the settlement is morally bad for Sweden.

- People have different expectations of Sweden, which has now bowed to a tyrant. «You leave everything because of a dictator and ally with another dictator,» she said, referring to President Erdogan and Russian President Putin.

But do you have no understanding that Sweden must negotiate in order to join NATO?

- Yes, settlements must be negotiated, but why at the expense of the Kurds? Why use Kurds as a badge? Nobody demands Turkey.

At the same time, Amineh Kakabaveh is threatening to arouse distrust in Foreign Minister Ann Linde, from whom she demands an explanation.

- I hope that other political parties call Ann Linde to the Foreign Affairs Committee, otherwise you have to arouse distrust of Ann Linde as Foreign Minister, she says to TV4 Nyheterna.

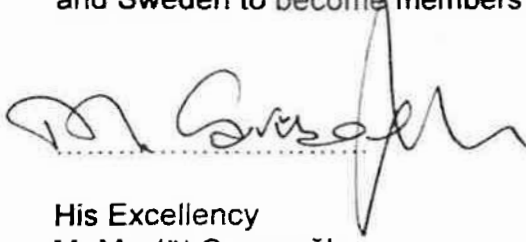
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TRILATERAL MEMORANDUM

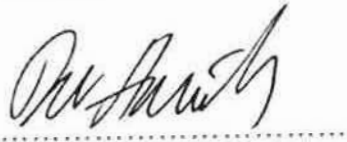
1. Today the representatives of Türkiye, Finland and Sweden, under the auspices of the NATO Secretary General, have agreed the following.
2. NATO is an Alliance based on the principles of collective defence and the indivisibility of security, as well as on common values. Türkiye, Finland and Sweden affirm their adherence to the principles and values enshrined in the Washington Treaty.
3. One of the key elements of the Alliance is unwavering solidarity and cooperation in the fight against terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, which constitutes a direct threat to the national security of Allies as well as to international peace and security.
4. As prospective NATO Allies, Finland and Sweden extend their full support to Türkiye against threats to its national security. To that effect, Finland and Sweden will not provide support to YPG/PYD, and the organisation described as FETÖ in Türkiye. Türkiye also extends its full support to Finland and Sweden against threats to their national security. Finland and Sweden reject and condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in the strongest terms. Finland and Sweden unambiguously condemn all terrorist organisations perpetrating attacks against Türkiye, and express their deepest solidarity with Türkiye and the families of the victims.
5. Finland and Sweden confirm that the PKK is a proscribed terrorist organisation. Finland and Sweden commit to prevent activities of the PKK and all other terrorist organisations and their extensions, as well as activities by individuals in affiliated and inspired groups or networks linked to these terrorist organisations. Türkiye, Finland and Sweden have agreed to step up cooperation to prevent the activities of these terrorist groups. Finland and Sweden reject the goals of these terrorist organisations.
6. Further to this, Finland refers to several recent amendments of its Criminal Code by which new acts have been enacted as punishable terrorist crimes. The latest amendments entered into force on 1 January 2022, by which the scope of participation in the activity of a terrorist group has been widened. At the same time, public incitement related to terrorist offenses was criminalised as a separate offense. Sweden confirms that a new, tougher, Terrorist Offenses Act enters into force on 1 July, and that the government is preparing further tightening of counter-terrorism legislation.

7. Türkiye, Finland and Sweden confirm that now there are no national arms embargoes in place between them. Sweden is changing its national regulatory framework for arms exports in relation to NATO Allies. In future, defence exports from Finland and Sweden will be conducted in line with Alliance solidarity and in accordance with the letter and spirit of article 3 of the Washington Treaty.
8. Today, Türkiye, Finland and Sweden commit to the following concrete steps:
 - Establish a joint, structured dialogue and cooperation mechanism at all levels of government, including between law enforcement and intelligence agencies, to enhance cooperation on counter-terrorism, organised crime, and other common challenges as they so decide.
 - Finland and Sweden will conduct the fight against terrorism with determination, resolve, and in accordance with the provisions of the relevant NATO documents and policies, and will take all required steps to tighten further domestic legislation to this end.
 - Finland and Sweden will address Türkiye's pending deportation or extradition requests of terror suspects expeditiously and thoroughly, taking into account information, evidence and intelligence provided by Türkiye, and establish necessary bilateral legal frameworks to facilitate extradition and security cooperation with Türkiye, in accordance with the European Convention on Extradition.
 - Finland and Sweden will investigate and interdict any financing and recruitment activities of the PKK and all other terrorist organisations and their extensions, as well affiliates or inspired groups or networks as outlined in paragraph 5.
 - Türkiye, Finland and Sweden commit to fight disinformation, and prevent their domestic laws from being abused for the benefit or promotion of terrorist organisations, including through activities that incite violence against Türkiye.
 - Finland and Sweden will ensure that their respective national regulatory frameworks for arms exports enable new commitments to Allies and reflects their status as NATO members.

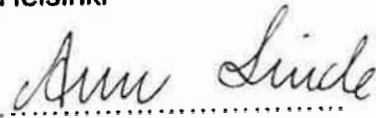
- Finland and Sweden commit to support the fullest possible involvement of Türkiye and other non-EU Allies in the existing and prospective initiatives of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy, including Türkiye's participation in the PESCO Project on Military Mobility.
9. For the implementation of these steps, Türkiye, Finland and Sweden will establish a Permanent Joint Mechanism, with the participation of experts from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Justice, as well as Intelligence Services and Security Institutions. The Permanent Joint Mechanism will be open for others to join.
10. Türkiye confirms its long-standing support for NATO's Open Door policy, and agrees to support at the 2022 Madrid Summit the invitation of Finland and Sweden to become members of NATO.



His Excellency
Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye
Ankara



His Excellency
Mr Pekka Haavisto
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland
Helsinki



Her Excellency
Ms Ann Linde
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Sweden
Stockholm

Madrid, 28 June 2022



COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE

PINAR SELEK CONDAMNÉE À LA PRISON À PERPÉTUITÉ LE GOUVERNEMENT TURC POURSUIT SON ENTREPRISE DE DESTRUCTION DES LIBERTÉS FONDAMENTALES

Nous avons appris le 21 juin dernier que les juges de la Cour suprême de Turquie ont condamné notre collègue Pinar Selek à la prison à perpétuité. Cette décision de la plus haute juridiction turque suscite une vive inquiétude et une forte indignation.

Pinar Selek est maîtresse de conférence à l'Université Côte d'Azur. Sociologue, écrivaine et militante féministe, elle est exilée en France depuis 2012, en raison des persécutions politiques et judiciaires qu'elle subit dans son pays d'origine, la Turquie. Elle a soutenu sa thèse en 2014 à l'Université de Strasbourg, qui lui a accordé la [protection académique](#). Elle a été faite Docteur honoris causa par l'École normale supérieure de Lyon.

Pour rappel, Pinar Selek est persécutée depuis 24 ans par les autorités turques qui ont fabriqué de toutes pièces les preuves d'un attentat qui n'a jamais existé : des enquêtes indépendantes ont démontré que l'explosion d'une bouteille de gaz au marché aux épices d'Istanbul en 1998 était accidentelle. Torturée et emprisonnée pendant plus de deux ans, Pinar Selek a été acquittée à quatre reprises. Mais, bafouant les règles élémentaires du droit, la justice turque a systématiquement annulé ces acquittements. Dans les faits, le pouvoir turc réprime, à travers la figure exemplaire de Pinar Selek, la liberté d'expression et de recherche, la défense des minorités et le combat des femmes pour l'égalité et l'émancipation.

Le SNESUP-FSU apporte tout son soutien à Pinar Selek et se joint à [la Coordination des collectifs de solidarité](#) pour appeler l'État français à exprimer son soutien à notre collègue et ressortissante, à protester officiellement et vigoureusement auprès des autorités turques et à s'engager à lui apporter protection contre toutes les conséquences de ce jugement inique. Le SNESUP-FSU invite les collègues qui le peuvent à [soutenir financièrement](#) les nouveaux recours juridiques que Pinar Selek va engager auprès de la Cour constitutionnelle de Turquie et de la Cour Européenne des Droits de l'Homme.

Enfin, au-delà du cas individuel de Pinar Selek, nous appelons le gouvernement français et l'Union européenne à exercer des pressions diplomatiques fermes en direction du gouvernement turc pour qu'il cesse son entreprise de destruction systématique des libertés fondamentales et qu'il garantisse l'état de droit. ■

Paris, le 29 juin 2022

SUIVEZ-NOUS !



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