

# Support Rojava Against the Erdogan-Trump Unholy Alliance to Crush the Kurds!

October 14, 2019



On October 9, Turkish armed forces began bombarding Rojava, the autonomous self-governing Kurdish enclave in northern Syria and are poised to cross over with ground troops as well. This attempt to wipe Rojava off the map is the product of a dirty deal between Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Donald Trump. In giving the green light to Erdogan, Trump has pulled the rug out from under the very forces that have done most to defeat and contain the Islamic State.

Over the past several years, the valiant Kurdish forces of the People's Protection Units (YPG), both women and men, have defeated and contained the brutal, misogynist Islamic State (ISIS), liberating parts of northern Iraq from ISIS as well. The latter battle freed thousands of Yazidi women from enslavement by ISIS at a time when the rest of the world stood by and did nothing. In the past several years, the Kurdish Rojava enclave in Syria has enjoyed limited air support from a small contingent of US forces. In this period, the YPG drove ISIS out of its capital, Raqqa, and other important territory, to the point where it has been driven underground. This US presence also gave Rojava a degree of protection from their mortal enemy, the Turkish regime, which views all struggles for Kurdish autonomy as "terrorism."

Whether by whim or design, or both, Trump has now put the Kurds in the crosshairs of the large, well-equipped Turkish army. The Kurds seem determined to fight, but they are armed only with light weapons against tanks and planes. Therefore, the very existence of the self-governing Rojava entity of northern Syria is in question.

This is therefore a very sad day for the Kurds, for the wider revolutionary movement in the region, and for the global left more generally. For Rojava was not only a question of ethnic self-determination by an oppressed minority, as important as that is, but also an experiment in gender equality and Kurdish-Arab solidarity. The gender dimension of Rojava is surely its most important revolutionary achievement, with women officers leading mixed-sex units against reactionary Islamist forces, and winning. Evoking Karl Marx's famous statement about the need for Black troops in the US Civil War at a time when the Lincoln administration was not yet ready to go that route, one could

surely say that these women-led units had a remarkable effect on the nerves of all reactionary forces in the region.

The Assad regime in Syria, and its allies Russia and Iran, all supposedly support the Syrian Kurds, but in fact would not be unhappy to see any kind of independent revolutionary force crushed. The same goes for the Saudi and the Israeli regimes, and for global capital as a whole.

It remains to be seen whether Erdogan can actually carry out the destruction of Rojava, however. It is one thing to bomb or invade, another to actually hold and administer territory. Erdogan's stated plan of moving Arab refugees into what is today a primarily Kurdish-populated area would amount to ethnic cleansing and is sure to meet stiff resistance.

But one thing is clear: Rojava, a beacon of human and women's liberation, is now in mortal danger.

We therefore call upon all Marxist-Humanists and the global left in general to defend Rojava by whatever means are at our disposal. Turkish consulates and embassies should be picketed and aid extended in all ways possible to the defenders of Rojava.

— Steering Committee of the International Marxist-Humanist Organization

*Originally posted at the International Marxist-Humanist Organization website.*