

Joint Statement of Condemnation and Call for International Action from Civil Society in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Regarding Ongoing Violations Against Kurdish Civilians in Rojava

The humanitarian situation in Rojava (Northeast Syria) has reached a critical point, particularly in the Kurdish city of Kobane (Kobanê), which has been subjected to prolonged military siege, access restrictions, and ongoing security developments amid shifting control arrangements and ceasefire agreements.

Recent developments, including ceasefire agreements, have created a rapidly evolving and uncertain environment. Despite these developments, civilians in Kobane and surrounding areas continue to face severe humanitarian restrictions, insecurity, and limited access to essential services, with these conditions persisting for over five weeks.

Access to food, fuel, electricity, heating, medicine, and clean water has been severely disrupted, placing civilians at extreme risk, especially during winter conditions. Local humanitarian agencies, including the Kurdish Red Crescent, report that multiple children, including infants and toddlers, have tragically died due to the extreme cold and lack of basic necessities, highlighting the severe humanitarian consequences of the siege on vulnerable populations.

In addition to the humanitarian crisis, there have been growing reports from local communities, civil society actors, and affected families of civilians being targeted, arbitrarily detained, abducted, or subjected to abuse based on their identity, perceived affiliation, or nationality. These reported incidents have created widespread fear and insecurity among civilians and raise serious concerns regarding violations of fundamental human rights and protections guaranteed under international law.

The targeting and isolation of civilians, particularly in a context of extreme weather and shortages of life-saving resources, constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights obligations. These conditions have caused suffering especially among the most vulnerable, including children, women, the elderly, and displaced families, and reflect a broader pattern of violence and disregard for civilian protection.

We therefore call upon the international community, including the United Nations, its member states, and relevant international mechanisms, to:

1. Publicly and unequivocally condemn all acts of violence and siege tactics that deprive civilians of essential services and protection.
2. Ensure the immediate protection of civilians in accordance with international humanitarian and human rights law.
3. Facilitate and guarantee safe, unhindered humanitarian access for aid including food, fuel, medicine, warmth supplies, and other life-saving assistance.
4. Support the meaningful participation of local civil society, women, and affected communities in all peace, protection, and decision-making processes.
5. Institute independent monitoring mechanisms that prioritize the immediate protection of civilians, prevent further violence and abuses, and enable civilians to live safely without fear of harm, targeting, or displacement.
6. Initiate independent, transparent investigations into alleged violations including cases of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, kidnapping, torture, and targeting of civilians based on identity or nationality and ensure accountability for any actions that constitute breaches of human rights norms and standards, in accordance with international law.

The deaths of children from preventable causes amid this blockade reflect not only a humanitarian tragedy but also a profound failure of the current protection framework. The principles of humanity, neutrality, and protection must guide urgent action — not selective responses or geopolitical calculations.

The people of Rojava have the right to live in safety, dignity, and peace. Upholding their rights is not negotiable; it is a legal and moral responsibility of the international community.

Endorsed by:

- 1. Al Mada Foundation for Human Rights**
- 2. Association for Women and Children**
- 3. BANANI Organization for Mental Health**
- 4. Better World Organization for Community Development (BW OCD)**
- 5. DAK Organization for Ezidi Women Development**
- 6. Future Influencers Organization**
- 7. Harikar NGO**
- 8. HOPE Organization for Development and Improvement**
- 9. H'WAR. help International**
- 10. Iraqi Institution for Development**
- 11. Jinda Organization**
- 12. Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights**
- 13. Kurdistan Working Women**
- 14. Phoenix Organization**
- 15. SEED**
- 16. The Best Women for Relief and Development**
- 17. The Iraqi Victims of Speicher 1700**
- 18. Woman Right's Center in Samawah WRC**
- 19. Women Empowerment Organization(WEO)**
- 20. Women Minorities Forum-Iraq**
- 21. Women Network for Peace**
- 22. Women Rehabilitations Organization**
- 23. Mrovsentery Organization for Human Rights**
- 24. ASUDA for Combating Violence Against Women**
- 25. Awan Organization for Awareness and Capacity Building**
- 26. Justice Organization for Minority Rights**
- 27. Saya Organizations for Human Rights and Democracy**

This statement was initiated by Better World Organization for Community Development (BW OCD), in collaboration with civil society partners.