



1/2023 JNS NEWSLETTER ٠/٢٠٢٢

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- We were established as a foundation by Kurds for Kurds - in honor of Jemal Nebez. We build on his life's work, which we want to preserve and make known far and wide.
- We have legal capacity and are politically independent, not affiliated with any party. Our committees work on a voluntary basis. We rely on donations for our projects and planning.
- We are recognized as a non-profit organization under German law. What we receive in donations is spent and disclosed in accordance with our statutes.

Dear friends and friends of the Kurds, old and new!

The first half of the year is now over. In our March Newsletter 1, we focused on Kurdish culture and were pleased that the JNS Award Commission was able to identify a worthy first JNF Awardee in Zara Mohammadi.

Our Newsletter 2 now contains the three texts from our home page since then. The longest text is the one written before the elections in Turkey on May 14. Then there is the text on what followed from the two May elections in Turkey. The top text is on NATO's concessions to Turkey at the time of its July 2023 Summit in Vilnius

From what has been said in these texts, there is an urgent need to research both the history of the partition of Kurdistan as a result of the First World War and the genocidal policy against Kurds that was developed in the further course. This type of policy was first developed by Turkey and then adopted by other states of the region which were to comprise a part of Kurdistan. Moreover, a variant of the genocidal policy was also practiced against Kurds in the international context.

Our next newsletter is scheduled for the fall.

On the NATO summit (10.) 11.07.2023 in Vilnius

Shortly before Start Erdogan increased his demands again

The fact that Erdogan had given up his blockade against Sweden joining NATO was most important to the NATO Secretary General. When asked, he added: ratification was still missing, but after Erdogan had given

up his opposition to Sweden's accession and recommended approval to his parliament, everything else would go its way, Stoltenberg explained.

NATO member Turkey received enormous concessions for abandoning its blockade stance against Sweden's accession

Even after the Turkish president had surprisingly increased his demands on Sweden, the U.S. and NATO, topping all by additionally still demanding the early resumption of EU accession negotiations with his country and eventually EU accession), NATO secretary general Jens Stoltenberg was not put off at all. He unwaveringly kept at it.

His mediation talks between Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson were varied, with EU Council President Charles Michel also present at a time.

Apparently, there is a possibility, even without EU accession, to grant Turkey economic and other benefits that could "bring a lot of money," was heard from a correspondent on the spot. The EU Council President, would have mentioned, however, that this would require an EU resolution. On Stoltenberg's hint that Sweden would be able to stand up for Turkey in the EU (be it with regard to the discussed 'customs union', be it with regard to EU accession per se), Prime Minister Kristersson readily responded. Describing Sweden's role at the pre-summit mediation, the ARD correspondent of the German Tagesschau in Vilnius said: "Sweden has promised to support Turkey on approximately all fronts.

Erdogan probably had a direct exchange with U.S. President Biden in Vilnius and seemed satisfied with Biden's simple promise: the U.S. would now soon supply Turkey with the high-tech fighter jets they had already requested some time ago.

NATO now with terrorism special envoy for the first time

At the Vilnius summit, Erdogan was granted by NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg another request that had also been put forward for a long time. For the first time, NATO now has a special representative for counterterrorism, Stoltenberg told the many correspondents who had traveled to the summit. Who this will be or is - was not mentioned, nor was any other information provided. But as a signal this was probably enough for the Turkish president, for whom "PKK-YPG counterterrorism" is an important issue and who had initially blocked the accession of Finland (until April) and Sweden (until the day of the NATO summit) because of this.

The question is whether NATO has made efforts to mitigate conflict BEFORE taking on the concern of its member Turkey to support it in fighting terror against certain Kurdish groups.

The question is also what innovations now exist in international law (and not only in international law, including the development of inter- or supranational organizations) that could be applied to the case of the Kurds' cultural nation, divided by state against their will, whether in Kurdistan or elsewhere.

Finally, the question is what innovative proposals the Kurds concerned can contribute from their respective contexts of life - to protect and further the existence of their state-divided cultural nation.

Dear friends of the Jemal Nebez Foundation, old and new!

It could very well be that from these first questions many more - and better ones - will develop. Then we would almost be on the way to a veritable first Jemal Nebez research project.

The aim is to stimulate new thinking and action on all institutional levels that are suited to bring about change and are likely to alleviate the situation for Kurds - in Kurdistan and elsewhere, which has become almost unbearable in a 100 years of genocidal politics against Kurds.

Let's keep at it. With staying power, step by step, and always on the basis of excellent research results.

Very best wishes!

Reez w silav!

Jemal Nebez Stiftung

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On the 2023 parliamentary elections in Turkey

Erdogan again President, appoints Ministers of Kurdish Origin, Kurds want Self-determination Status

Islamic conservative President Recep Erdogan has been re-elected to a five-year term. And he let it be known that he would also make himself available for after that.

Setting the course for the coming months, 2024 local elections.

Erdogan's new cabinet initially offers hope for moderation. However, if this could mean a change of course, and if so, for how long, is totally unclear. In the presidential system Erdogan has tailored for himself, he has every opportunity to determine Turkey's course.

As for his new cabinet, two appointments are likely to attract particular attention abroad, namely the appointment of Mehmet Şimşek as finance minister (which could mean a new course in fighting inflation) and the decision to fill the post of vice president with Cevdet Yilmaz, an experienced economic specialist, and to put him in charge of reviving the economy. If districts in the southeast that remained neglected after the 2015 unrest were given catch-up attention and could participate in the country's revival, including in terms of earthquake reconstruction aid, not only would the economy be revived, but also a start would be made on finally taking long-standing injustices seriously. This would also be a good start altogether to regain confidence in Turkey as a business location across the borders, which is lost.

In election campaign mode and in the struggle to implement the presidential system he wanted, Erdogan relied on polarization and on ever new confrontations. To this end, he had a loyal agitator in the Interior Ministry for years: Süleyman Soylu.

Popular with the ultra-nationalist Gray Wolves, Soylu had cracked down on a wide range of government opponents after the 2016 coup attempt and had consistently pursued a particularly repressive course against the Kurds. Instead of condemning attacks on opposition politicians during the election campaign, he had threatened to "crush" the opposition. He also cast doubt on the legitimacy of the elections when he claimed that a victory of the opposition would amount to an "attempted coup by the West."

The new Interior Minister, Ali Yerlikaya, has a lot of experience in managing metropolises and cities. He is considered loyal to Erdogan. In any case, he appears conciliatory. When he took office, the 54-year-old said that as interior minister he would be guided by "the rule of law and human rights."

That raises hopes for a less repressive course against the opposition in Turkey.

Unforgettable June 2015

The tough stance against the opposition was linked to the AK Party's election defeat in June 2015, which hit the AKP leader at a time when he wanted to move forward with his plan to transform Turkey into a presidential system tailor-made for him, now facing a strengthened opposition.

It had not escaped his opponents how his dispute with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party PKK had failed. After he broke off peace talks with the party, which more than a few ultra-rightists welcomed, bloody riots broke out in south-eastern Turkey, with roadblocks and tank deployments. This brought back bad memories for the population there of the war against the PKK in the 1980s and 1990s, and also recalled more distant military intervention such as the Dersim genocide in the late 1930s. The attempt to reach a just peace lasted from 2013 to 2015. The unjustified abrupt termination of the attempt further aggravated the situation.

Erdogan's electorally correct decision to hold early elections in November of that year quickly made up for the June election defeat and regained an absolute majority, but the unresolved problems, opposition and criticism of him remained.

A new era for Kurds in Turkey

For the pro-Kurdish HDP, the parliamentary elections in June 2015 brought a breakthrough. For the first time ever, a pro-Kurdish party succeeded in qualifying for inclusion in the "Grand National Assembly of Turkey" in a parliamentary election. There was no problem for the party this time to clear the ten-percent threshold. At 13.1 percent, its share of the vote was even significantly higher. As first pro Kurdish party (which all along had claimed to represent the concerns of the Kurdish minority in Turkey), it not only joined the "25th Grand National Assembly of Turkey", but could also form its own parliamentary group. The minimum number of elected deputies for this is 20. The pro-Kurdish HDP had 80 elected deputies in its parliamentary group.

November 1, 2015 confirmed what was previously achieved

Once again, the pro-Kurdish HDP was able to easily overcome the ten-percent threshold, albeit with fewer percentage points (10.8) and fewer elected HDP deputies (59), but was again able to form its own parliamentary group for its parliamentary work.

In terms of the number of party deputies elected, it even ranked third in the parliamentary group hierarchy after the November election (after the AKP (317) and CHP (134), but with 59 elected HDP deputies ahead of the MHP, which was only able to bring in 40 deputies in November, whereas in June, the HDP and MHP had the same number of elected deputies in parliament, 80 each).

June 2018 Parliamentary elections again a success for the Kurds

In this election, the pro-Kurdish HDP was able to slightly improve on its last overall good result to 11.7% voter share and 67 HDP deputies (thus achieving even a better result than the ruling coalition MHP, 11.1% with 49 MHP deputies elected).

Yet the period from November 2015 to June 2018 had been full of challenges. It included the coup attempt in June 2016 and what followed on the part of the Erdogan government: arrests and dismissals by the thousands. In November 2016, the dual leadership of the pro-Kurdish HDP, Demirtas and Yüksedaq, was arrested.

It also included Turkey's attacks on Kurds in Kurdistan in Syria or Rojava, which were illegal under international law, and for which Erdogan won the approval of the majority in parliament, without the NO vote of the pro-Kurdish HDP faction being taken into account.

It was also during this period that Erdogan's desired presidential system in Turkey moved forward and eventually was introduced. The pro-Kurdish HDP voted NO in parliament on January 20, 2017, and as they were not the only ones, Erdogan's request failed, at least in parliament. A popular referendum was then held in April 2017. This brought Erdogan the desired approval.

Before and during the 2023 election campaign, Erdogan threatens to ban pro-Kurdish HDP

The AKP leader repeatedly threatened to ban the pro-Kurdish HDP for "collaborating with terror".

On account of this, and after much hesitation, the party finally refrained from standing in the May 14, 2023 election for Turkey's 28th Grand National Assembly. However, individual HDP members with the relevant qualifications could stand for election through other parties' lists, which is usual in Turkey.

Green-left YSP party to run in 2023 parliamentary election

Three times previously, the Green-Left Party YSP had supported the pro-Kurdish HDP in elections, in the 2014 presidential election (when HDP politician Demirtas stood for election and finished with 10%, Erdogan 51.8%, Ihsanoğlu 38.4) and the YSP supported the pro-Kurdish HDP in both 2015 parliamentary elections. It did not run itself then and it did not field candidates.

In May 2023, it was the other way around. The Green-left party YSP had put up its own candidates and registered the party for election. It also put some HDP deputies on its list. In addition, the YSP stood in place of the pro-Kurdish HDP in the Alliance for Labor and Freedom.

In this constellation, the Green-left YSP party managed to overcome the (now lowered) seven-percent threshold, with 8.8 percent and 61 deputies.

Conclusion:

How things proceed will involve the interaction of elected Kurdish deputies in parliament, whether on the side of the government or on the side of the opposition, or by putting forward their own ideas.

At a suitable moment, individual elected representatives in parliament can also take the initiative and put forward the demands of their constituents – for them to be heard at this high level. For example, this one on amending Turkey's constitution:

- **Recognition of the Kurdish people and the identity of the Kurds in the constitution.**
- **Recognition of the Kurdish language as a second official language and teaching with it at all levels of education;**
- **Recognition of the status in which the Kurdish people have the right to govern themselves in Kurdistan.**

"Against PKK terror, other groups" - Erdogan's negotiations with NATO/ Sweden

Some of the new appointments to the new Erdogan cabinet give hope for moderation. However, this cannot be said of the appointment of Hakan Fidan to the post of foreign minister. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* NZZ ran this shortshort on him shortly after his appointment was announced:

'The longtime intelligence chief is considered a level-headed, experienced negotiator with excellent contacts in the Middle East. However, Fidan was responsible for supporting Islamist rebels in Syria and for kidnapping Turkish dissidents abroad. In his new office, too, he is likely to be guided less by the law than by national interests. And what those are will continue to be defined by Erdogan.'

No sooner was the new minister in office than his ministry reported that in a telephone conversation with his Swedish counterpart, he had demanded 'concrete steps' from the latter, including the establishment of a 'permanent talks mechanism' between the two states. These talks are to address the terror threat posed by the PKK and 'other groups.'

Foreign Minister Fidan was head of the Turkish intelligence agency MIT when three Kurdish female politicians were assassinated in Paris on January 9, 2013: Sakine Cansiz, Fidan Dogan and Leyla Saylemez. The case has been intensively investigated by the French police and widely publicized.

And among the 'Islamist rebels' to whom he conveyed Turkey's support is the 'IS'. Just the 'IS', which - with the mentality of the first centuries of Islam - in a barbaric way took possession of land belonging to Kurdistan, first brutally robbed the people farming there and then tried to make taxpayers out of them. In the case of a group of Kurds of other faiths (Yezidis), extermination was the goal, by killing men and boys, enslaving their women and even offering them for sale in markets. These crimes of the "IS", which date back ten years or less, will never become time-barred.

Increased need for communication between NATO and its member Turkey

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is interested in fast and intensive contact with Turkey. He attended Erdogan's inauguration ceremony in Ankara and the first urgent talks took place that weekend.

No sooner was the foreign minister in office than his ministry reported that in a telephone conversation with his Swedish counterpart he had demanded "concrete steps" from the latter so that it could "move forward" with the approval of the membership applied for by Sweden. The message specified one concrete step, namely the establishment of a "permanent discussion mechanism" between the two states. These talks are to deal with the terrorist threat posed by the PKK and "other groups." Not only Sweden, but also other "Nordic countries" have been accused by Ankara of harbouring Kurdish "terrorists" and protecting them from extradition to Turkey.

NATO Secretary General urges - wants Turkey's participation in the coalition of the West against Putin-Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

Not only President Erdogan and his Foreign Minister, also NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is interested in quick and intensive contact with Turkey. He attended Erdogan's inauguration ceremony and the first urgent talks took place that weekend.

The political West, all NATO members (with some exceptions like currently still Sweden and paradoxically also Turkey) is known to be looking for more partners to support its coalition against Putin-Russia because of latter's war of aggression against Ukraine. NATO is looking for partners to decisively support its political coalition against Putin-Russia, as we know, because of the latter's war of aggression on Ukraine.

Turkey, as a NATO member, is apparently not obligated to do so and has not been willing to do so so far. Instead, it positions itself as a go-between. As to the EU sanctions against Russia, they have been undermined by Turkey.

The NATO military alliance only obligates member states to protect each other in the event of a war of aggression. An attack on one member is like an attack on all. Only this is the so-called NATO case.

Turkey's war of aggression on Rojava in Syria in violation of international law.

Given that Turkey itself is waging a war of aggression against a Kurdish region in neighbouring Syria, this NATO initiative inevitably raises many questions.

NATO's stance on this so far has been - silence. This attitude is likely to have damaged the credibility of the military alliance. In self-representations, NATO speaks of itself as "values-driven."

If a lot of money is to flow, a lot will have to be disclosed

After World War 2, a lot of money has already flowed to Turkey once - under the Marshall Plan - but Turkey's genocidal policies against the Kurdish minority in the country have continued unchallenged.

Of course, there have always been variations of this policy and some refinements, as just now - with the appointment of ministers of Kurdish origin. The terrible policy toward the Kurds in Turkey has thus changed only superficially, with no guarantee of continuation.

It is not yet clear whether President Erdogan wants to give his country, which consists mainly of ethnic Turks, a new direction that includes the self-determination that Kurds in Turkey are demanding today.

Nor is there yet any talk of major financial concessions to Turkey, only to be expected in view of the country's economic and financial difficulties.

Still open, Sweden's NATO accession

How this dispute will end, now under Foreign Minister Fidan, has not yet been fully decided. What demands Turkey wants to hold on to vis-à-vis Sweden, and what concessions it is prepared to make, are being negotiated covertly.

It is not clear when the actual results can be expected. But as there is a desire from two sides - Sweden's and the NATO Secretary General's - for an early conclusion, it can be assumed that it will be soon.

In July - at the next NATO summit in Lithuanian Vilnius- there will be news on the matter for sure.

Best regards!
Reez w silav,

Jemal Nebez Stiftung

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Within days - on May 14 - Turkey will hold an election

This election has a lot of attention worldwide. It is said to be important for the future of Turkey. Two camps are going head-to-head - according to the polls. The still-president Recep Erdogan (with the conservative-Islamic AK Party founded by him and again necessary, extreme-right ultranationalist coalition partner MHP) faces an unusual opposition alliance. This is led by the conservative Century Party CHP (Republican Party) under Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu who has gradually been able to bring many small parties to his side.

Hard-fought election campaign for majority of votes

The issues are inflation and corruption, the refugee situation, the mega earthquake and who is to blame for its cataclysmic consequences.

It is also about the Islamization of society, which has become much stronger under President Erdogan, and about Turkey's return to parliamentarianism, which is important to many people, after President Erdogan introduced the presidential system as an alternative, hastily and autocratically, after he had to endure an attempted coup in 2015.

Rather autocratic introduction of presidential system

The new form of government was introduced in an increasingly autocratic manner and at an inopportune time, according to many critics. It was introduced after the still-president had to suffer a coup attempt, although it remains unclear to this day whether he did not stage it himself. Others look for the culprits in the Gülen movement. Still others see a connection with the talks with Kurdish representatives that had previously been held at the highest level for more than 2 years. These talks failed because Erdogan, then still prime minister, unexpectedly broke them off. It was as if these talks suddenly turned out to be a hot potato for the AK chief.

It is conceivable that the AK leader suddenly realized that too much innovation would quickly deprive him of the government majority. In any case, after breaking off talks with the Kurdish representatives, he made the party most hostile to the recognition of Kurdish identity in Turkey his coalition partner. He has also entered this election campaign with the ultranationalist MHP at his side.

Erdogan's 'hot potato' - birth defect and genocidal politics

The first 10 Erdogan years were wonderful years for him and his conservative Islamic AK Party. He obviously felt strong when he started the high-level talks and did not hide them, although he must have known that touching the birth defect of his country is still taboo in his country.

Only one other politician in the 100 years since Turkey was founded had dared to do so before Erdogan. Turgüt Özal, who was then serving as Turkish president, brought into this office in 1989 by the Turkish military. Özal was popular with the electorate in Turkey, he had founded the Anavatan (Motherland Party) and had much experience in Turkish politics. He had served twice as prime minister before he received the honor to become president. Turkish military. And Özal was not deterred by the taboo.

He died in office in 1993. His family believed he had been poisoned.

A look at history. In the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, the Kurds were not denied their national rights; the option of future independence was mentioned. In the event of their partial assignment to the territory of the state of Turkey to be founded, they were expressly promised autonomy in the Sevres Treaty.

But the Sevres Treaty was suspended due to the war going on. After the Turkish-Greek War of 1919-22 ended two years later, the Treaty of Sevres (1920) was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923.

The Treaty of Lausanne essentially regulated the expulsion of Greeks from Asia Minor and established the present-day border between Greece and Turkey. In addition, it contained several articles on the rights of minorities in the Turkey to be founded, by which term in the Islamic context Christians are traditionally meant. Probably due to the revolutionary spirit of the times and simplicity, the Lausanne Treaty refrained from mentioning the Kurds by name. However, in a statement put on record by the head of the Turkish delegation, they are explicitly mentioned: "The government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey is the government of the Kurds just as it is the government of the Turks (...)."

But the reality in the new state was quite different

Something new and terrible arose under the hands in the Turkish government led by Kemal Atatürk in the first 15 years, which can be called - in a nutshell - genocidal policy. At the same time, the state apparatus was working on the ideology of the state, which was completely new in the region. As a Western-style nation-state, Turkey also used its foreign policy options to implement its anti-Kurdish goals in its own country

If one look is not enough, there are many research results and documentations

Apart from what was part of the common genocidal policy in the first decades, such as the use of the word Mountain Turks for Kurds, the prohibition of speaking the Kurdish language in public, or the many Turkish military operations into Kurdish areas with terrible human casualties and destruction of livelihoods (which measures were reinstated in the 1980s/90s) there was more. For the present, the keeping of Kurdish out of the Turkish public school system and the fact that people can only live their ancestral Kurdish identity in Turkey together horrors, among others: Suspicion of terrorism, arrest, interrogation.

What can change, how?

Unfortunately, there can be no answer to this question at the moment, and probably not after the elections. But according to the recipe of democracies, we have communicated - to the best of our knowledge and conscience - what we consider extremely important and what can no longer be left unsaid.

May there be more goodwill between people everywhere. May there be more goodwill for Kurds. A conceivable approach would be to work through this problem including its broader implications, and with a steady eye to the future.

Who could do that? It could be the UN. To make a start, it could also be a body created and mandated by some responsible states.

Reez w silav!
Warm greetings!

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