



## 3/2023 JNS NEWSLETTER ٣/٢٠٢٢

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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!

For Kurds and our foundation, these times are almost unbearable, as - to an extent never seen before - it is precisely such topics and historical data that are being widely discussed in the global public sphere in connection with the suffering and injustice in the Near East, which the Kurds and their ancestral homeland of Kurdistan also had and have to experience and which, unfortunately, have been ignored on that scale.

Every day, the media remind Kurds around the world of their own suffering, which is not addressed and which they bear alone, which is even more painful.

Such suffering and injustice, i.e. genocide and the unlawful division of a civilized nation are unforgettable and cannot expire.

### Kurdistan in the course of the reorganization of the Near and Middle East between 1920 and 1946

#### Excursion to the relevant starting point, Treaty of Versailles that ended WW I

Kurdistan, which was ultimately divided into three new nation states - Turkey (1923), the Arab state of Iraq (1932) and finally the Arab state of Syria (1946) - was part of the land mass that had fallen to the victorious powers with the capitulation of the Ottoman Empire in 1918. At this point, it had already been decided to divide the vast territory into nation states of a Western pattern and to place the political process in the hands of two states from the circle of the victorious powers: Great Britain and France. Preparations were also made for the founding of the League of Nations from

among the victorious powers, with further founding members invited, which was also to provide corrective support to the two appointed mandate powers, Great Britain and France, during the process.

At the beginning of 1920, the three conditions under international law for the partition of Kurdistan were in place: the Versailles Peace Treaty had been signed and ratified, the two Mandate Powers had been appointed with far-reaching powers, and the League of Nations had been established to assist them.

However, something had also gone wrong after the armistice agreement in 1918. The conditions imposed on the Young Turks for the land mass of Asia Minor were not met in western Anatolia, on the Bosphorus and along the Mediterranean. This led to the Greco-Turkish War, which was then waged by the Turks as a war of liberation, with the result that they regained control of the Bosphorus. However, this was only after the victory of the Young Turks in the Greco-Turkish War in August 1922. The strengthened Young Turks under Atatürk were no longer willing to accept the treaty that had already been negotiated with them in Sevres in 1920 and concluded with details of the impending foundation of the new Turkey. The content of the 12th point of Wilson's "Fourteen Points" on the self-determination of "the remaining nationalities formerly under Turkish rule" was recognizable in the Sevres Treaty, even if it had not been accepted. In any case, the Young Turks were now pressing for new negotiations. They were given way and in June 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne replaced the provisions of Sevres. The League of Nations agreed and the new Turkey was founded in October 1923.

What was overlooked, or was not considered important, was the fact that the decision to grant the new Turkey a major part of Kurdistan located in the east of Asia Minor deprived the Kurds in this part of Kurdistan of the opportunity to live out their right to undisturbed independent development.

Since this point did not play a role in the founding of Turkey and the appointed Mandate powers had no conditions whatsoever to formulate certain rights for Kurds or to maintain the settlement area of the Kurds in context, there was a proliferation in the policy directed against Kurds, first in Turkey and then in neighboring countries, which is correctly described as genocidal policy.

The next state proposed by Britain to become an independent nation-state was the Arab state of Iraq. It was founded in 1932 as an Arab constitutional monarchy. The Kurds in Southern Kurdistan proclaimed their own king in order not to have to become part of a monarchy whose Arab king had been imported from elsewhere.

The story of how the Arab state of Iraq came into being, including oil-rich Kurdistan but against the will of the Kurds there, is well documented, as is the helplessness of the League of Nations in the face of a mandated power bent on imposing its will. The southern Kurds resisted, they were shot at and bombed, they protested, they submitted petitions. None of this was to any avail. The League of Nations agreed, and Iraq became independent. In this case, however, with some conditions regarding language rights for Kurds in Southern Kurdistan. Having them fully in place was then another long struggle for the Kurds in Iraq.

The last part of Kurdistan remained under French mandate for many years, until after World War II. In the last year of the war, action was taken quickly.

Although the League of Nations had already ceased its activities in the mid-1930s, it had formally remained in existence and only dissolved in connection with the founding of the UN (1945) after World War II.

In 1946, when France was ready to propose the Arab Republic of Syria as an independent state to the newly founded UN, the latter accepted the proposal of the long-standing Mandate and colonial power without hesitation. The Syrian Arab Republic was immediately granted independence by the UN, with no restrictions on the protection of the Kurds in its north.

## What happened to Rojhelat / Eastern Kurdistan in the Qajar Empire or in Pahlevi Iran and in the Islamic Republic of Iran

And in Iran, more precisely in the Qajar Empire bordering the Ottoman Empire to the east, how did the Kurds fare there?

Unlike the Ottoman Empire, this multi-ethnic state had not taken part in the First World War and was not initially affected by the Treaty of Versailles and what followed from it, but only when the new Turkey was founded did a certain Pahlevi overthrow the Qajar ruler and found the Pahlevi dynasty. Reza Shah's father initiated the transformation of the former multi-ethnic empire (as the Ottoman Empire had been) into a centralized nation state of his own free will. In many respects, he was on the same line as Atatürk in Turkey and, like him, also took a pro-Hitler course, although both states, Turkey and Iran, were able to avoid being on the losing side at the end of the war. Together with the victorious states in the Second World War, they were of course in favor of the small republic of Kurdistan, with its capital Mahabad, which the Kurds from all parts of Kurdistan prepared in the slipstream of the war and founded in 1945 or proclaimed in January 1946 and were then able to live democratically and peacefully for just under a year, during which time they received the news that in April of that year another Arab nation state - now founded by the UN in 1945 - had been granted independence with part of Kurdistan in its territory. The small republic of Kurdistan capitulated by being handed over to the army commander by its president, who was executed by Pahlevi Iran in March 1947.

1946 was only half-time! After that, the genocidal policy against the Kurds as established between WWI and WWII and the hammering down of their unlawful division as a cultural nation continued

Pahlevi Iran belonged to the Western camp through Reza Shah's (son) excellent relations with the USA during the decades of the Cold War, particularly because Reza Shah (son) maintained excellent relations with the USA.

This changed abruptly when the Shah was overthrown in 1979 - in the course of the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini - and the Islamic Republic of Iran was founded. The Kurds in Eastern Kurdistan tried to make suggestions to the Islamic revolutionaries as to how they could be granted some kind of autonomy in their part of Kurdistan.

But it didn't help, they were attacked militarily, collectively condemned by a curse (Fetwa) from Ayatollah Khomeini and finally overrun by the Iranian army at the outbreak of the Iraq-Iran war that lasted for years.

When the desire for more freedom began to stir in Islamic Iran a good 10 years ago, the famously freedom-loving Kurds in Rojhelat had long since joined in, with internal repercussions as far as Iran. This was noticed by Tehran: when it comes to more freedom, Kurds are happy to be involved, which can lead to special conditions being imposed on them. On the memorial day of Jina from East Kurdistan, who died while visiting Tehran after a dispute with the morality police about the correct way to wear a headscarf, certain conditions were imposed on her home region.

There were instructions on how to organize the memorial day in Rojhelat. But this did not happen. The Kurds in East Kurdistan commemorated Jina by staging a general strike.

European Parliament announces honouring Jina and the freedom movement in Iran with the Sakharov Prize in 2023

We are delighted with this choice by the MEPs.

Jina from Saqqez is known to have bravely defended herself when she was stopped by the Tehran morality police. She died on September 16, 2022 after being mistreated while still in police custody. She will therefore receive this year's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought posthumously.

At the same time, the prize will be awarded to the "Women, Life and Freedom Movement in Iran", whose courage and perseverance in organizing peaceful protests, mainly by young people throughout Iran, has already attracted a lot of attention worldwide. But after the harsh and brutal countermeasures taken by the security forces against the protesting students and young people in Iran, it has become quiet again.

### Salman Rushdie, writer and Nobel Prize winner, wants more

Salman Rushdie, who as a free-thinking individual was cursed with a fetwa by Ayatollah Khomeini at the time and only just survived the attack by a Shia Muslim fanatic in the execution of the fetwa, expressed himself as follows in an interview on the occasion of the news of the prize at a book fair:

"I really admired the protest movement in Iran, the women's protest, and I would really appreciate it if Western governments took more notice of that and supported the process instead of trying to keep the Iranian government in power."

The West should correctly understand and apply this desire and advice, not least with regard to Turkey.

### Kurds want recognition, want to be named

We can only agree with this and add that - Kurds - have of course noticed that Jina is named as a "Kurdish-Iranian woman" in the European Parliament's press release. It has already happened that Jina was named in the world press only with her citizenship classification "Iranian", which falls short of the mark and only addresses one level, such as "European". All Europeans are European, but also more, and the MORE is important to every European.

Incidentally, the keywords used to describe the freedom movement in Iran come from the Kurdish language, which is linguistically older than Persian. The Jin-Jina-Azadi movement grew up under the same name, corresponding to Kurdish culture, in a completely different corner of Kurdistan, namely in the Kurdish region of Rojava in northern Syria, and at a time when civil war was raging in other parts of Syria. Friends of the Kurds and Rojavas have already reported a lot about the innovative cultural power of this part of Syria, which is still partly autonomously governed. Nevertheless, Turkey continues to occupy at least part of it in order to change social cohesion through forced resettlement. And it continues to bring death and destruction from the air to the adjacent Kurdish areas, without ever being held accountable at the relevant level - that of states

### War in Europe, currently in stalemate

The Russia-Ukraine war has now been going on for 20 months without even a ceasefire. The history and facts of the war have been forgotten.

The territories of the two warring states were once an integral part of the Soviet Union, which disintegrated and was wound up at the beginning of the 1990 s. While the new Russia now has - geographically speaking - a European and an Asian part, the territory of Ukraine lies entirely in Europe

### War between two states that emerged from the Soviet Union

Ukraine is being supported by Europe and the European states in this war almost without exception, in humanitarian and political terms. And by the EU and Brussels. The EU is currently examining whether it is possible to open EU accession negotiations with the belligerent country. European states are also supporting Ukraine with weapons systems, including military training, but are deliberately keeping the necessary distance to avoid being considered an active participant in the war. The same applies to the countries of North America, the USA and Canada. As well as for NATO. NATO is also examining whether it is currently possible to admit Ukraine to the defense alliance. Russia is on the other side. Although it triggered the war after years of smoldering conflict and has been widely criticized by the political West as an aggressor, including at UN level, it has been able to counteract this diplomatically and politically and, to the surprise of the West, has met with understanding from some countries around the world. The result is a kind of stalemate.

### Turkey blocks NATO accession of countries willing to join, forces political quid pro quo: active persecution of the PKK as a terrorist organization

In the period before the Russia-Ukraine war, Finland and Sweden saw no need to join NATO. The people there felt safe. Many Kurds persecuted in Turkey also fled there and received asylum and cultural support. When Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership after the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Turkey (a NATO member since 1952) blocked their application. The countries would first have to come into line with Turkey in its persecution of the PKK. In this way, the right of veto that NATO members have on some issues in this organization has probably never been used before.

Finland was the first of the two countries to give in to the extent demanded by Turkey and was able to join NATO early this year. The Turkish head of state and government was only satisfied with Sweden at the NATO summit in Vilnius, but only presented the signed accession protocol to the Turkish parliament for ratification on October 23. But that could be a long time coming. Because at this time, shortly before the 100th anniversary of the founding of Turkey, the Turkish head of state and government was probably already thinking about what benefits could be derived for his unified country from the new war in the Middle East, which had then been going on for a good 14 days.

**Palestine and Kurdistan** - there is an analysis of these two problem complexes from the pen of our namesake, which also includes the situation in Gaza after 2007, when Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip, the territory and the population.

### A new kind of Near East war, since October 7

The terrorist attack from the Gaza Strip came from the ground, from the sea and from the air. It apparently came as a surprise. The attack was carried out by the Palestinian organization Hamas, which has been in control of the territory of the Gaza Strip and its Palestinian population since 2007. The terrorist attack on the ground targeted villages near the border with the aim of taking as many Israeli hostages as possible, which was successful.

### Israel after Hamas terror on 07.10.: *'We are at war'*

Israel immediately named the enemy: Hamas. It also declared the eradication of this organization as a war aim, and has stuck to this position ever since, even in the face of the many pro-Palestine protests worldwide.

The world has experienced an unprecedented polarization, in which all media are involved to an ongoing extent. Irritating topics such as anti-Semitism, hostility towards Jews and Islam are no longer taboo and, like news of the war, are constantly stirring up emotions. Everything seems to be talked about this war, only Kurds and their homeland Kurdistan remain excluded.



Beyond the media and protest activities, Israel - assisted by the UN and individually by many states - has found a way to continue the war against Hamas in the Gaza region while at the same time initiating or permitting measures to help secure the situation of the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza.

Germany, the USA and NATO were firmly on Israel's side at an early stage of this war. Although Israel, founded in 1948, is not a formal member of NATO, like Turkey, it is a partner that NATO assured years ago of protection in the event of an attack.

### Hamas well equipped with weapons and support

Thanks to its tactic of taking hostages during the first onslaught and its astonishing military strength, Hamas was in a good starting position. The tunnel system in Gaza, which was also built for defensive purposes, added to this. Hamas was obviously not lacking in financial resources. This can be traced back to the brotherhood between Islamic Iran and some Palestinian organizations. It all started during the Islamic Revolution with revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini and PLO leader Arafat, which was expanded into an axis directed against Israel after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, this terrorist organization has been able to rely on the largely open support of the Islamic Republic of Iran. As with Iran, Hamas also has good relations with neighboring Lebanon and Syria. Both states have already benefited from Islamic Iran and are as closely linked to it as Hamas.

The axis that has developed between Islamic Iran and the Mediterranean states of Lebanon and Syria as far as the Gaza Strip should be understood as a network consisting of many groups and organizations that have a more or less close relationship, including a financial one, with Tehran.

Having created this informal but firm connection between the Islamic Republic and the coastal part of the Mediterranean has already been called "Ayatollah Khomeini's greatest coup".

Politically motivated processes or events can also be handled via the network between the states on this axis. For various reasons, Iraq is not in a position to take action against this. Since the beginning of the war, the number of attacks on US military facilities on its territory has increased dramatically, more than 40 in number, with corresponding claims of responsibility by terrorist organizations clearly linked to Tehran. Against this backdrop, a deterioration in diplomatic relations between the two countries could be expected next. But these no longer exist between the USA and Iran, and haven't since 1980. But Iran could have stepped up its rhetoric towards the US, but has not yet done so, which probably means that Tehran would rather wait and see in this still Near East war.

### Turkey positions itself anti-Israel

After a good 14 days of the new Middle East war, Turkey's support has been added to the good starting position, significantly shortly before the country's centenary celebrations. Erdogan had already announced the anniversary a year earlier with the triumphant message that the following century would be great for Turkey and the Turks. Then it was quiet over the course of the year. And now this, from the Turkish head of state and government personally in front of a large number of AKP members on 25 September in the open air: "Hamas is not a terrorist organization, but a liberation organization".

### Hamas - a liberation organization for Turkey

Oops, he had just forced NATO and individual NATO states to classify the Kurdish PKK as a terrorist organization again this year.

Recognizing the PKK as a liberation organization has been unacceptable for Turkey from the very beginning, since the 1980s, preferring to wage a dirty war against it, which claimed many victims and destroyed large parts of Kurdistan in Turkey. The EU was also unable to persuade Turkey to

grant the Kurds in Turkey certain rights that were necessary for Turkey's accession during its accession negotiations, which had been ongoing for several years. The accession negotiations were therefore broken off.

**The Kurdish PKK should continue to be regarded as a terrorist organization and actively persecuted - as Turkey wishes - while the Arab-Palestinian Hamas should be recognized as a liberation organization.**

These are the two cornerstones of both Turkish domestic and foreign policy, which Erdogan first clarified in NATO in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (which is not yet a NATO member) and recently, shortly before his country's centenary celebrations, in Istanbul, but addressed directly to the West.

In view of the ongoing new type of war in the Middle East, the West is first and foremost Israel and NATO, which has pledged to protect Israel if necessary, and all those states, above all the USA, the EU and Germany in particular, which have declared their special allegiance to Israel.

Incidentally, Erdogan used the stylistic device of disparagement, similar to Islamic Iran in relation to the USA, but Erdogan is now using it against the West as such, including Israel. There is no need to disparage the Kurdish PKK, they do not count, they have always been the enemy and must be fought against completely. Turkey has never agreed to any of the ceasefires offered by the PKK. Kurdish civilians were not granted any respite. Instead, their forests and fields were torched by the Turkish military. So much for the compassion Erdogan shows for the Palestinians.

**To summarize**, the assessment given at the beginning is correct. It doesn't look like things are improving or easing; things could get much worse.

There have already been rocket attacks on Israel from neighboring states. Nevertheless, Israel has not given in for four weeks now, neither politically nor militarily. It could become a prolonged war or even a conflagration.

**Jemal Nebez Foundation,**

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