ARMENIAN BATTALION CELEBRATES ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY

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Please read in conjunction with Karen Mkrtchyan's
Armenian Battalion in Syria, Calculated Move or Blunder?

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Founded on the 104th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Martyr Nubar Ozanyan Battalion is an active component of the Rojava Revolution and defense.

Nubar Melkonyan, one of the battalion commanders, answered ANF's questions about the battalion's one-year activities, new genocide attempts, and the future plans of the battalion.

The Armenian people find themselves in the Rojava Revolution, how did the first Armenian battalion of Syria take part in this revolution?

The Rojava Revolution is not just a woman and a Kurdish revolution, it is also a revolution of oppressed peoples living in these lands. This is how we see it. In addition, this revolution is owned not only by those living in this land. The Syriac, Assyrian and Armenian peoples found themselves in the revolution, just as the Arab people, who did not feel free, joined the Rojava Revolution, led by the Kurdish Freedom Movement. Therefore, this revolution also awakened the peoples looking for themselves, lost in Rojava, scattered like pomegranate seeds, disintegrated, who had lost their identity, and remained under ashes. In particular, the Revolution played a big role in the awakening of the Islamized Armenian people.

Especially in Turkey, they were humiliated, despised, perceived as blasphemy. Here they regained an identity. This was entirely thanks to the Rojava Revolution. For this reason, we should defend the Rojava Revolution more than anyone else. By defending the Rojava Revolution, we defend our identity and root.

The revolutionaries of the Armenian people also gave martyrs to this revolution. One of them is our comrade Nubar Ozanyan. Comrade Nubar Ozanyan led all actions, trained many friends. He took part in the resistance and fought against the mercenaries. He acted with the principle of a commander on the front. He led the participation of the Armenian people in this Revolution.

In one year, we tried to give the Armenians who had disappeared their roots and their identity. This was not easy. Every Armenian friend who came here was assimilated in some way and had lost his real identity. When the friends came here, they would say 'we just thought we were Armenians.' They saw that there was an Armenian force. This gave them strength, determination. While we gave them this identity back, we showed and taught that we should defend and definitely take part in the revolution in order not to be exposed to a second genocide. Friends took steps in this direction. It is not only to protect our own history, language, to return to our history: we showed that these lands should be taken care of.

The battalion both trained itself militarily and took its place on the front of Serêkaniyê and Til Temir.

It is still on the front to defend these free lands.

However, we have a lost language and culture. In the battalion we are carrying out educational activities, as well as giving military education. We give Armenian language education, we tell the history of the genocide and we keep the culture of our language alive.

This revolution maintains and enlarges the brotherhood and friendship of the Kurdish and Armenian people. This is actually a message to Kurds and Armenians all over the world. Our liberation and freedom go together. This is the proof of this reality. We want this to continue and grow.

On which fronts were you active? Has anyone joined your battalion from outside of Syria?

We were in Hesêkê, Serêkaniyê, Tıl Temir and Çiyaye Ebduleziz and some of the neighboring regions. There are people from Armenia who joined the battalion. There are people who want to come. Increasing participation from the region has also had a great impact in Aleppo, Lebanon, Beirut, Armenia and Europe.

In particular we have people who want to join from Aleppo, England, France and America. We stopped receiving people though, because of the coronavirus epidemic.

While the whole world is trying to counter the coronavirus pandemic, the Turkish state continues its attacks on the region. Your battalion is also on the front line.

The Turkish nation state was founded on the concept of slaughtering and destroying Kurds and Armenians. This continued after the nation-state creation. While everybody's attention was on the war, the Young Turks, the Ittihat-i Terakki Party, planned an Ottoman state, with a genocide mentality. This genocide mentality continues to this day.

Today, while all the states of the world are working to protect their people against the coronavirus pandemic, the Turkish state actually used this as an opportunity. They want to destroy the Kurds, just as they destroyed the Armenians in the First World War.

What happened in history is repeated today. Despite the change of date and actors, what happened in the past is happening today. The same mentality, the same denial and destruction policy, continues.

The occupation of Serêkaniyê meant that the Armenian people were also forced to migrate. Do you see the current activities of the Turkish state as a continuation of the Armenian Genocide in 1915?

It is a fact that Turkey would like to repeat what was done to our people in 1915. Yesterday our people were not organized, not aware, unarmed and had no free will. There were no sister peoples to resist with them. Today, however, the situation is very different. Today is not yesterday. Yesterday had much more disadvantages. Yesterday, during the First World War, while everyone jumped at each other throat, the Turkish establishment carried out a genocide in this territory knowing that the

Armenians, Assyrian Assyrians, Yazidi and Chaldeans were not organised. But this is not the case anymore. The people today have forces that represent the free will of these lands. Therefore, we are more advantageous today. Unlike yesterday, today we have friends, Kurds, Assyrians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, who have been subjected to genocide and massacres. We will not allow this again. There is a conscious freedom movement today. And the resistance is growing.

How do you assess the fact that despite 105 years have passed since the Armenian Genocide, it is not recognized internationally? What are your expectations?

We are looking at the forces of democracy. We are looking at the peoples in the world who seek freedom. They will recognize the genocide. We don't care that the USA recognize the Armenian Genocide after 104 years. Where were they during the massacres and occupation of Afrin, Serêkaniyê and Girê Spî? What they have done is just given us a smile after 104 years.

What are your plans for the future?

We want to turn our tabur into a bigger brigade. There are people who want to join from Syria, Lebanon, Armenia, Kurdistan and Europe. There are people who want to join our battalion. It has a great participation potential. In addition to this, the Armenian people is trying to establish a self-governed council. I think these two plans will help providing a free land for Armenians organized outside of their own countries (Armenia). We are trying to explain this here. We are trying to make our people to understand our lost language and culture.

We are with the people who seek freedom in other lands, especially in these lands. Just as the Rojava Revolution opened its doors to us, we are very grateful to the martyrs. Thanks to the struggles of thousands of people who sacrifice themselves in these lands.

The year ahead will be one of even more participation and defense and liberation of these lands.

There are no comments yet.