



# Independent Human Rights Commission in Northeast Syria

Ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights

A joint statement

9th December 2021



# **Independent Human Rights Commission in Northeast Syria: Ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights**

**A joint statement by civil society organizations in north and east Syria  
on the occasion of the International Day for Human Rights**

9th December 2021

Today, December the 10th, marks the International Human Rights Day, which is an important occasion to review the extent of commitment of governments to human rights values and principles proclaimed in the international document adopted by the United Nations on this day from the year 1948. Equally important, it is essential to emphasize the importance of the existence of national human rights institutions in countries and regions that are specialised in protecting and promoting human rights.

Over the past years, the northeast region of Syria has made bold and progressive steps on the path of improving the realization and promotion of human rights. Even though these steps are still in initial stages and in need of greater activation and action, it remains the most stable region and most committed to human rights principles compared to the rest of the Syrian control areas, whether controlled by Syrian regime or Syrian opposition where there are widespread violations of human rights in conjunction with the absence of the rule of law and the dominance of the force of arms in all aspects of civil, political and social life

**While civil and human rights organisation, operating mainly in the region and signatories to the position paper, view this remarkable and positive development regarding procedural steps to protect human rights in Northeast Syria, whether through:**

1. The leadership of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the main military forces in the region, at the headquarters of the International Organization in Geneva on June 29th, 2019, signed an action plan with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment of children under the age of eighteen in ongoing wars and battles in Northeast Syria.
2. The Joint Presidency of the Executive Board of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, on August 30th, 2020, created the Office of Child Protection in armed conflicts.
3. The General Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria on December 13, 2020, pledged to redraft the social contract to be aligned with international human rights conventions and international standards for legislation and on June 10, 2021, a committee to redraft the social contract was formed.
4. The Internal Security Forces (Asayish) opened on September 30th, 2021, an office for detainees' affairs, for the relatives of detainees to be able to check up on them





While **the signatory organizations** welcome and support these steps because of their positive impact on the status of human rights protection and promotion in the region, they call for the establishment of an independent human rights commission in Northeast Syria that is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, which is independent and efficient, able to exercise overall authority, has sufficient guarantees of its independence, and is established in accordance with the Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, is formed in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 48/134 of December 20, 1993 in accordance with following proposal submitted by **Fraternity Foundation for Human Rights**:

### **Frist. Formation and guarantees of independence and pluralism:**

1. The new document of the Social Contract for the Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria provides for the establishment of Independent Commission for Human Rights in Northeast Syria.
2. Establishing transparent and fair criteria for the mechanisms for selecting members of the Commission from among qualified national personnel of distinction in the field of human rights and known for their integrity, impartiality, and independence.
3. Emphasizing the importance of independence of the Commission, whether from the ruling authority with its parties, the local opposition with its parties, or civil society organizations in the region, ensuring that membership of independent candidates is taken into consideration, in a way that guarantees the participation of all national, religious, political and civil components in the region.
4. Disbandment of the Office of Child Protection in armed conflicts and the Office of Detainees' Affairs and merging them into the new body through two specialized committees in the same context
5. Ensuring the financial and administrative independence of the Commission and its members by providing the financial appropriation that enables the Commission to perform its role independently, impartially, and in accordance with the budgets and labor law of the Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria.



## Second: Functions, responsibilities, and work mechanisms

1. provide recommendations and proposals on local legislation, laws, procedures, and judicial rulings to ensure that they are consistent and compatible with fundamental human right principles. When necessary, recommend and propose the adoption of new legislation or the amendment of the existing legislation. And to adopt or modifying administrative measures in accordance with international human rights standards.
2. Preparation of periodic reports on the human rights situation in the region and holding the bodies and security and military forces of the Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria accountable for any human rights violations that may occur. Also receive and investigate complaints and petitions related to individual cases. Cases may be brought before it by individuals, their representatives, third parties, non-governmental organizations, associations, trade unions, etc. and refer them to appropriate authorities.
3. Ensure that members of the commission can visit all detention facilities to assess the availability of judicial guarantees for registering inmates and detainees, and such visits, both periodic and unplanned, shall be subject to notification.
4. Formulate programmes to ensure teaching human rights in the region and integrate them into education at all levels in the region through educational curricula or any other educational resources supervised by the Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria and its relevant institutions.
5. Contribute to efforts of awareness-raising and promoting human rights and combat racial discrimination using both public and private media apparatus.
6. Encourage local authorities to join to international treaties and conventions related to protecting and promoting human rights, in whatever capacity that is available to the legal status of the local authority.
7. Coordinate and communicate with the UN human rights committees and rapporteurs on human rights in the Human Rights Council and contribute to their reports and make recommendations to them.
8. Coordinate and cooperate with international and local human rights organizations, in impartial manner for effective protection of human rights in the region, and to establish relationships with non-governmental organizations that is dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights, economic and social development, combating racism, protecting particularly vulnerable groups (especially children, migrant workers, refugees, and the physically and mentally disabled), or other specialized organisations.



9. Ensure the protection of human rights defenders in the region without any form of discrimination and in accordance with the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms which was adopted and published by General Assembly resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998.

**while we, the signatory organizations of this statement, support the proposal of an Independent Commission for Human Rights in Northeast Syria, in letter and spirit, we:**

1. Call upon the General Council of the **Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria** to discuss this initiative and submit appropriate proposals for its development and implementation in a manner that strengthen the governance of the bodies and departments of the Autonomous Administration of Northeast Syria.
2. Invite the **Syria office at the Human Rights Council** to contribute its expertise in implementing this initiative.
3. Emphasize the effective role of the **United States government** as a strategic ally in Northeast Syria, and we call upon relevant American bodies and institution to aid and support this initiative by providing all available resources in line with the directions of the Biden's administration with respect to implementing, promoting, and protecting human rights.
4. Invite the **international human rights organizations and non-governmental democratic** institutions to contribute their expertise and resources to make such an initiative a success.
5. We call upon on all **political parties and social and religious** bodies in Northeast of Syria to support this initiative, which represents a part of efforts for peace, cooperation, and negotiation among various parties in the region and in Syria in general.

Northeast Syria  
9th December 2021





- 1- Adel Center for Human rights
- 2- AL- Diyar Society
- 3- Amal Center for Civil Activities
- 4- Anwar ALghad organization
- 5- ASHNA for Development
- 6- Benevolent Imprint
- 7- Better Life Organization
- 8- Civil ambulance system
- 9- Civil Society Youth
- 10- Ezdina organization
- 11- Field Response Team
- 12- Fraternity Foundation for Human Rights (FFHR)
- 13- Furate for Relief and Development organization
- 14- Holm Organization for Development
- 15- Hope Links Association for Development HLD
- 16- Hope Without Borders
- 17- Jomard Organization
- 18- Kurdisches studienzentrum
- 19- Kurdish Committee for Human Rights-Rased
- 20- Lasting Peace organizations
- 21- Medicak Skills organization
- 22- Mitan Center for the Revival of Civil Society
- 23- Nabd Team organization
- 24- Organization to remove the smile
- 25- Peace and Civil Society Center(PCSC)
- 26- Peace Land
- 27- PEACE SHE - LEADERS NETWORK
- 28- Qanadil ALAmal Association
- 29- RENG Organization for Development
- 30- Restore Hope
- 31- Rights Defense Initiative - Syria organization
- 32- Road organization
- 33- Sanabel ALfurat Development
- 34- Sanad Humanitarian organization
- 35- Silav Center for Civic Activities
- 36- Syrian Civil Association- Roeya
- 37- Syrian woman council
- 38- Tayif Humanitarian organization
- 39- To gether for Deir ez- Zor
- 40- Union of Al Jazeera Intellectuals
- 41- Violations Documentation Center in Northern Syria



