



The Collective Punishment Method

The Turkish Regime perpetuate the old Turkish approach in dealing with the Kurds

South African Nelson Mandela said, "A man who deprives another man of his liberty is a prisoner of hatred, prejudice and narrow-mindedness." This applies to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's dealings with the Kurds in line with the history of the relationship between the Ottoman sultans and the Kurds, and this confirms the historical stability in the Turks' handling of the Kurdish issue through the duality of containment and oppression without any indications of willingness to listen to the demands of this Muslim people, who demand a political agreement that grants them a margin of freedom to conduct its administrative and economic affairs in an expanded decentralized framework under Turkish sovereignty.

In this regard, Erdogan took advantage of the European & the American cover, which classify the Kurdistan worker's party "PKK" as a "terrorist group", in order to legitimize the brutal attacks against one of the oldest indigenous peoples in the region. It seems that Ankara took advantage of this classification in order to expand its borders at the expense of neighboring countries, which are in a state of internal war, under the pretext of protecting its vital depth from "terrorist" threats.

On 28 of December, 2011, A Turkish squadron targeted a group of Kurds who were on a regular smuggling flight between the Kurdish lands, an activity that was widespread in this region and takes place in full view of the Turkish army, the outcome, 34 Kurdish, most of them under the age of eighteen, were killed in a brutal operation whose memory still hunts the minds of the Kurds.

Turkey refused to admit the crime and insisted that the raids targeted "terrorist operatives" affiliated with the Kurdistan worker's party "PKK", before it back out under the leverage of photos and videos documenting the crime, and under pressure due to the demands that called for "the need for a transparent investigation, announcing those responsible for the crime, bringing them to trial and achieving justice."

The scarcity of reliable original sources that can be used to document this massacre, should be noted, in view of the systematic media blackout practiced by the Turkish authorities on the incident, except for the investigative book written by Dutch journalist Frydryka Khyrdynk entitled "The Boys are Died: The Roboski Massacre and the Kurdish Question in Turkey", which is the only reference that documents this crime in detail that enrich the researcher from other writings that addressed this brutal, painful event.

The accuracy of the Dutch journalist used to address with the events provoked the Turkish authorities, who called her "the whore of terrorists", especially after the conclusions she reached, which is that "the killing was deliberate targeting the Kurdish people." This summary, issued by a neutral journalist, prompted Ankara to expel the journalist Frydryka (2015) and prevent her from entering Turkey.

The siege of the Tyre region in the center of Diyarbakir was a permanence of the tough approach adopted by Ankara in dealing with the demands of the Kurdish people. According to the Turkish narration, the siege of the area occurred due to the declaration of some activists in the Autonomous Region of Tyre, which is a form of administrative decentralization and has nothing to do with any separatist or independence demand.

In this regard, although this initiative was caused by some Kurdish operatives, yet the Turks imposed a suffocating siege on large parts of Diyarbakir, which resulted in many civilian deaths, whose numbers, according to Amnesty State statistics, are estimated at 368 people, in addition to the displacement of more than 24 thousand people from Tyre alone.

The siege of these areas of Kurdistan lasted for more than three months, which was enough to stifle the economy of the region, starve its inhabitants, and force them to leave their homes in poor conditions. This situation is described by Amnesty International's report in January (2016) by saying that: "those inhabitants residing in areas that external observers are currently unable to enter, such fact shows the vulnerable circumstances these inhabitants are currently experiencing as a result of harsh and arbitrary measures."

The Turkish regime resorted to the method of collective punishment against the inhabitants of Diyarbakir considering its political and historical symbolism, which fueled feelings of hostility towards Erdogan's regime in light of the policy of starvation and siege practiced by Ankara, which was described by John Dalhousien, Director of the Europe and Central Asia Program at Amnesty International, by saying: "The cuts to water supply and electricity, in addition to the risks of accessing food and medical care, while those areas are under fire, all have a catastrophic impact on the population."

Giving the Roboski bombing incident and the siege of Diyarbakir, it becomes clear that the Turkish approach towards the demands of the Kurds represents a permanence of the eradication policy that Turkish politicians practiced for centuries against a people who preceded them to history and to the land, a people who had a decisive contribution to building the pillars of the Ottoman Empire when the first founders were on the margins of history and outside Geography context.

Turkey refused to admit the crime of bombing and killing 34 Kurds, most of them were children, in (2011).

"Ankara" expelled the Dutch journalist, Frydryka Khyrdynk; as she proved that the killing of innocent Kurds was intentional.

References:

- 1) Bedirkhan Ali, "Because We Are Kurds: The Story of the "Roboski" Massacre and the Myth of the Turkish Judicial System," a scholarly article published on Hafryat website, (January 2020) 9).
- 2) Frydryka Khyrdynk, Boys died; Kurdish massacre Robosca issue in Turkey, translated by Kevork Khatun Wanis (Beirut: Dar Al-Farabi, 2018).
- 3) Amnesty International report (January, 2016) about the siege of Tyre, the center of Diyarbakir.