

# West Largely Silent About Erdogan's War on Kurds

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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*Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) members are marked for elimination. Earlier attempts for peace collapsed in July. Open warfare followed – Ankara using tanks, artillery, warplanes, attack helicopters and thousands of combat troops in heavily populated areas. Civilians suffer most.*

Cities and towns affected are trapped under virtual siege – without food, electricity, medical supplies and other essentials. Erdogan vowed to eliminate PKK members, freedom fighters wanting local autonomy or independence in Turkey's southeast, wrongfully designated terrorists.

Erdogan minced no words saying “(y)ou will be annihilated in (your) houses, (your) buildings, (your) ditches which you have dug. Our security forces will continue this fight until it has been completely cleansed” – no matter the cost in human lives and suffering.

Trapped civilians say tanks and artillery fire all day long. They have nowhere to hide. They're dying in their homes. Their schools, hospitals and vital infrastructure were destroyed. Kurdish areas resemble war-torn Syria and Iraq – endless devastating conflict with no relief.

Human Rights Watch Turkish researcher Emma Sinclair-Webb blasted what she called “ignor(ing) or cover(ing) up what's happening” to Kurdish communities. Erdogan's operation has “no limits. (There is) no law.”

One Kurdish citizen spoke for others, saying “(t)he east of the country is burning, and it feels like no one” notices or cares.

Western leaders able to intervene responsibly support their Turkish ally, a valued NATO member.

Turkey's General Staff said hundreds of PKK members were killed since late December alone. Dargecit businesswoman Melek Gumus said her warehouses and everything inside were destroyed.

“(T)he whole district is like this,” she said.

“We were stuck at home for 20 days, and there was nothing to eat. It was torture for everybody.”

“We want freedom. We want peace. We don't want them to be unfair to us.”

Turkish forces are destroying everything. Civilians are targeted like militants.

Snipers man rooftops. Anyone going out after curfew risks being shot. Thousands lost everything. People have no work, many without essentials to survive.

Over the weekend, hundreds of Berliners marched carrying signs and banners, saying: "Stop the war against the Kurdish people!" Protesters compared Erdogan's ruling AKP party to ISIS.

Kurds are Turkey's largest ethnic minority, representing up to 25% of the population, according to some estimates, ruthlessly treated for decades.

Earlier, the European Court of Human Rights condemned Ankara for committing high crimes against its Kurdish people since the Turkish state's 1923 creation – including massacres, extrajudicial executions, torture, forced displacements, arbitrary arrests, ravaged towns and villages, as well as disappeared journalists and regime critics.

Erdogan pursues his own agenda while pretending to be combating ISIS in Syria and Iraq. He's a major sponsor of terrorism, representing pure evil.

Selahattin Demirtas co-chairs the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party of Turkey (HDP) – founded in 2012, combining several left-wing groups – including supporters of equal rights for women and gays, secularists, anti-capitalists and environmentalists, putting it at odds with Erdogan's agenda.

He accused HDP of fronting for the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Last week, Ankara's public prosecutor's office opened an investigation into Demirtas, relating to his support for Kurdish self-determination in southeastern Turkey.

The Kurdish Democratic Society Congress (DTK) passed a resolution demanding local autonomy as the only way to resolve things responsibly.

"The rightful resistance mounted by our people against the policies that degrade the Kurdish problem, is essentially a demand and struggle for local self-governance and local democracy," the resolution said.

Demirtas expressed support, saying "regional autonomy offers a very important opportunity for everyone in terms of living together" – putting him at direct odds with Erdogan's agenda.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu accused him of "treason" for meeting with Sergey Lavrov in Moscow last month, publicly denouncing Turkey's downing of a Russian bomber in Syrian airspace.

He forthrightly opposes Erdogan's lawlessness, calling him and ruling party officials "murderers. Your hand is bloody. Blood has splattered from your face, your mouth to your nails and all over you. You are the biggest supporters of terror."

Erdogan tolerates no opposition or critics, Demirtas a likely marked man. Perhaps he and his party officials are designated for elimination as part of Erdogan's all-out war on Turkey's Kurds.

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