



Genocide Emergency Alert Turkey's Aggression in Northern Syria and Iraq

Genocide Watch is issuing a Genocide Emergency Alert for Turkey's aggression in Northern Syria and Iraq.

In November 2022, Turkey launched over 1500 airstrikes across northern Syria and Iraq targeting the Kurdish population and Kurdish towns. Turkey claimed the attacks were in reprisal for a terrorist attack in Istanbul. Ankara blamed two Kurdish parties: the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and the PYD (Syria's Democratic Union Party). Both parties deny any connection with the Syrian bomber.

Turkey's 'reprisals' in northern Syria and Iraq targeted Kurdish towns such as Kobani, Tel Rifat, and Sinjar, where many Kurdish refugees have fled. Turkey's goal is to collectively punish all Kurds for an unrelated attack in Istanbul for which Turkey needs a scapegoat.

Turkish and Syrian Kurds have demanded autonomy within Turkish and Syrian borders for decades. Turkey's policies are part of its historical rejection of ethnic and religious diversity. Turkey's response has resulted in repeated genocides.

Since ISIS was driven back in 2019, Turkey has targeted areas along its southern border with Iraq and Syria where Kurds live, killing Kurdish civilians and Internally Displaced Persons. The attacks spread terror in Kurdish towns to forcibly drive out their inhabitants. Turkey also intends to crush the autonomous Syrian Kurdish administration of Rojava.

Turkey's Erdogan has embraced Ottoman-era Pan-Turkish (Pan-Turanist) eliminationist policies towards minorities. Turkey's Kurdish policies reflect the Ottoman genocides of Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks in 1915-1923 as well as Turkey's continuing denial of the Ottoman genocides.

These military attacks by Recep Tayyip Erdogan's regime are part of a wider Turkish policy of annihilation of the Kurdish and Assyrian people in northern Syria and Iraq. Turkey has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity, including bombing, shelling, abduction, torture, and extrajudicial killings. The attacks are part of Turkey's genocidal policies towards Kurds, Christians, and Ezidis.

Turkey actively supports Azerbaijan's genocidal attacks against Armenians in the Republics of Armenia and Artsakh. Both Azerbaijan and Turkey deny the Armenian Genocide. They aim to destroy Artsakh independence.

Genocide Watch issued Genocide Warnings for Turkey in [November 2020](#), and for Azerbaijan's invasions of Artsakh in November [2020](#) and [2022](#).

In the wake of the Istanbul terrorist attack, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre announced that the US stood "shoulder-to-shoulder with [its] NATO Ally [Turkey]." Genocide Watch condemns the Istanbul terrorist attack. However, we also call the US government's attention to Turkey's open threats of renewed genocide against Kurds, Armenians, Christians, and other minority groups in Northern Syria and Iraq.

Turkey exploits its NATO membership for aggression with impunity against Armenians, Kurds, and Ezidis.

Genocide Watch calls on NATO to suspend Turkey's membership if it again invades Northern Syria and Iraq. Suspension from NATO will warn Erdogan that his aggression will be severely punished.