



STATEMENT ON THE LIBERATION OF RAQQA

This regime based on male dominance, that tries to control all aspects of human life, survived and expanded by exploiting contradictions and escalating the armed conflict. This regime always answers naturally ambiguous yet critical human processes with violence and bloodshed. As women, we faced these brutal politics with the required fighting spirit.

The history of women is full of pain and difficulty, as well as struggle and resistance. When the YPJ was founded on April 4th, 2013, our units took the responsibility for the history of women's resistance onto our shoulders. This date marked the beginning of the march towards the end of women's suffering. Now women across North and East Syria, working in politics, society, culture and in the military, have liberated themselves from male dominance and become key to solving the many problems troubling our region. We emphasize that women are a fundamental source of life and morality.

We built up the Women's Protection Units as an answer to the appearance of terrorist groups in Syria, from Ahrar al-Sham to Al Nusra, and then finally ISIS. These groups posed a massive threat to the people of Syria and especially our women. In one of our first battles against these terrorist groups, our friend Warşîn fell as a martyr while waging a fierce resistance. From this day on, our units became a source of hope for the freedom of all Syrian women, and Syrian women started to see potential in themselves to be revolutionary. If, after today, new generations of women take up the fight, it will as a result of our resistance.

Women stand on the front line of the revolution and defend its values. Our units, that have provided an example from the beginning of the fight against terrorism, continue to resolutely resist. Arîn Mîrkan, who sacrificed herself to defend Kobani from Daesh, has become a symbol for victory and ultimate sacrifice. Our martyrs Şevîn, Sozdar, Hebûn, Silava, Zozan and numerous other heroic women have sent a clear message; women will be free. The liberation of Raqqa was a particularly important achievement ideologically, psychologically and strategically for our units.

From the beginning, our fighters have played an active role on the frontlines. We have been shoulder-to-shoulder with our friends in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the People's Protection Units (YPG). During the liberation of Raqqa, the Women's Protection Units represented the unity of all Syrian women. The fierce defense and resistance of our barricades in the city, where Kurdish,



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Arabic and other women stood together, is the foundation of the sisterhood and brotherhood of all people in Syria. On this basis our units took their place at the forefront of the war and resistance, with tremendous power of will.

By taking Daesh's capital, we made a fierce blow against the heart of terror. Through this resistance we restored the honor of the Yazidi women, and freed the bodies and minds of numerous Yazidi girls and children. Arabic women joined the ranks of YPJ and took an active part in the battle, later building up two women's battalions in Raqqa. A battalion from the YJS, Shengal Women's Protection Units, also fought in the battle, helping to achieve justice for their Yazidi brothers and sisters. As Raqqa was liberated, 450,000 civilians were freed from the grips and cruelty of terrorism, and have been relocated to safe regions. During the historic resistance of the battle of Raqqa, thirty of our female fighters were martyred. We dedicate the liberation of Raqqa to all the women of the world.

YPJ spokeswomen Nesrîn Abdullah
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