

# Turkey's War Against Women Fighting ISIS

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drone assassinations  
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2022



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YPJ Information & Documentation Office  
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The Women's Protection Units (YPJ) is an all-female military self-defense force that was founded in 2013, with the aim of protecting the people and women of North and East Syria. As YPJ we see it as our responsibility to defend the people's right to self-administration and the achievements of women's liberation, ecology and democracy.

The existence of the peoples, histories, and cultures of North and East Syria have been threatened by the barbarism of ISIS and the violent expansionism of the Turkish state. The establishment of women's selfdefence forces was necessary not only to combat these existential threats but to guarantee the people's legitimate right to self-determination and democratic organization.

We have entered an era of modern warfare where war technology is proliferating in the hands of the imperialist world-powers at an exponentia rate. Turkey is one of the leading drone producers in the world and they are using this power the most against the people in all parts of Kurdistan andthe Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria. In the last years Turkey's drone strikes executed out of combat have killed numerous members of our Self-Defense Units, civilians including children, and vital civil infrastructure with the aim to impact the people's abilityto live and survive in these regions once liberated from ISIS.

In the year of 2022 alone, a year with no territorial offensive, Turkey's drone strikes carried out in North and East Syria reached 130. This number includes 8 YPJ members killed by targeted assassination in non-combat situations. What is most remarkable is that in the history of the fight against ISIS in North and Easy Syria, these women were all highly revered in various battles against the Islamic State and played crucial roles in ensuring the safety and security of the region, along the lines of women's liberation. This brochure documents the attacks against these women of YPJ who were targeted as threats due to their strong resistance and struggle for freedom.

## 20.4.2022, Kobane



On April 20, 2022, three YPJ fighters, Dilar Heleb, Kobanî and Ronahî Kobane, were martyred as a result of an attack by a Turkish drone on a vehicle in southern Kobane. The targeted attack was the 29th drone strike carried out by the Turkish state in the autonomous region of North and East Syria in 2022.



## Şehîd Dilar Heleb

### Dilar Heleb - Ranya Henan

**Guerre:** Dilar Heleb

**First-Last Name:** Ranya Henan

**Mother's Name:** Necah

**Father's Name:** Remzi

**Date and Place of Birth:** Efrîn-1988

**Date and Place of Martyrdom:** Kobanê-20.04.2022



Dilar Heleb was born in Afrin. In 2012 she participated in the resistance of the Şêxmeqsûd (Sheikh Maqsoud) district of Aleppo. Soon, she became a leading YPJ commander who was always by the side of the people. Dilar Heleb participated in the fight against ISIS and played a leading role in the liberation of the city of Minbic. She fulfilled her responsibilities in the revolution under all circumstances until the Turkish state assassinated her.



## Şehîd Ronahî Kobanê

### Ronahî Kobanê - Rodîn Ebdilqadir Mihemed

**Nom de Guerre:** Ronahî Kobanê

**First-Last Name:** Rodîn Ebdilqadir Mihemed

**Mother's Name:** Emîne

**Father's Name:** Ebdilqadir

**Date and Place of Birth:** Kobanê-1996

**Date and Place of Martyrdom:** Kobanê- 20.04.2022



Ronahî Kobanê joined the YPJ in 2014 to defend the city of Kobanê against ISIS. She was heavily wounded during the battle. After she recovered, she continued to fight in the ranks of YPJ. She took part in the fight against ISIS and participated in the liberation offensive in Raqqa. Most recently, she was the co-chair of the Defense Committee in Kobanê before she was killed by a Turkish drone strike.



## Kobanî - Cihan Nidal Elî

**Nom de Guerre:** Kobanî

**First-Last Name:** Cihan Nidal Elî

**Mother's Name:** Celila

**Father's Name:** Nîdal

**Date and Place of Martyrdom:** Kobanê-20.04.2022



Kobanî was a member of YPJ. She took her name remembering the great resistance against ISIS that took place in the city Kobanî. She was murdered by a Turkish drone attack in the very city from which she took her name.



30.5.2022, Qamishlo



On May 30, 2022, the Turkish state targeted a car in the village of Sêgirka, on the outskirts of Qamishlo, resulting in YPJ fighter Mizgîn Botan being martyred. In the same attack a civilian, Kesra Melek, was killed and two fighters, Dîcle Tîrbespiye and Hêvîdar Dirbesiyê, survived with injuries. This was the 39th Turkish drone attack in North and East Syria in 2022.





## Şehîd Mizgîn Botan

### Mizgîn Botan - Rahime Xezali



**Codename:** Mizgîn Botan

**Name and surname:** Rahime Xezali

**Mother's name:** Sureya

**Father's name:** Ismail

**Place and date of birth:** 1989-Selmas

**Place and date of martyrdom:** Qamishlo-30.05.2022



Mizgîn Botan joined the ranks of YPJ upon the call for mobilization during the war against ISIS in Rojava. Being from the city of Salmas in Eastern Kurdistan (Rojhilat), she grew up in a family that was connected to their land. She felt great happiness when the Rojava Revolution took place. When ISIS attacked Rojava, she went there and took her place in defending the revolution. She took part in many battles against ISIS, was a defender of the ideology of women's freedom, and lived a life with a great and meaningful spirit of comradeship. She was killed by the Turkish state in a targeted assassination carried out by a drone strike on her vehicle in Qamishlo.



## 2.7.2022, Raqqa



On July 2, 2022, a car was targeted in the village of Tel Samin in Raqqa, resulting in SDF and YPJ commander Mizgîn Kobane being martyred and two other fighters injured. This was the 49th Turkish drone attack in North and East Syria in 2022.



## Şehîd Mizgin Kobane

### Mizgin Kobane - Siham Muslim

**Nom de guerre:** Mizgin Kobane

**Real name:** Siham Muslim

**Mother's name:** Amina

**Father's name:** Ahmed

**Date of Birth:** Kobane/ 1990

**Place and date of Martyrdom:** Raqqa, July 2, 2022



Mizgîn Kobane was born in Kobane. She grew up in a family that was deeply connected to the social values of their land. In her family she learned a spirit of resistance and freedom. She joined the Rojava Revolution early on and participated in defending the women and people in Aleppo. She shared the experiences that she had gained in Aleppo with her comrades and participated in many battles against ISIS. In Serekaniye she resisted against the Turkish occupation and demonstrated the will of revolutionary women fighting against occupation. She put all her intellectual energies into promoting the idea of free women before she got assassinated by the Turkish state in a drone strike in Raqqa.



## 22.7.2022 Qamishlo



On July 22, 2022, an armed UAV from the Turkish state targeted a car on the road between Qamishlo and Tirbespiye, resulting in YAT and SDF commander Jiyân Tolhildan, YPJ commander Roj Xabûr, and YAT fighter Barîn Botan being martyred. This was the 56th drone strike that Turkey committed in North and East Syria in 2022.



## Şehîd Jiyân Tolhildan

### Jiyân Tolhildan - Salwa Yusuf

**Nom de guerre:** Jiyân Tolhildan

**Real name:** Salwa Yusuf

**Mother's name:** Asia

**Father's name:** Hussein

**Place and date of birth:** Afrin / 1980

**Place and date of martyrdom:** Qamishlo – 22/07/2022



Jiyân Tolhildan has been involved in organizing the ranks of the YPJ since the first day of the Rojava Revolution. She participated in establishing the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and became the leader of the Counter-Terrorism Units (YAT). She led liberation campaigns against the terrorist group ISIS in cooperation with the International Coalition forces. She fought relentlessly and with great courage in all the battles to build the project of the Democratic Nation and to achieve women's freedom in North and East Syria. On the 22nd of July, 2022 she gave a speech on self-defense at the Women's Forum that was held in Qamishlo on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Women's Revolution in Rojava. On her way back, she was killed in a targeted assassination carried out by a Turkish drone that hit her car in Qamishlo.



## Roj Xabûr - Joana Hisso

**Nom de guerre:** Roj Xabûr

**Real name:** Joana Hisso

**Mother's name:** Shams

**Father's name:** Hasan

**Place and date of birth:** Dirbesiye / 1992

**Place and date of martyrdom:** Qamishlo – 22/07/2022



Roj Xabûr was born in the city of Dirbesiye. Since the very beginning of the Rojava Revolution, she joined the ranks of YPJ with great enthusiasm. She developed deep belief in a free life and became a role model for her comrades. As a YPJ commander she was participating in several liberation campaigns against ISIS terrorism, also with the cooperation of the International Coalition. In July 2022 she was murdered in a drone attack carried out by the Turkish state



## Şehîd Barîn Botan

### Barîn Botan - Ruha Bashar

**Nom de guerre:** Barîn Botan

**Real name:** Ruha Bashar

**Mother's name:** Qadria

**Father's name:** Marwan

**Place and date of birth:** Shahba'a / 2003

**Place and date of martyrdom:** Qamishlo – 22/07/2022



Barin Botan was born in Shehba and grew up in a revolutionary family. She was full of hope for a free life when she joined the ranks of YPJ. With her unprecedented enthusiasm she became a member of the Anti-Terror Units YAT and fought vigorously against all authoritarian forces. She was killed by a Turkish drone attack in Qamishlo on the 22nd of July 2022.



## 2022: Turkey's drone war on North and East Syria

The attacks described above document the deadly attacks on members of the YPJ carried out by Turkish drones in 2022. However, there have been other attacks as well. At the beginning of the year 2022, on January 20, ISIS launched a coordinated attack on the al-Sina'a prison in the Ghweiran neighbourhood in the city of Haseke, where thousands of ISIS militants were detained. The attack escalated into a weeklong battle that was successfully repelled by the fast intervention of our forces and other SDF components. With this attack, ISIS attempted to free detained militants in order to bring bigger parts of the city under their control and ultimately to re-establish their so-called caliphate. In the battle of Haseke 121 people were martyred. On February 3, 2022, YPJ fighter Ronahî Xebat was on her way, along with three more fighters, to the funeral of a fallen fighter who was martyred in the battle of Haseke. Their car was attacked by a Turkish drone near the village of Xerez on the road between Amûdê and Dirbêsiyê. Luckily, none of the three women and one man inside the car was martyred. However, YPJ member Ronahî Xebat, was severely injured and lost her leg in the attack. Being a veteran of the fight against ISIS herself and having participated in the operations in Serêkaniyê, Cezaa, Mabruka, Raqqa, Tabqa and Manbij, Ronahî Xebat was directly targeted because, as a member of YPJ, she had fought against ISIS.

Besides the drone strikes in 2022 that directly targeted YPJ fighters, there have also been drone attacks in the same year, which killed women engaged in defending their society against threats like ISIS. On July 28, 2022, four members of the Internal Security Forces were martyred in a drone attack on a car on the Ain Issa-Raqqa road, near the Tel Samen IDP camp, south of Ayn Issa. This attack was the 61st drone attack on North and East Syria in 2022. Three of the four victims were women: Selma Elî Mistefa, who was part of the women's organisation of the Internal Security Forces, Cîhan Mihemed Mistefa, who was leading the women's organisation of the Internal Security Forces of Ayn Issa, and Sara Mihemed El- Hisên, who left a husband, 5 children and grandchildren. Additionally, on August 9, 2022, a Turkish drone attacked a position of the conscripted Self-Defense Forces north of the COVID-19 hospital in Qamishlo. Four members of the Self-Defense Forces were killed, among them Dilsoz Tirbespiye, a young woman who had joined the volunteer programme of the Self-Defense Forces. This was the 74th Turkish drone strike on North and East Syria in 2022.

On August 18th 2022, a Turkish drone targeted a group of teenage girls playing volleyball in an UN-affiliated education center 2 km close to the base of the U.S.-led International Coalition in Haseke. The center was assigned to underage girls who were yet not accepted into YPJ. Mazlum Abdi of SDF General Command has been signing a United Nation Action Plan to end and prevent child recruitment. The school Turkey attacked was opened following this Action Plan. As a result five girls were killed and ten others wounded.

While 2022 has so far been the year with the highest number of such targeted assassinations of YPJ members by Turkish drones, Turkey had already killed a YPJ member in a targeted assassination in 2021: on August 19, YPJ commander Sosin Bîrhat was martyred, alongside four other male comrades in an attack in Til Temir. Comrade Sosin played a leading role in the liberation of many areas, especially the Sheikmaqsoûd neighbourhood, which accomplished a huge victory through the revolutionary people's war in the historical city of Aleppo. Afterwards, she participated in many battles against ISIS and became a source of morale for all fighters. The circumstances of her assassination were revealed when three agents of the MIT, the Turkish secret services, were caught in a special operation and confessed that the attack was premeditated.

Turkey continues to assassinate members of YPJ to this day. On May 11, 2023, a Turkish drone attacked the vehicle of YPJ fighter Cûdî Egîd in the town of Jalabiyya, in the south-east of the canton of Kobane. As a result of this attack Cûdî Egîd was martyred.





## The attacks on YPJ are a direct support of ISIS resurgence attempts

The targeting of YPJ members is part of a wider strategy of the Turkish state. The systematic assassinations of revolutionary women vanguards aim to weaken the women's struggle for freedom and democracy itself. As YPJ, we are not a mere military force but an intellectual one, aiming to build up women personalities that can bring about radical change within society and create a free life. The YPJ is building up and defending a concrete alternative that enables women to liberate themselves, lifting the burden that capital and patriarchy forces on our societies and opening the way towards a true democratic, ecological, and free life. Attacking YPJ members is therefore an attempt to prevent these democratic changes from happening. Furthermore, the Turkish state is assassinating those who became a human shield to protect, not just the peoples of the Middle East from the barbarism of ISIS, but the whole of humanity. As YPJ together with our comrades within YPG and SDF, we have paid the defeat of the so-called caliphate with the lives of 11,000 martyrs. We gave these sacrifices with the full knowledge that fighting ISIS' terrorism does not just protect Rojava, Syria and the Middle East, but the whole world. Attacking those who are fighting ISIS is therefore directly supporting the ongoing resurgence attempts of ISIS.

The pledge we made as the Women's Protection Units is to guard all the different peoples, and especially women, of North and East Syria against all forms of terrorism, occupation, and attacks on the people's right to self-determination. We are willing to continue to protect our people and humanity against ISIS and all those supporting them. We are fighting for a peaceful and democratic future for the Middle East.



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