

Burning of Crops in North and East Syria



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Dossier Committee

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Introduction:

Over the past years, the regions of North and East Syria have witnessed unprecedented events throughout its history, especially in the last years. Many have tried to pressure them in various ways. However, thanks to the cohesion of the co-existing components and their support for the institutions and bodies which have been formed, our regions have laid the bedrock for building a democratic system that can be a role model. Many people expected this to collapse, leading to the deterioration of the economic and security situation, but this did not happen. They bet on the people's rejection of these institutions and bodies, and the government and tried to sow the seeds of strife and discord, but again they did not succeed.

We will find that many achievements have been fulfilled, and others are under way. We can say that this cultural edifice has succeeded in securing the safety of the components of North and East Syria, that it has won over terrorism and its tools, and has been able to gather all the components of the country together.

The cities of North and East Syria have developed significantly in all respects. This development includes the economic and agricultural sectors, especially recently in terms of the agricultural sector, of the diversity of agricultural crops and the provision of all necessary assistance to farmers.

The agricultural sector in Syria in general, and North and East Syria in particular, is the main pillar of the community's economy and the main pillar of food sufficiency. The agricultural sector in North and East Syria has suffered many setbacks which caused imbalance in self-sufficiency in the agricultural sector. As a result of the tragic events that hit Syria in general and the areas of Rojava and North and East Syria, especially as this region is the main source of the local agricultural production, in particular, grains and vegetables



, this led to serious consideration of how to rehabilitate and develop the agricultural sector under the embargo and with limited opportunities.

The agricultural sector at the present time depends on research, development, coordination and cooperation among farmers, institutions and research centers in order to find ways and mechanisms to address and overcome the obstacles that face this vital sector, and to advance it to meet the needs of the community for all kinds of agricultural resources.

Successive dominant regimes adopted policies and practices that fought citizens for their livelihoods, especially in the regions of Rojava and North and East Syria, which is considered one of the most productive agricultural regions in Syria. It is largest in terms of area, its population depends mainly on locally produced food because of its nutritional importance, which is an important source of food for humans.

The Self-Administration of North and East Syria provided all agricultural equipment and machinery at nominal prices to increase production and facilitate the work of farmers. They also provided fertilizer for land, and the latest machinery and the main materials for farmers. The regions of North and East Syria witnessed a qualitative renaissance in recent years in several fields, including agriculture.

I: Fire in farmlands in North and East Syria

In May and June of 2019, there were outbreaks of fires throughout Syrian territory, especially in the regions of North and East Syria. The causes of these fires varied, in addition to being man-made, and the phenomenon of crop fires represents a new war in the region between the conflicting parties.

The fires were spread in Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Tabqa, Kobane and Manbij. In addition, it spread in the countryside of Hasakah and Qamishlo, which are considered the wheat stocks in Syria. These fires caused considerable damage to crops, including wheat and barley. The phenomenon of crop fires continues to haunt the minds of the people and threaten the region with famine.



II: The causes of crop fires

There have been many reasons for the spread of fires in the region this year, including the high temperatures accompanied by winds that increased the fire in the land, and the excessive spread of weeds this year due to heavy rains in the region last winter.

The main reason behind the spread of fires is the presence of sleeper cells who start these fires in order to harm the population of the region and deprive them of their crops, which are strategic for the food security of any country, especially to the North and East Syria.

Several factions have vowed to take revenge on the Self-Administration and the Syrian Democratic Forces after their liberation of many Syrian regions, including the terrorist organization ISIS and its sleeper cells, who vowed to avenge its defeat in Baghouz. The organization took responsibility for most of these man-made fires and confirmed that they will continue to set fire to the largest area possible justifying that they belong, according to their description, to "infidels".

The organization also promised that the harvest season in North Syria is still long, sending a message to its fighters saying: "In front of you, there are thousands of acres of land planted with wheat and barley, and before you their orchards and fields and homes and economic facilities, so start your harvest, God bless your harvest."

In addition, there are documents confirming the involvement of Turkey in the fires in North Syria and their deliberate setting of fires to the lands adjacent to the Syrian-Turkish border.



[Video 1: Turkish soldier setting fire to crops on the border near the city of Darbasiya in Hasaka](#)

[Video 2: Attempts of the people Darbasiya to extinguish the fire](#)

There are other indications that the Syrian regime is involved in setting fires via its proxies in the region, because of the unwillingness of the people to market their crops to the Syrian regime. This is part of the regime's desire to destabilize North and East Syria, which has become one of the most secure areas in Syria, to prove the inability of the Self-Administration to manage the region and protect its components.



The road between Qamishlo city and Qahtaniyah town (Tirbespi)

III: The aim of crop fires in North and East Syria, and the damages:

The fires that consume crops in North and East Syria have become stolen livelihoods. The fires burned vast acres of agricultural land in cities and rural areas (Raqqa, Hasakah and Qamishlo). The first of these fires broke out on agricultural land in the village of Al-Abed, east of Hasakah, burning an area of 5 hectares. The city of Raqqa was also exposed to fires. Hundreds of hectares of agricultural land were destroyed in different areas. According to activists in Ain Isa alone, more than 35 hectares of barley were burned. Other fires burned dozens of acres of in the village of Tel Osman in Jerinia, west of Raqqa, and the village of Mahmudli. All the fires that mentioned in this file were set on purpose.

This is the policy of starvation followed by the Assad regime (the Syrian regime) to settle its differences with its opponents, chief among them the Democratic Self-Administration. Their latest action is to burn large areas of agricultural land in North and East Syria at the start of the harvest season.

The Syrian regime deliberately offered preferential prices compared to the prices set by the Democratic Self-Administration, about 30 Syrian pounds more per kilo.

"If the grain trucks produced from North and East Syria are not sold to areas under the control of the Syrian regime, we will burn everything in those areas." (the popular resistance) of the Syrian regime threatened on social media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XQy6Z3yfD0>

On the other hand, ISIS emerged as the perpetrator of most of the fires in the region, which manifested in the claiming of these fires by its media (Al-Naba Newspaper).

The Turkish state is not so different from the Syrian regime and the terrorist organization ISIS in the burning of these agricultural crops, like the Syrian regime, and ISIS is involved in these fires, as proved in the following video.



The video shows Turkish soldiers setting fire to agricultural crops on Saturday, June 8th, 2019, at 11:22 A.M. in Dirbesiye, north of Hasakeh, on the border between Turkey and Syria.

It is worth mentioning that Turkish soldiers have carried out similar acts prior to this date. They burned the agricultural land in the villages surrounding Derik in the far north-east of Syria, which led to serious damage to agricultural crops in that area.



The moment Turkish soldiers on the Turkish border with Syria set a fire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1a1kHTBJ0w>

It is worth mentioning that the areas of North and East Syria are the bread basket of Syria; the World Food Organization estimated that the Syrian wheat production in these areas is about 65% of the total output of Syrian agricultural land.

Economic terrorism has multiple forms, causing economic losses to the individual, the family and the community in addition to other effects; leading to fear, panic, anxiety and imbalance in economic transactions. The 1996 World Food Security Summit declared that "food should not be used as a tool for political and economic pressure."



Fire burns agricultural crops in the northeast of Qahtaniyah town (Tirbespi)

IV: The support provided by Asayish and local forces in putting out the fires, the results of this phenomenon, and its strong impact on the people of the region.

The internal security forces (Asayish), traffic police, rescue forces, emergency teams, ambulances, the Syrian Democratic Forces, and all military forces and civilian bodies played a prominent role in controlling these fires and helping the people to stop it from spreading. These forces were ready with the available resources. They have sacrificed 11,000 martyrs and 2,000 wounded already, and will not be discouraged by these fires.

The Syrian regime forces, the Turkish state, and ISIS, through their cells and followers, burned the crops, targeting the economy of the region after the victory they achieved for economic purposes to starve the people and displace them. Our forces, who fought terrorism in all its forms, have turned from defenders of the land into firefighters. They have their weapons on one shoulder to protect the people and the land in the North and East Syria, and extinguish fires with their other hand.



In an attempt to extinguish the fires in North and East Syria, many civilians and military personnel have been martyred for the sake of a decent free life, they are as follows:

1. Number of civilian martyrs: 6

- Rashid Ayoub Muslim: Died in the countryside of the city of Kobane
- Ahmed Rimelan al-Mukhlaf: Martyred in the village of Al-Atshan on June 9th, 2019
- Ali Mufidi al-Abbas: Died as a result of fourth degree burns
- Ragheb Ibrahim al-Hamid
- Aziz Saleh al-Mansi
- Majrafa' Hanoush Al-Ali: more than 60 years old, died on June 17th, 2019

2. Number of military martyrs: 4

- Ayman Ibrahim al-Thiab
- Mazen Abdullah
- Saleh Ali al-Mohammed
- Saleh Maani' al-Awad



Majrafa' Hanoush al-Ali



Aziz Saleh Al – Mansi



Ragheb Ibrahim al-Hamid



Ali Mufidi al-Abbas: Died as a result of fourth degree burns



Ahmed Rumailan al-Mukhlaf



Saleh Ali al-Mohammed



Mazen Abdullah



Ayman Ibrahim al-Thiab



Saleh Maani' al-Awad



Rashid Ayoub Muslim

**Statistics of Damaged Crops in North and East Syria until
the preparation of this file:**

No	Region	Ratio of burnt crops (Wheat / Barley)	Burned Hectares
1	Jazira	70% Wheat 30% Barley	37,800 Hectares
2	Euphrates	80% Wheat 20% Barley	2,650 Hectares
3	Raqqa	60% Wheat 40% Barley	3,842 Hectares
4	Deir ez-Zor	70% Wheat 30% Barley	386 Hectares
5	Manbij	60% Wheat 40% Barley	110 Hectares
Note: The fires burnt more than 2,000 trees in the Euphrates and Raqqa regions			

The Self-Administration estimated the losses at 19 billion Syrian pounds in North and East Syria.

In addition, statistics included other losses, including the burning of 1,650 bags, 1,500 in Tabqa, and 150 bags in Deir ez-Zor.

In addition to this, statistics included the burning of trees and agricultural machinery, classified as follows: 2,000 trees (Euphrates Region 500, Tabqa 1,500), 3 agricultural mechanisms (two croppers, one agricultural tractor), and many houses in the Jazira region.

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