

YPJ

The Guarantee of a Free and Equal Life



The Establishment of the Women's Protection Units (YPJ)

The Women's Protection Units (YPJ) have established their presence at the regional level through their struggle against the Baath regime and terrorist groups. Their courage in confronting ISIS mercenaries has earned them global recognition. Through this unwavering stance, YPJ has become a model to be emulated in the protection of women and a trusted force within society.

A world that confines "being armed" exclusively to men is one dominated by sexist and authoritarian mentalities. Historically, this paradigm has prevailed for thousands of years. Despite the decisive roles

women have played in both war and peace, they have been systematically excluded from all spheres of life—most notably from the field of protection.

This militaristic-male system was rejected in North and East Syria, where the spark of the Revolution was ignited by women. Hundreds and thousands of young women joined the Revolution, taking their place within the ranks of defense. This became a fundamental driving force behind the formation of independent women's units and their pioneering role within the broader military structure.

On this basis, the first YPJ conference was held on April 2, 2013, in the city of Derik. During this conference, the strategic framework for organizing women's units was established. It was decided that YPJ would be founded upon the principle of protecting women and society against all forms of attack, violence, and occupation.

Decisions made at the Conference

Women from all Syrian components have the right to join the ranks of YPJ.

The principle of "legitimate self-defense" constitutes the core of YPJ's struggle.

YPJ defines itself as a social force; accordingly, it is not solely a force for the protection of women, but also for the protection of the homeland and all peoples of Syria.

YPJ does not discriminate among the components of the region and organizes itself as a Syrian force.

In order to transform prevailing gender perceptions, YPJ leads the struggle for freedom and equality between women and men.

In place of a state-centered protection system, a system of essential (self) protection is adopted, enabling women and society to defend themselves.

YPJ does not engage in aggression against any state or individual; rather, it is grounded in the principles of self-defense and societal protection.

Criteria for YPJ Fighters

The principles governing membership in YPJ are as follows:

A YPJ member must respect the identities of all components. She must embody a spirit of sacrifice and be prepared to give her life in defense of the values of society, women, and the homeland.

She must remain ready at all times, under all circumstances, to fulfill the duties of the Revolution.

YPJ also defined its framework of joint operation with the People's Protection Units (YPG). While YPJ retains authority over decisions related to the protection of women, it operates jointly with YPG within the broader strategy of defending the homeland, while preserving its organizational autonomy.

Based on the outcomes of this conference, YPJ officially announced its establishment on April 4, 2013.

Why Did YPJ Organize Independently?

YPJ carries a profound and valuable legacy, drawing inspiration from the experiences of women guerrilla fighters across the world and in Kurdistan. It is grounded in a philosophy rooted in women's science (Jineolojî), which seeks to build and protect society.

As women, its members assumed the highest level of responsibility in defending their society and homeland, adopting a firm stance against genocidal attacks and patriarchal authoritarian mentality.

The First YPJ Battalions

YPJ began forming its independent women's battalions across cities as follows:

Martyr Ruken Battalion – Afrin, February 13, 2013

Martyr Adalat Battalion – Qamishlo, March 8, 2013

Martyr Dicle Battalion – Kobani, March 24, 2013

Martyr Zozan (Derik) Battalion & Martyr Berçem (Derbasiyah) Battalion – February 25, 2013

Campaigns and Struggles of YPJ

YPJ fought against the Baath regime and engaged in its first combat operations in 2013 in Ras al-Ain (Serê Kaniyê) against armed groups, including the Free Syrian Army and Jabhat al-Nusra.

In late 2013 and early 2014, ISIS advanced toward Tel Hamis. Despite limited experience at the time, YPJ fighters resisted without hesitation, liberating the city and later clearing Tel Tamer of ISIS forces.

On August 3, 2014, when ISIS attacked Shengal, YPJ forces rushed to aid the Yazidi people, opening a safe humanitarian corridor to rescue civilians.

The brutality of ISIS in Kobani was decisively broken in 2015 under the leadership of YPJ fighters, culminating in victory on January 26.

In 2015, in the al-Hol region, ISIS attempted to break the resistance of the fighters through car bomb tactics; however, YPJ fighters resisted with unwavering determination and thwarted these plans.

On February 16, 2016, within the framework of the "Wrath of Khabur" campaign, YPJ participated in the liberation of al-Shaddadi, freeing hundreds of women who had been held captive by ISIS.

In 2016, in Manbij, YPJ demonstrated remarkable resistance and liberated the city from ISIS control.

In October 2017, alongside the Syrian Democratic Forces (QSD), YPJ fighters liberated Raqqa, once declared the capital of ISIS.

In 2018, the Turkish occupation state attacked Afrin, YPJ engaged in a historic 58-day resistance alongside the people.

The campaign to defeat ISIS reached its final victory in Baghouz in March 2019, marking the collapse of ISIS under the leadership of YPJ fighters.

On October 9, 2019, Turkish forces attacked Serê Kaniyê and Girê Spî; YPJ fought to defend the population and the gains of the women's Revolution.

The Turkish state and its affiliated militias have relentlessly attacked Northern and Eastern Syria.

Continued attacks through airstrikes and drones resulted in the martyrdom of numerous YPJ leaders,

YPJ fighters and patriotic people and vanguards of the Rojava revolution

In March 2021, YPJ led the first phase of security operations in al-Hol camp, under the leadership of Şehid Jiyan Tolhildan. These operations continued until 2025, dismantling dozens of ISIS sleeper cells

On January 20, 2022, ISIS attacked al-Sina'a prison in Hasakah; YPJ and QSD forces successfully repelled the attack.

In late 2024, following major political developments the Baath regimes was overthrown and HTS came to power.

At the same time militias affiliated with the Turkish state carried out attacks against the region. With the vanguardship of Ronahî Yekta and Ezîz Ereba an unparalleled resistance was put up. YPJ

and allied forces demonstrated steadfast resistance in key strategic areas. In January 2026, as a result of an international conspiracy which involved many different actors,

a coordinated attack targeted Kurdish neighborhoods in Aleppo. The attacks were carried out with great brutality against the people. Young people have been kidnapped and the corpse of YPJ fighter Deniz Çiya was thrown out of the window. With these kind of operations they wanted to drive a wedge between the Arab and Kurdish peoples and incite them to kill one another. YPJ forces, alongside allied forces, prevented escalation into large-scale conflict and protected civilian populations.

As a result of sustained resistance an agreement was reached with the interim government in Damascus, marking a new phase in Syria.

Impact of YPJ on Society

Before the emergence of YPJ, the world recognized only "men's armies," often associated with destruction, violence, and domination. YPJ introduced a new model, drawing global attention.

Women in this geography waged a difficult struggle—akin to "digging a well with a needle"—to dismantle deeply rooted authoritarian mentalities. Through this struggle, women reclaimed their role and redefined freedom in North and East Syria. From Rojava, YPJ has become a source of hope for humanity.

Impact on Women Worldwide

Throughout history, women's resistance has taken many forms. From anti-fascist struggles in Europe to contemporary movements, women have continuously challenged oppression. The resistance of YPJ, particularly since Kobani, has inspired women across the globe.

It has created hope for a free and equal life, leading women from different countries to join its ranks.

Professional Development Over 13 Years

Over thirteen years, YPJ has pursued an unwavering struggle. This experience cannot be fully captured in books or films alone.

In order to bring about the revolution, the individual who has been subjected to thousands of years of oppression as well as society that has been ruled by oppression must first rediscover their true essence. Central to achieving this transformation is education. YPJ established independent ideological and military academies named after its martyrs, including Dilan, Berivan, Sosin, Jiyan, Nujiyan, and Rojda Manbij. These institutions have played a crucial role in both intellectual transformation and military professionalism.

Leaders and Fighters Who Shaped YPJ

YPJ has built a powerful legacy within the Revolution in North and East Syria. This land has given rise to courageous women whose contributions have shaped a free and democratic social system.

YPJ Commanders and fighters like Warşîn Tirbespiyê, Ruksen Efrîn, Sozdar Dêrik, Azadî Girkêlegê, Berivan Êzîdî, Silava Efrîn, Arîn Mirkan, Barîn Kobanê, Rêvan Rojava, Tolhildan Raman, Sosin Bîrhat, Jiyan Tolhildan, Roj Xabûr, Sorxwîn Rojhilat, Deniz Çiya, Leyla Qasim, Sidar Efrîn û Şilan Kobane are personalities that embody the personality of vanguardship. YPJ has proven its existence through its constant struggle and resistance.

YPJ's Pledge and Commitment

Over the past thirteen years, YPJ has marked a historic turning point in the struggle of women. Its mission remains clear: to protect and advance the legacy of women's freedom. It has taken on the responsibility of upholding the legacy of women's struggles and has made this struggle its goal.

YPJ for a Strong and Democratic Syria

Over thirteen years, YPJ has resisted all forms of violence and terrorism targeting women and society.

Today, it enters a new phase: integration within a democratic Syria.

An agreement signed on January 29, 2026, between the Syrian government and the Syrian Democratic

Forces (QSD) marks this transition. As an independent force and a foundation of the Syrian Democratic

Forces, particularly in terms of ethics and values, the YPJ can protect women and society from all forms of terror.

YPJ remains a fundamental force in protecting women and society. Its presence within the defense system is essential to

safeguarding the achievements of a free society. The YPJ's participation as women within the Syrian army has become a

fundamental criteria for the democratisation and equality of Syria. It is very important for YPJ to preserve their military

presence within the Syrian army, both now and in the future as it will ensure the peace and safety within Syria. Ensuring YPJ's

continued existence—constitutionally and institutionally—represents a guarantee for the protection of all

Syrian women from all forms of violence, terror and oppression. Likewise as attacks on the regions and across

Syria have not ceased, the threat to women has increased more than ever. Therefore the existence of YPJ needs to be ensured

in the new constitution. At the same time, YPJ can play a vanguard role in the formation of a new Syrian army. With the

YPJ's participation in the army, the Syrian army can become a model of peace, equality and security for the entire region.