



Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Kurdish Studies Graduate Student Association
Subject: Urgent Call: Kurds Facing Genocide

We, as [the Kurdish Studies Graduate Student Association](#) at Rutgers University, write to the general public with deep alarm regarding the ongoing and escalating threats faced by the Kurdish community in Western Kurdistan - Rojava (Northeast Syria) by the Syrian Arab Republic and the Turkish-backed jihadist militia. We believe that these events raise serious alarms about ethnic cleansing and genocide and demand urgent institutional attention.

Since the fall of the dictatorial Asad regime in December 2024, armed factions now operating under the banner of the current Syrian Arab Republic—many of them former ISIS-affiliated militants and Turkish-backed jihadist organizations—have come to power. These groups, despite their documented histories of extremist violence, have gained power with international acquiescence and regional support. They have since engaged in systematic attacks against minority communities such as the [Alevi](#) community in March 2024, the [Druze](#) in July 2025, the [Christians](#), and the [Kurds](#). Since January 6, 2026, these same forces have turned their attacks toward Kurdish communities in Western Kurdistan-Rojava—communities that played a decisive role in the global fight against ISIS and suffered immense losses, over 13 thousand martyrs in the fight against ISIS, in defense of humanity.

Particularly alarming are documented instances in which the Syrian state and media outlets explicitly invoke [Surah al-Anfal](#) from the Qur'an to frame Kurds as “infidels,” calling on Muslims to wage violence against them. Such rhetoric constitutes an explicit incitement to mass killing and collective punishment. The same surah was invoked by Saddam Hussein’s dictatorial regime between 1986-89 against the Kurds, resulting in the loss of over 182 thousand Kurdish lives. The incident is known by the Kurds as al-Anfal and is recognized by the international community as a [genocide against the Kurds](#). The current situation and invocation of such a religious discourse remind us of nothing but another genocide in the name of Islam and Arab nationalism. Under international law, these acts and declarations meet multiple criteria associated with ethnic cleansing and genocide, yet it seems that, due to the geopolitical alliances, the international community remains silent as it did between 1986 and 89.

The consequences of these hostilities extend beyond immediate physical harm; they threaten the cultural survival of communities that have historically faced discrimination and violence. Despite the Kurdish role in defeating ISIS—a campaign widely recognized by international actors—the current lack of meaningful international protection or accountability mechanisms contributes to a sense of abandonment and impunity.

We urge the international community to take action to stop the current attacks of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Syrian Arab Army on the Kurds and other minorities in Western Kurdistan-Rojava and Syria.

In solidarity,

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Rutgers University-New Brunswick