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## **The Paris attack, and the many unanswered questions...**

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## WHAT HAPPENED?

Three people were killed and three injured in the centre of Paris on Friday, December 23, after shots were fired at the "Kurdistan Democratic Centre of Paris", which also houses the Kurdish Democratic Council in France (CDK-F). According to an eyewitness, the man shot at the two victims who were at the entrance of the Kurdistan Democratic Centre of Paris. Shots were also fired at nearby businesses, including a hairdresser's and a restaurant opposite the association, of which both are owned by Kurds.

The three Kurdish activists killed in the terrorist attack were *Emine Kara (Evîn Goyî)*, *Şirin Aydın (Mîr Perwer)* and *Abdurrahman Kızıl*. Three other people were injured, one of them seriously.

A video footage shows how the assassin was later overpowered by the barber shop employees as he reloaded his weapon. By the time police arrived, the gunman had been disarmed.

The shooter named William Mallet, was arrested on Friday with his gun and several cartridges. According to the information gathered, he wanted to use all the ammunition and kill himself with the last bullet. The perpetrator was a seasoned marksman in a sports club and owned guns. On December 12, 2022, he was released from prison. In 2021, he had attacked a migrant camp and injured several people with a sabre. In 2017, he was sentenced to a six-month suspended prison term and a five-year ban on holding weapons.

Many Kurdish and European associations, political parties and personalities have condemned this heinous attack and all the forces behind this act of terrorism in the heart of Europe. In response to these murders, the Town Hall of the 10th arrondissement lowered the French tricolour to half-mast and flew a Kurdish flag next to it to tribute to the victims. Strong public support for the Kurdish community was shown by the left-wing parties: by the French Communist Party, which has a long history of supporting the Kurdish struggle, and also by La France Insoumise – NUPES. Already on Friday evening, the co-president of the latter, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, had made it clear that they did not accept the official view that the killer had acted solely on the grounds of racism. Speaking at Saturday's demonstration on behalf of a delegation of his party's deputies, he told the crowd that they were demanding a full lifting of **the defence secrecy** on the 2013 killings, and that last week's murders should be handed over to the counter-terrorism prosecutor.

Monday's editorial in the newspaper *L'Humanité*, observed that after the price paid by the Kurds in the fight against Islamic State, Paris should be honoured to remove the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) from the list of terrorist organisations, and that "*defending their struggle is also preserving our freedom*". It is widely believed that the list of terrorist organisations, drawn up at a time when the PKK was calling for peace, is based on a political decision rather than a legal argument and has been used by Turkey to justify all its attacks against Kurdish activists in France and Kurds in general.



*William Mallet, assassinated three Kurdish activists in Paris, France on Friday 23, December 2022*

## **MANY SIGNS POINT TO AN ORGANIZED & POLITICALLY MOTIVATED ATTACK**

The Kurdish community and political representatives express great doubts about the French authorities' assumption of a 'lone wolf' with 'racist motives' and point out that this man, with a history of extreme racist violence, was most likely recruited by the 'Grey Wolves' - Turkish ultra-nationalists - for their own purposes.

First, eyewitnesses reveal that the 69-year-old was driven to the scene of the attack in a car. There, he pulled out a gun and shot at the entrance of the Ahmet Kaya Kurdish Cultural Centre in Paris, which is the largest association under the umbrella of the *Kurdish Democratic Council in France, CDK-F*. He then crossed the street and went straight to the restaurant opposite the association, and then to the hairdresser's salon – both of which are run by Kurds. “Rue d'Enghien” is a small street with many restaurants and shops run by migrants of various origins, not far from the main boulevards and their well-known department stores. The fact that the perpetrator only attacked associations and businesses, all owned and run by Kurds, indicates that this was a targeted attack against the Kurdish community in France.

It should also be noted that, French President Emmanuel Macron described the deadly shooting in Paris as a targeted attack against the Kurdish community. "*The Kurds of France have been the target of a heinous attack in the middle of Paris*", wrote the President of the Republic on Twitter. He said his thoughts were with the victims and their families.

Secondly, at the time of Friday's attack, there was to be a meeting at the cultural centre of about 60 women, all members of the Kurdish Women's Movement in France (TJK-F), to plan the tenth anniversary of the commemorations of the assassination of Sakine Cansız, Fidan Doğan and Leyla Şaylemez on January 9, 2013. The three leading Kurdish Women revolutionaries were assassinated by a member of the Turkish secret service MIT -also in the 10th arrondissement of Paris- at 147 rue Lafayette. In February 2021, during a live broadcast on CNN-Türk, the former head of the intelligence department of the Turkish General Staff not only admitted that the murder was a Turkish state operation, but also called for more to be done, telling viewers: "*They have their elements in Europe as well. We have to do something about it there. I mean, it was already done once in Paris...*". Despite these confessions, to this day, no one has been brought to justice for the triple murder and a "defence secrecy" is blocking the investigation. This is why the tenth anniversary of the commemorations will be marked by the slogan "Lift the defence secrecy – End ten years of impunity!"

Friday's meeting was postponed by an hour, due to disruptions in public transport. If the meeting had started on time, the assassin would probably have succeeded in carrying out a massacre of about 60 representatives of the Kurdish Women's Movement in France. The timing of the attack suggests that the choice of target was not random.

With a history of extreme racist violence, it is possible that the perpetrator met with the 'Grey Wolves' - the ultra-nationalists of the Turkish far right – and was used by them for their own purposes. Could the suspect have been radicalised and recruited by Turkish intelligence agents in prison? Given that the perpetrator spent the last year in prison, any links to Turkish ultra-nationalists or jihadist groups must be thoroughly investigated.

## WHO ARE THE VICTIMS?

On Friday evening, the CDK-F (Kurdish Democratic Council in France) made public the names of the victims.

**Eminê Kara** (nom de guerre, Evîn Goyî) had been part of the Kurdish Liberation Movement since 1988, fighting first with the Kurdish Workers' Party-PKK, and then against the terrorist organisation "Islamic State"-Daesh, in Iraq and Syria, notably during the liberation of Raqqa. In 2015, Daesh invaded the main Ezidi settlement of Şengal (Sinjar) in northwestern Iraq and committed genocide and enslaved Kurdish women. Tens of thousands of people, who had fled the jihadist group in the Sinjar mountains, were rescued by PKK guerrillas and YPG-YPJ forces by opening an escape corridor to Syria. Emine Kara organised care and built a shelter for the persecuted Ezidies. In 2019, she came to France after being injured in the war against Daesh, and appealed against the refusal of her asylum application. Eminê Kara has played a leading role in the Kurdish women's movement, including in France. Berivan Firat, spokesperson for external relations of the CDK-F, recalled the role of Emine Kara in the defeat of Daesh: "*She is also a woman who fought for the protection of France. Unfortunately, France could not protect her.*"

**Abdurrahman Kızıl**, who had been living in France since 2001, began struggling for the Kurdish people's freedom in the early 1980s. An activist in his 60s, he was a regular at the Ahmet Kaya Kurdish Cultural Centre in Paris. He was first forced to leave his village in northern Kurdistan (south-eastern Turkey) for Istanbul, and then, after detentions and torture, he emigrated to Europe.

**Şirin Aydın**, known to many people by his stage name Mîr Perwer, was a young Kurdish singer and songwriter. He had to leave his homeland due to political persecution by the Turkish state. He had been an activist in the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) in Turkey and spent two years in detention. But when he was sentenced to prison by the Turkish judiciary for "terrorism" and given a twenty-year sentence, he felt he had no choice but to go into exile. He was granted political refugee status in France and wanted his wife and child to join him here.



*Emine Kara*

*Şirin Aydın*

*Abdurrahman Kızıl*

## UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AFTER THE ATTACK

Many questions remain unanswered after the recent attack that killed three Kurdish activists. The Kurdish community demands answers to the following questions from the French authorities:

1. The perpetrator of the attack was released from prison on 12 December. Under police surveillance, how did the perpetrator manage to plan this attack and within only eleven days?
2. How and where did he obtain the firearm and ammunition?
3. How did he get to the place where the attack took place, with a bag full of ammunition?
4. Eyewitnesses reveal that the perpetrator was driven to the crime scene in a car, driven by a woman. Whose car was it? Who is the driver? Or did he go on foot? Shouldn't the numerous surveillance cameras in Paris give us information on the suspect's movements?
5. At the time he went to the Ahmet Kaya Kurdish Cultural Centre in Paris, a gathering of about 60 Kurdish women was supposed to take place. Was the perpetrator aware of this meeting? If so, where did he get the information? Was the ammunition intended to be used to target members of this meeting specifically?
6. Did the perpetrator know the representative of the Kurdish Women's Movement in France, Emine Kara? Since he first aimed at her, and after walking away, turned back to fire more bullets at her?
7. After the second target and attack, which was against the Avesta café/restaurant across the street, the perpetrator turned his attention to a hairdressing salon. Between the Avesta café/restaurant and the hairdresser salon there are many businesses belonging to different groups of immigrants and foreign communities. If the perpetrator's motive was based on racism, why did he bother to go so far, to this specific hairdresser's salon, also owned by Kurds, located about 100 metres away?
8. If the perpetrator acted for purely racist reasons, why did he only attack Kurds? Why did he only target people belonging to the Kurdish community, which represents a very small part of the French population?
9. Is it not clear, considering all the grey areas listed above, that this was no ordinary attack and that it could not have been organised by one person? But rather an organised attack with political motivations and the work of a professional team?
10. Why are we not told with whom the perpetrator was imprisoned, when he was in prison until December 12? Were there any jihadists or radicalised people among his fellow inmates?
11. For what reasons was the criminal in prison? Why was he released in the first place? How is it that his state of health allowed him to be in prison for 1 year and then after the attack on Friday 23/12/2022 against the Kurdish community, he had to be placed in a psychiatric service of the prefecture?
12. Referring to the Paris attack, Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said: "*Recep Tayyip Erdogan will not only neutralize terrorists in Turkey, but all terrorists in the world*". This statement strengthens the suspicions of Turkey's involvement in the terrorist attack in Paris on 23/12/2022. Will this statement be included in the investigation file? After all, all Kurds fall into the category of 'terrorists' in the eyes of Soyly and the Turkish Government.

## CALL FOR A TRANSPARENT INVESTIGATION BY THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES

In recent years, the Turkish state has launched an all-out war against the Kurdish people inside and outside Turkey. The attack on the Kurds in Paris has shown once again that the genocidal policy of the Turkish state against the Kurdish people knows no borders. At a time when the Turkish army is killing Kurds in Turkey, Syria and Iraq, it is very worrying that these attacks have once again spilled over into Europe and in particular to France.

The fact that all three targets are Kurds shows that the attack is organised and politically motivated against a specific community in France. This is a continuation of the assassination carried out 10 years ago in Paris on 9 January 2013. This is the second time in 10 years that Paris has become the scene of a terrorist and political attack against Kurds and Kurdish women in particular. On January 9, 2013, three Kurdish female political activists were murdered by Omer Güney, a member of the Turkish intelligence force, the MIT. Unfortunately, the French government failed to take responsibility for the investigation and to hold those responsible for the murders to account. The real culprits were never brought to justice because of the imposition of a “defence secrecy” on the case.

We must not forget that when the terrorist organisation Islamic State attacked Paris and other European cities, Kurdish men and women led the fight and sacrificed more than 12,000 lives for the final defeat of the caliphate in Syria and Iraq.

Kurds want to be able to live in safety, and we urge the French authorities to conduct a full and transparent investigation into both these recent killings and the killings of ten years ago, and those responsible. These attacks are not only an aggression against the Kurdish people but against all the peoples of Europe and its democracy. It is France that is directly targeted here. The Turkish state can no longer escape French justice and must be held responsible and brought to justice for its crimes.

- We urge France and the European Union to convene immediately to discuss the Turkish operations on its soil
- We urge France and the European Union to take a stand against these acts of terrorism on French soil
- We urge the lifting of the defence secrecy on the terrorist attack on January 9, 2013, and that the file of the attack of 23/12/2022 be transmitted to the national anti-terrorist prosecutor.
- We ask that the protection of the Kurds of France be raised to the highest level and that their associations be protected.



*Kurds hold march of mourning after terrorist attack in Paris killing three persons on Friday 23, December 2022*