

Conference statement

Democracy, feminism & diversity: Support the radical alternative in northern Syria

[This statement was adopted by the conference, The Rojava Revolution in northern Syria: An experiment in radical democracy, feminism & ecology, Melbourne, July 1, 2017.]

- 1. This conference strongly supports the Kurdish people and all those oppressed groups fighting for their basic human rights in the Middle East — ethnic and religious minorities, women and LGBTI people.*
- 2. The Rojava Revolution in northern Syria, based primarily in the oppressed Kurdish community, has developed into a multi-ethnic struggle to build a new type of society.*
- 3. The process taking place in the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria is profoundly progressive. Its unremitting efforts to build a radical, grassroots commune-style democracy, its unprecedented struggle to empower women as full participants in society, and its attempt to incorporate all ethnic and religious groups into the revolutionary process are a beacon of hope for the region.*
- 4. Any attempt to restore the old repressive, centralist “Syrian Arab Republic” would be a catastrophe for the peoples of Syria. Violence, ethnic and religious sectarianism, and discrimination will only succeed in fragmenting the country.*
- 5. The example of the DFNS shows the way to build a new democratic Syria. Local and regional self-government and federation on a truly democratic basis that recognises and celebrates the diverse ethnic and religious mosaic of the country is the only way to preserve its unity.*
- 6. The western governments say they are fighting terrorism. But their policies in the Middle East — domination, war and conquest, and looting of resources — created the conditions for the rise of Islamic fundamentalism (principally Al Qaeda and the Islamic State). Turkey, a key member of the West’s NATO alliance, directly nurtured these forces as a means of furthering its genocidal anti-Kurd agenda and its designs for regional hegemony*

7. *The emancipatory policies carried out by the DFNS — along with the struggle of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the defence militia of the DFNS — are the most effective weapons of the peoples against terrorism.*
8. *All international and regional powers should stop supporting their reactionary local clients.*
9. *The YPG/YPJ and the SDF have every right to procure the weapons they need from the western powers or Russia. This does not make them in any way responsible for the actions of these powers.*
10. *We call on the Australian government, the United Nations and all other international agencies to recognise the right of the DFNS to participate in all negotiations regarding the future of Syria and to call for its inclusion in all such forums.*
11. *In Australia it is the duty of supporters of the liberation struggle in northern Syria to make determined efforts to publicise its inspiring achievements and build practical solidarity with it.*