

The Kurdish Parties Unity Deal in Rojava

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After more than three months of talks first between the Kurdish National Council in Syria (KNC) and the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and then within its allies – the Kurdish National Unity Parties (PYNK) – a coalition of twenty-five parties, led by the Democratic Union Party, they have reached common political understanding. In the beginning these negotiations under auspices of Ambassador William Roebuck, US Deputy Special Envoy for the International Coalition, and Mazloun Abdi, Commander-in-Chief of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) were launched and organized confidentially, then the outcome of the talks on June 16, 2020 in a joint statement by KNC and PYD was disclosed to media and public. They declared that reached “a binding common political vision,” and “reached a set of preliminary understandings using the 2014 Duhok Agreement as a basis for ongoing unity talks that will cover governance, administrative cooperation, and protection.” And both sides committed to continue ongoing negotiations with the aim of signing a comprehensive agreement in the near future”.

Why this statement is matter?

The significance of this statement lies, first, in its expression of the first real achievement of the negotiations, and thus bypassing it the stage of hesitancy whether talks it can continue or not; secondly the parties involved, other than having reached a common political vision regarding the position on resolving the Syrian issue, The Kurdish proposal for this solution, and the position on the regime and opposition, both sides in the negotiations agreed on two main issues related to the military and administrative aspects, and they agreed that the Dohuk Agreement would be the basis for continuing negotiations.

Undoubtedly, the (PYD) and its allies would not have accepted the adoption of this agreement as a basis for continuing negotiations, if its decision-making authority had not decided to accept the return of the Peshmerga (Roj forces) which is the military wing of (KNC), and turn the self-administration rule to a joint administration.

Imminent Round of Talks

Once the joint statement was announced, US envoy William Roebuck supervisor of the negotiations, left the region. According to available information, his duties in the region have ended – unless if going to extended to him by the State Department to continue overseeing the negotiations – and now the State Department has assigned Zahra Billy head of US envoy office in Syria to oversee the next round of negotiations that are expected to begin this week, as both Kurdish delegations are ready to start new round of talks. Militarily there is a belief that both sides to reach an agreement to merge their forces that have a unified body and a unified command, which will end the existence of two separate forces.

As for the administration, the (KNC) tends to discuss joint administration of the Kurdish areas as a priority, and then discusses how to deal with the administration in other areas under the control of SDF. But by the end this depends on America’s position and its vision of the region, as it is the sponsor of the negotiations and the protector of the region.

Inclusive Talks or Not

America and SDF wanted to involve all the Kurdish parties in the negotiations, but the (KNC) rejected the triumvirate in the negotiations, and stipulated its dualism. Therefore, three Kurdish parties stand outside these negotiations, but the position of these three parties are different. First the Free Kurdistan Union Party has previously submitted a request to join (KNC), and it is moving in its political sphere. Second The Kurdish Democratic Unity Party (al-Wahda) is a member of the

Syrian Democratic Council -SDC (political wing of SDF) and has a minister (head of the economic department) at the self-administration of Rojava, therefore even if (al-Wahda) party does not announce its official accession to it but it's in that political sphere of the SDC. As for the Progressive Democratic Party, after its exit from SDC, has insisted that does not want to have any connection with the self-administration and its departments. The parties participations in the negotiations depends on their position and relationship with the two parties involved in the talks.

American Threat

The term of "American threat" to western Kurdistan and northeastern Syria may be alluring. But the behavior of the American administration in the past stage, especially Trump's decision to withdraw the American forces and give the green light to Turkey to invade the areas of Sari Kani and Gre Spi, along with the new book of John Bolton, former US National Security Adviser, which revealed that how the American administration supported Turkey and Trump's refused to heed his warnings and those of his French ally Emmanuel Macron regarding Erdogan's intentions to crush the Kurds, so this makes the American threat real, not delusional. Especially since the American president is heading towards the autumn presidential elections, and if he sees that a decision to withdraw American forces from the region may improve his embarrassing position internally he will do so.

The Caesar's Act

On the seventeenth of this month, the American Caesar's act to impose sanctions on Syria came into effect. According to some leaks, America has asked SDF and the Self-Administration to refrain sending oil to the Syrian government. And if these leaks are correct, then this means that the economic relations between the Syrian government and Kurdish self-administration will shrink, and this will certainly affect the overall relations between the areas under the Syrian government and those are under self-administration. This means that the prospects for any bilateral dialogue between the Syrian government and self-administration are diminishing. And this will speed up the rapprochement between self-administration and the Kurdish National Council.

The scope of US actions on Syria, from efforts to reconcile the Kurdish parties; And at a later stage, reconciling the Kurds and their partners in the region, as well as intensifying communication with the Syrian opposition and trying to prevent the split of its negotiating body _ the last conference of the Syrian opposition high negotiations committee was decided in a meeting in the presence of James Jeffrey and Saudi minister Thamer Al-Sabhan in a European country with the leaders of the committee, but did not succeed in overcoming its recent division inside the negotiation committee _ as well as the Caesar's act came into effect. All of these American actions are to organize and strengthening its cards in the Syrian file in order to press the Syrian regime and persuade its main ally, Russia, with a political solution for the Syrian crisis that satisfies America and its allies.