

The Western Kurdistan...Rapid Developments and Slow Kurdish performance

06-01-2020

Authors

Rudaw RC

Hussein Omer-

Syrian Affairs Expert |

The rapid political and field developments are taking place in Syria in general, and in West Kurdistan and East Euphrates in particular, but the required equivalent does not appear in the performance of the Kurdish political parties in Syria. The developments affect the current political situation which has shortened in the Constitutional Committee, as well as international efforts to achieve Kurdish rapprochement and understanding, the growing Russian role in the Kurdish-Syrian file, the intensification of the Russian-Iranian conflict over influence in Syria, and the beginning of Russian mediation in the political file between the Syrian government and self-administration. All of these developments, which fundamentally affect the Kurdish issue and the future of the Kurdish people in Syria, are offset by a terrible slowdown in the performance of the Kurdish political movement in interacting with them to a degree that raises doubts not only in its seriousness, but also in its devotion to the cause it claims to defend.

The work of the Constitutional Committee

The Constitutional Committee, which started its meetings in Geneva, was unable to make any progress. Rather, it failed even to hold one joint meeting in its last round to adjourn without setting a new date for its next session. This failure was followed by Arab efforts, led by Saudi Arabia, to make a change in the structure of the opposition negotiating body, towards reducing Turkish influence there, by holding a meeting of independents in Riyadh (27-28 December 2019), which resulted in the selection of eight new members to replace eight members in the committee. Prior to this meeting, information was leaked about the inclusion of Kurdish figures close to (SDF) in the meeting to break the Turkish veto. The leadership of SDF and MSD has already recommended Kurdish figures to attend the meeting. Saudi Arabia, at the last minute, has canceled its invitation and this is apparently to take into account to the Syrian opposition at this stage. And likely in the future representatives of the Northeastern Administration be included in this committee. These efforts to reduce Turkish hegemony over the Syrian opposition come in the context of the increasing Arab protest (especially the Egyptian-Saudi-Emirati trio) over the Turkish role not only in Syria, but also in Libya and other Arab countries.

International endeavors for Kurdish rapprochement

In the past few weeks, a political delegation from the International Coalition (including the representatives of America, Britain, and France) met in western Kurdistan with most of the Kurdish political parties and urged them to achieve unity in support of them politically and make efforts to include them, unified, to the Constitutional Committee. Despite the issuance of a statement from the Interior commission of the self-administration, it included positive steps, and despite the fact that the Kurdish National Council issued a statement that included a tribute to a statement of the interior commission of the self-administration, both parties did not undertake serious initiatives. On the contrary, the statements of the two sides were marked by a negativity, which does not correspond to the positive atmosphere spurred by the statements issued by the two parties. The self-administration did not make any call to initiate the dialogue. Rather, the statements of some of its leaders were blowing the content of its interior commission statement. For his part, and in the meeting recently held by the Kurdish National Council, the Council decided to form a committee to communicate with the opposition coalition in order to resolve disputes with it, while no clear decision was taken in negotiating with the self-administration.

Russian military recruitment in western Kurdistan

Recently, Russian forces began opening the door of recruitment to young Kurdish men in western Kurdistan, and for this purpose they opened a center in the countryside of Tel Tamr. The information we obtained indicates that the Russian army requires that the volunteer be Kurdish and that the service be at least two years, that the volunteers be on the order of the Russian army and has no connection with any other military entity, and that they are ready to transfer them to any area specified by the Russian army. But it is interesting that the SDF will pay the salaries of these volunteers. In the search for the reasons for this funding by the Syrian Democratic Forces, informed sources have suggested that the SDF, in the stage of the Turkish attack on it and the critical situation in which it found itself after the American announcement to withdraw from Syria, has pledged to the Russian side obligations that are difficult for them to withdraw from at some point After the American retreat from the withdrawal.

A Russian proposal to negotiate between the government and self-administration:

In the wake of the US announcement of withdrawal from Syria and the start of the Turkish attack on Western Kurdistan, the Syrian government ruled out negotiating with self-administration and went towards the option of removing self-administration, by force if the need arises, and Russia did not seriously object to this Syrian option. However, the American retreat from the withdrawal changed the equation again and pushed Russia towards re-raising the issue of negotiations between the Syrian government and self-administration to prevent America's uniqueness by holding the Kurdish card. Now, there is already a Russian proposal to negotiate between the government and the self-administration, which Russia is willing to host in its bases in Syria, in the first stage. However, the ideas proposed for negotiation fall under a very low ceiling that does not exceed the borders of the municipal or local administration in the sense of the Syrian government with a willingness to expand it and discuss ideas about merging the military forces with the Syrian regular forces, in exchange for the return of the Syrian government to control the oil sector, border crossings and other economic sectors, as well The possibility of using these forces in battles against the pro-Turkish opposition outside the Kurdish areas.

Growing the Russian-Iranian conflict

The opening of the eastern Euphrates region to Russian-Syrian forces appears to have exacerbated the Russian-Iranian conflict, already in place, over influence in Syria. Prior to this development in the east of the Euphrates, there was an Iranian presence at Qamishlo airport and some neighborhoods of Hasaka, especially through the militants of Hezbollah, the strong Iranian arm in Syria. There is no doubt that Iran wanted to take advantage of the developments after the Turkish attack on western Kurdistan and extend its influence to wider areas in the region, which Russia saw against its interests, and its position in the region. Certainly, it is not excluded that at this moment, the American and Russian interests in disposing of the first character who aims to strike American influence and compete with Russian influence meet. That Qassem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force, be assassinated on his way back from Syria via Damascus airport, suggests that Russia will have an intelligence role in this. The Damascus airport movement is completely monitored security by Russia, in addition to the fact that the Syrian airspace is entirely under Russian air control. And Russian-American-Israeli intelligence coordination in Syria is at its utmost. Perhaps the statement of the US President during New Year's holidays in which he revealed that Russian Vladimir Putin had contacted him and thanked him for providing the United States with intelligence information to Russia that led to the abortion of terrorist operations that were prepared for their implementation during New Year's celebrations in Russia, is significant in this regard.

Strengthening the American presence

Following a visit by a joint oil delegation that included, according to our information, representatives of the American Exxon Mobil Company, Emirates National Oil Company, and Saudi Aramco Company, which is the largest oil company in the world, to the Omar oil field, which is the largest oil field in Syria in terms of production and area. More than fifty

kilometers east of Deir ez-Zor, the United States of America has sent heavy equipment to the region to repair infrastructure in the oil fields. The repercussions of the assassination of General Soleimani, and the Iranian threats to target the American presence and interests in the region, may make the East Euphrates region a candidate to be in the Iranian targeting circle as a loose waist for America. In terms of the weak military presence in it, the importance of its oil and gas facilities and its proximity to the locations of militia loyal to Iran, whether in the west of the Euphrates (in al-Mayadin axis of the fields that are only ten kilometers from the Omar and al-Bukamal field located directly on the Iraqi border), or along the Iraqi-Syrian border in the east of the Euphrates, which practically forms a line of contact between the militia of the popular mobilization loyal to Iran and the American forces and its ally the Syrian Democratic Forces. This fact may require an American decision to increase the number of American forces in the region and provide them with more deterrent weapons, and perhaps the region will have a share of the American forces that the US Department of Defense decided to send to the Middle East.