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The Kurdish National Council: The Impasse of the Political Movement



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(This text was translated from its original Arabic version.)

Executive Summary

- The creation of a unified Kurdish political movement represented by the Kurdish National Council (KNC) at the end of 2011, was covered extensively in the media and marked the start of a new era of politics for Kurdish people in Syria, both domestically and internationally.
- The KNC is made up of 15 political parties of different sizes and structures. Some are linked, and others are not. The parties represent youth and women in conjunction with related NGOs and social organizations, and independent politicians as well.
- The KNC's political program includes issues that are considered the core demands of the Kurdish public in Syria. Constitutional recognition of the Kurdish identity, and negation of all laws and regulations in violation of their rights.
- The KNC faces a number of challenges, most notably: poor community presence, weak public support or participation in KNC organized protests and public gatherings, and marginalization of intellectual cadres.
- The KNC failed to build auxiliary institutions or civil society organizations working in public affairs that would serve as a social

wing of the council creating a social support base. The KNC also lacks the needed administrative cadre.

- The Democratic Union Party (PYD) announced its control over the predominantly Kurdish and mixed cities in northern Syria on 07/19/2012. Their governance structure was military in nature. The situation on the ground changed dramatically after the battle of Kobani/ Ayn al-Arab at the end of 2014.
- The KNC does not recognize the PYD-led Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), or its institutions, judiciary structures, the PYD's so called "democratic nation" political agenda, or its charters including the "social contract". The KNC accuses the PYD of partisanship and being intolerant of other political and social perspectives.
- The Autonomous Administration benefited from the American and international neglect of the Syrian political file by increasing pressure on the KNC in various ways, including preventing it from carrying out any public programs such as demonstrations, political meetings, and even humanitarian aid activities.
- The KNC's options are limited to joining the Autonomous Administration, publicly confronting it, creating an alliance with both the AANES and the PYD, or maintaining their current position.

- The AANES succeeded in isolating the KNC through a number of practices, such as: the forced conscription policy, arresting supporters and leaders of KNC parties, and the closure or burning of the KNC and affiliated parties.
- The KNC joining the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (SNC) was a significant development in terms of the council's involvement in Syrian politics. The SNC was the only opposition body that had legitimacy in terms of representing the opposition. However, the internal relationship between the KNC and the SNC was politically challenging for both bodies.
- The KNC lacks strong relations with intellectuals, media outlets, political thinkers, and the Arab or Kurdish tribes in Northeastern Syria. It also lacks a clear relationship with the Arab and Assyrian communities living under the AANES.

Introduction

The KNC/ENKS, was formed on October 26, 2011. It was the natural result of political developments between the Kurdish parties in Syria. This was the first agreement between Kurdish political parties in Syria announced at an event in the Hilaliyah neighborhood of Qamishli. The agreement was referred to as “The Nationalist Movement of Kurdish Parties in Syria”. The initiative was joined by the majority of Kurdish parties including the Democratic Union Party (PYD). It was a framework through which the parties joining the initiative shared their vision for solving the Syrian “crisis”. It was presented in a brief statement on 04/27/2011; and was announced during a public gathering on 05/14/2011.¹ The statement included general demands consistent with the goals of the revolutionary movement. The demands included ending the use of violence and killing under any pretext and allowing peaceful protesters to express themselves. Adopting principles and rhetoric that encourage a comprehensive national dialogue between various nationalistic political ideologies and intellectual elite that believe in dialogue as a way to reach an understanding. The application of the presidential decree to lift the state of emergency and martial law.

¹ The Lost Kurdish Umbrella in Syria... Between Rivalry for Power and Fragile Agreements, Bedird Mulla Rashid, Website: Omran Center for Studies, Publication Date: 03/20/2019, Link: <http://bit.ly/3E1O2PA>

The announcement of the initiative was essentially the formation of an organizational platform that represented a wide array of the Kurdish political movement in Syria in an attempt to overcome the division and conflict that was directly impacting the peaceful revolution ².

The KNC's establishment brought a renewed sense of hope for a large portion of Syrian Kurds who sought a comprehensive political body that would solidify the Kurdish community's role in the revolution and represent their political agenda and demands. The establishment of the ENKS represented a new beginning for Kurdish politics in Syria whether it be about their internal relations, with other parts of the opposition, or even regional and international actors.

The step of forming a unified political front for the Kurdish political movement created strong public and media interest. But the momentum collided with the weight of the political manoeuvres and international interventions that took place in the Syrian file. This pushed the council

²Organizationally: Formation of a Kurdish National Council consisting of 1- 35% of the Kurdish parties operating under the name of the Kurdish Movement Parties, 2- 20% of the youth movement in various regions, 3- 10% of cultural activities, 4- 15% of professional activities 5-10% of socio-economic activities, 6-10% for women from various activities. The National Council takes what it deems appropriate in terms of procedures, structures, committees, and decisions. But I will present a vision about it, which is towards a Kurdish National Council in Syria, Abdul Hakim Bashar, Source: Walati website Publication date: 07/18/2011.

into a phase of political stumbling. Especially in the period following the entry of the US-led International Coalition into Syria and its dependence on the Syrian Democratic Forces in the fight against ISIS. As a result of this reality, in addition to specific reasons stemming from the characteristics of the parties that formed the council, the KNC became weaker from an organizational perspective, especially in the absence of an effective political agenda. The bleak reality within the KNC and its parties was accompanied by a complete lack of support for civil society organizations, whether from members of the KNC or those active outside the local and regional political formations and alliances. Little attention was given to media presence. Instead, the KNC resorted to a reactionary policy, commenting on developments and announcing their positions on them. The KNC grew even weaker as a result of various pressures it was subjected to from the AANES, represented by the PYD. The KNC's only political message became regular complaints about the PYD's treatment of its party members which made the KNC look weak in the public's view. The main problems that the KNC suffered are summed up through several indicators about its organizational performance. The KNC parties operated secretly for many decades, not allowing members the flexibility to exchange ideas and recruit freely. Their secretive operations also forced them to keep very little documentation or

paperwork to avoid detection. This also had the effect of isolating party leadership among a small group of people.

This paper addresses the current realities of the KNC, the challenges it faces, and the council's political agenda by answering one main question: What are the KNC's current political activities? The question is answered in three parts:

1. The internal conditions of the KNC and the impact of the AANES on the Council.
2. The Council's anti-regime position since the start of the Syrian revolution.
3. The KNC's strengths and weaknesses.

Organization and Structure of the Kurdish National Council

The KNC is made up of 15 related and unrelated parties with varying sizes. The parties represent youth and women through affiliated NGOs, as well as independent figures.

The administrative structure of the Council consists of a presidential office composed of representatives of 5 parties, namely: the President of the Council: Saud Al-Mulla, who is the secretary of the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Syria (PDKS); Suleiman Oso, the secretary of the Yekiti Kurdistan Party; Faisal Youssef, the coordinator of the Islah Movement; and the secretary of the Musawah Party, Nemat Daoud; and Fasla Youssef, secretary of the Kurdistan Unity Party in Syria.

There is also a general secretariat that includes one representative from each party, a formation of youth and women, and a number of independents, numbering approximately 30 people. The council is divided into a group of offices, the majority of which are inactive, namely:

1. The Office of Local Councils: Present in the Kurdish populated cities in Syria except Afrin because it stopped frequently under the AANES pressure before the Operation Olive Branch, after the operation they did not reopen it. It stayed at the minimum level active through the activities of the PDK-S. There are 14 local councils each made up of residents of the respective towns and villages located under the jurisdiction of the council. The local councils helped organize protests at the start of the revolution. The councils also provided citizens with in-kind and cash aid. However, due to a siege, increased pressure by AANES authorities, and the KNC's poor organizational structure, the councils' operations waned. They resorted then to routine meetings and limited organizational activities.

2. Media Office: An inactive office. It did not train its cadres even though it maintains a website.³ It did not produce any print or digital

³ .The KNC's website

content since its establishment until 2019. That year they published their first digital newsletter called “Kurdistan”. The digital newsletter was headed by Chief Editor and Researcher Shivan Ibrahim. The newsletter was issued only 10 times and then discontinued for so-called “financial” reasons.

3. Civil Peace Office: This office focused on conflict resolution between locals, the public, and tribes. It carries out its activities with intermediaries mainly in the Hasaka province. Through consultation the office helps find solutions to conflicts to maintain peace and order and reduce violence in the region.

4. Office for Women and Childhood: The office is headed by “Arya Juma”. The office's main activity is participation in the council’s programs and organizing events that promote the protection of women and children, such as commemorating “International Women’s Day”.

5. Office for Youth and Students: This office coordinates its programs directly with the Students and Youth Union of Democratic Kurdistan - Rojava.

6. Office of Finance: The office has been chaired by the current head of the ENKS Saoud Almula since its founding. Mulla is not on the President of the ENKS and the Office of Finance, he also heads the

PDKS. There are no documents referencing the ENKS/KNC financial situation, in any regard like their finance incomes or expenses.

7. Office of Foreign Relations: The office is responsible for developing the ENKS/KNC's external relations with countries and institutions interested in Kurdish and Syrian issues. KNC members attend to meetings and conferences related to Syria. In conjunction with the Office of Foreign Relations, the KNC members in the SNC play an important role in building relations with countries that are interested in the Syrian file.

The KNC's Activities

The KNC suffers from a lack of grassroots presence and public support or participation in the programs and protests it organizes. The Council's administrative structure weakens its decision-making structure. Kurdish parties would have routine meetings outside of the general assembly meetings, and due to the conflicting opinions between the parties, the issues would then be discussed in the general assembly meetings. This makes decision-making a slow process. This system also lacks a clear accountability mechanism making it difficult to make decisions that were not influenced by the interests of individual parties. This also allowed parties to limit their participation in the KNC's public meetings and activities that didn't match their own

political agenda. The parties also failed to provide volunteers or cadres that would carry out local council administrative activities, aid work or even service provision to the public through the local councils. Parties that lacked a partisan base would obstruct certain issues in coordination with other parties; some of which were expelled from the Council later on. Those parties leaked decisions and KNC meeting notes to the media and other parties obstructing the Council's operations.

These obstructive measures even prevented the KNC from holding its fourth general assembly since 2017.⁴ It should be noted that all of the previous general assemblies were also delayed and not held at the scheduled time. The fourth general assembly was delayed for two main reasons: firstly, the AANES did not allow the meeting to take place because the KNC did not have the proper permissions granted by the AANES itself. This was rejected by the Council for political and principled reasons. The KNC publicly rejects the AANES's existence and authority and accuses it of having ideological partisanship. The KNC insists that the AANES was established by a single party without the approval of all parties; especially taking issue with its stance on

⁴Asayish forces of the Autonomous Administration prevent the Kurdish National Council from holding its conference, STJ, 11/12/2017, published at: <https://stj-sy.org/ar/312/>

the Syrian tragedy and the opposition; and its political agenda, including the ideas of a “democratic nation” and “the brotherhood of humanity”. The KNC also does not recognize the AANES’s legislative or judicial institutions; and it rejects the AANES’s charters, including the “Social Contract”.⁵ The KNC’s leadership believes that there is no room for compromise on these issues and any such attempt would result in losing political and organizational legitimacy.

The second issue is related to internal differences about the Council’s administrative structure, especially related to how, which and whether or not to allow political parties to join the Council. The Council also has limited financial resources and a lack of funding compared to other political parties and institutions in the area.

The KNC does not have any relations with local economic activities and is not allowed to benefit from tax collection or income from border crossings controlled by the AANES. The KNC has never publicly announced any amount of support that it received, or how it spends the money that it receives. Its current activities are limited to routine meetings and poorly organized public events with weak turnout.

⁵A reading of the social contract of the "Northern Federalism", Omran Center for Studies, Bedir Mulla Rashid, date: 08/16/2016, link: <https://bit.ly/3epB592>

Kurdish National Council Conferences

Location	Date	Conference
Qamishli ⁶	26/10/2011	Inaugural Conference
Qamishli	16/01/2013	Second Conference
Qamishli	16/6/2015	Third Conference

⁶The Kurdish National Council's second conference was held in Syria on 10-11/2013 in the city of Qamishli, in the presence of 211 delegates Link: <https://bit.ly/3Ra3a26> Ismail Hama's speech at the Kurdish National Council Conference in Syria, Website: YouTube, Peşveru Party Link: <https://bit.ly/3e0DSW6> <https://bit.ly/3PVh0EL> About the rest of the conferences: Special reports: Opinions about the Kurdish National Council's second conference <https://bit.ly/3pPGKYA> The Kurdish National Council sets a date for its next conference and appoints its representatives in the Coalition <https://bit.ly/3pRoEFA>, 01/11/2013 Qamishli - Friday of death camps... <https://bit.ly/3AU2QiV> The Kurdish National Council heads tomorrow to approve amendments to the Erbil Agreement and resolve the situation regarding joining the Syrian National Coalition <https://bit.ly/3APnDnw>,

and about the third conference, you can refer to the sources: The Kurdish National Council holds its third conference with the participation of 260 members, <https://bit.ly/3RcCRZd> News: A communiqué issued by the Kurdish National Council's third Congress in Syria, <https://bit.ly/3pOTHlb>, The meeting of the General Secretariat of the Kurdish National Council comes up with a number of decisions, shorturl.at/hPT04, the vision of the Kurdish National Council on the unity of the Kurdish position in Syria <https://bit.ly/3wAqD4O> And about the fourth conference, you can refer to the link: The press conference of the Kurdish National Council after the Asayish which affiliated to the SDF banned the KNC from holding its meeting <https://bit.ly/3RcfCOW> In its fourth conference.. The Kurdish National Council folded its hands in front of the "PYD" <https://bit.ly/3wzil7Y>

Qamishli - Conference Banned	7/11/2017	Fourth Conference*
Qamishli - Conference Banned	14/11/2022	Upcoming Fourth Conference

The Announcement of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria as a Deterrent to the Kurdish National Council

The PYD announced its control of Kurdish majority and mixed communities in Northern Syria on 19/07/2012. The announcement was essentially a confirmation of their military control. Before this announcement the PYD promoted the concept of “Autonomous Administration” through the establishment of “the Council of Western Kurdistan (Rojava)” and creating affiliated local councils. The PYD also established a security apparatus in the territories where it was present. This made it easy for the PYD to take military control when it officially announced control over Jazira, Kobani, and Afrin in October 2013. Then in November 2013 the PYD announced the creation of the AANES. A temporary constitution was put in place in January 2014.

The situation on the ground changed significantly following the Battle of Kobani at the end of 2014 and start of 2015. The US-led International Coalition formed the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

This new reality pushed the AANES to further advance its political program because it was now present in Arab communities; and had Arab and Christian armed groups in its ranks. It was in 2016 When it approved a document for the federal system of Rojava - Northern Syria in 2016, and announced the establishment of the Syrian Democratic Council February 2017; the stated goal of which was to create a federalized governance system. However, Turkey's Operation Olive Branch and messages of non-approval from the Syrian regime and other actors put a halt to the idea of "federalization" and the adoption of the "Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria" in 2018.⁷ Faced with fluid changes on the political-administrative-military fronts caused by the creation of the Autonomous Administration; in addition to the focus of the United States of America (the International Coalition to fight ISIS) on the battles against ISIS; their retreat from the Syrian political file in favour of Russia; the Kurdish National Council found itself in even more isolated. The AANES benefited from the American and international neglect of the Syrian political file by increasing pressure

⁷The Kurdish federation includes 3 regions and 6 cantons, Alsharq Al-Awsat, 7/31/2017, Link: <https://bit.ly/3HIiO0m>, for more review: A woman co-chairs the Federal Council for the Kurds of Syria, Russia Today, 3/17/2016 <https://bit.ly/378d0jt>

on the KNC in various ways to prevent it from carrying out any public activities through arrests, security harassment, and preventing any organized events, such as demonstrations, political seminars, and even relief activities. The KNC's options were limited to:

- **Joining the Autonomous Administration:** This would mean limiting political options to the "democratic nation" project and the ideology of the PYD. In addition, abandoning a political vision for the future of Kurds in Syria built on the efforts of political movement that is more than six decades old. All external relations and communication would be exclusively through channels determined by the AANES. Adopting a "third line" theory used by the AANES (not to align with the side of the regime, nor the side of the opposition), which also requires severing the relationship with the Syrian Opposition's political institutions. Since the AANES took a tough stance towards all opposition bodies; formulating an independent set of political characteristics - identity, ideology, governance system, and politics; allowing it to distance itself from all Syrian nationalistic political movements.
- **Starting a popular resistance against the AANES:** Meaning making an effort to remove the AANES, which in turn requires moving towards direct confrontation, which is the most rejected option.

This was due to the nature of the context of the region which AANES took control over; such as, inclusion of the different types of people in the region, and the strong family ties with the AANES. This meant that any confrontation would mean civil war between the same family. This was one of the reasons that prompted the KNC and the KRG to choose the following option.

- Engaging in compromises and agreements with the PYD and AANES. 3 agreements were signed between 2012 and 2015. Encouraged by the KRI and United States, the two sides have been meeting for nearly a year and a half since 2020 for direct negotiations. They agreed to and signed a Memorandum of Understanding⁸, but none of these understandings and agreements have been implemented by the AANES.
- There remains the last option represented in preserving the current situation: continuing to participate within the SNC, the Higher Negotiations Committee (HNC), and within opposition delegations. While also keeping the door open to enter into negotiations and talks with the AANES.

⁸The Kurds of Syria reach a preliminary understanding among themselves under American auspices, The Independent Arabia, dated 06/19/2020, Link: <https://bit.ly/3x1gSg7>

Here, it is necessary to expand on the issue of the intra-Kurdish dialogues. Although the KNC accepted to enter into dialogues with the PYD, the latter was always exploiting it for interim goals related to the stage of the Erbil 1 and Erbil 2 agreements with the possibility of joining international dialogues and negotiations on the Syrian file. The same happened in the Dohuk 2015 agreement so that the AANES could obtain American support in the "Battle of Kobani". The PYD would commit only when it has achieved what it wanted and reached an agreement with the KNC. Once an agreement was reached, the PYD would not necessarily remain committed. With regard to the negotiations that followed the year 2020, the PYD and allied parties got involved due to the danger of Turkish operations expanding to include regions outside of Operation Peace Spring territories. It seems that the recent dialogues have reached the end point again with the intensification of the conflict in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) as Turkey launched a new operation against the PKK; and the PYD/YPG taking a political stand in support of the PKK, even offering to get involved in the fight with its own troops. According to a KNC member, "there is no real feeling that America supports the effort to separate the PYD from the PKK. The conflict in the American position becomes clear when you know that the Americans were offering rewards for anyone who provided information about

wanted members of the PKK, but at the same time, it strongly supports the SDF and the PYD, whose leaders threaten anyone that brings any harm to the PKK in the KRI. This makes the chances of moving talks forward very slim, while they wouldn't have even started without the Americans sponsoring the KNC in the first place.”⁹

This situation forced the KNC to resort to a policy of self-preservation. The KNC's focus became trying to remain a feasible political formation that waits for a political solution in Syria. The KNC's hope is to make some political and public gains by that time. This strategy created fertile conditions for significant losses to the KNC's strengths, especially losing all financial, administrative, and military influence; due to the extreme poverty and poor financial conditions in the area that forced young people to join the AANES's ranks.

⁹Abdullah Gado is a representative of the Kurdish National Council in the political body of the Syrian National Coalition and a former member of the party's central committee in the spring of 2013.

Pressure Tactics Used by the AANES

The AANES succeeded in isolating the KNC using the following practices:

1. **Forced Conscription:** The AANES calls the forced conscription “Self-Defense Duty”. The AANES implements politicized and ideological curriculums that have no future utility. This was a huge blow to the KNC because large numbers of young people moved into the AANES’s ranks and are used as cannon fodder and as a human resource to participate in public programs and other events.
2. **Absence of economic resources:** With the AANES controlling economic resources and the recruitment process within its local governance structures; the AANES used pressure tactics on local communities to force them to work with it. This put the KNC in a very embarrassing situation in front of its constituency. Emigration rates were increasing as the Council was growing more incapable of meeting the financial needs of its support base. This led to losing many of its own cadres, as well as of affiliated parties, which greatly affected its political effectiveness.
3. **Arrests of supporters and leaders of Kurdish political parties in the KNC.** The intense unhindered pressure on the KNC’s leadership

and supporters by the AANES is a main factor in the Council's deteriorating performance.¹⁰

4. Repeatedly banning funerals of “Rojava Peshmerga” fighters killed in battles against ISIS and the Hashd al Shaabi in the KRI. Family members of Peshmerga fighters are also threatened in order to pressure their relatives to leave Peshmerga ranks.
5. Closing and burning the offices of the KNC, its affiliated parties and other organizations. This prevented it from working in the public space. The KNC’s leaders and members were prevented from using the Semalka crossing into the KRI - Iraq, preventing the KNC from developing its relations with the outside world.
6. A media campaign targeting the Council and the Roj Peshmerga.¹¹ Any writer, thinker, intellectual, activist or journalist that opposed the AANES would be labelled as an agent of regional states.¹²

¹⁰- Statement by the Kurdish National Council regarding the arrest of its leaders and cadres, Yekiti Media, 5/29/2016, <https://bit.ly/36d6l6S>. For more: The Kurdish National Council condemns the arrest of its party cadres by the PYD security personnel, Baladi News, <https://bit.ly/3KBR9z7>

¹¹Accusing the leaders of the Kurdish National Council of treason, and the Autonomous Administration is pursuing them, Arabs21, 4/2/2018, <https://bit.ly/3q1dm1I>, review: In a dangerous escalation: the Autonomous Administration accuses the head of the Kurdish Council of treason and collusion, al-Hal Net website, Musab al-Numeiri, 31/10/2018, <https://bit.ly/3tQM3bN>

¹²Reporters Without Borders, Syria: Kurdish forces persist in detaining journalists, 9/2/2021, <https://bit.ly/3pZEKXG>, 12/3/2022. and the statement of the Syrian

The Weaknesses of the Kurdish National Council

The KNC suffers from a number of issues that have made it consistently weak with poor organization and public support. These weaknesses are discussed here:

A Legacy of Covert political live

Kurdish political activism has been conducted in secret for decades. This makes achieving any progress a very slow process because of the need to avoid detection by security forces. However, the KNC directly jumped to full blown national and public programming without any planning or changes in political programs for the parties underneath its umbrella. Without changing political practices, or how it engages in politics, the KNC has now become more like a monitoring and observatory institution. Instead, the KNC now only gives political positions about current events in the Kurdish and Syrian files. Distancing itself from the fast-changing events pushed large numbers of young people away from being active in the ranks KNC's parties. The KNC failed to understand that the old way of

Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, July 2021, <https://bit.ly/3vZmQOO>, and the statement of solidarity with a writer and journalist published by the Kurdistan Journalists Council, and the World Union of Kurdish Writers and Journalists in Syria, on 8/16/2021, <https://bit.ly/3JIDmWL>

working is no longer effective. The KNC continues to suffer from structural weakness caused by weak political parties, poor internal structures, and dwindling membership. This caused severe brain drain and a decrease in public programming, especially in regard to issues of importance to the constituency. This happened under increasing pressure from the AANES, direct pressure, shaming, and attacks on political personalities and the KNC's reputation. The AANES also made it difficult for the KNC to continue operating by repeatedly rejecting the KNC's application for official registration. Interestingly, between March 2020 and mid-2021, despite the AANES's less aggressive policies towards the KNC, the Council was unable to create any notable field presence or public programs.

Organizational Intractability

The KNC continued its policy of allowing individuals to manage external political and social relations. Neither the KNC nor its affiliated parties made any effort to enhance their community outreach. The political changes and political funding also played a role in distracting people involved in public affairs. Individual interests overpowered political and public interests. The KNC's own cadres that have high qualifications, as well as cultural and social legitimacy, were marginalized. The KNC also lacked transparency

and failed to have clear plans about what they should be doing. The KNC did not develop relations with international organizations, significantly decreasing consistent sources of funding, making its financial situation less transparent.

Most of the KNC's official offices, that make up its operational structure, were also mismanaged. The KNC also pushed away the main cultural and intellectual figures affiliated with it. Some were pushed away on purpose, while others fell victim to the KNC's lack of funding and inability to integrate them into its ranks. The KNC did not succeed in creating a single auxiliary institution or civil organization in its support base. Even the local councils were unable to meet the expected work requirements. While the local councils were able to object to the AANES policies, many communication channels between the public support bases and international organizations could have been used more effectively to strengthen public engagement. This way, the KNC lost its legitimacy with local communities, which were previously the Council's main source of support in its peaceful resistance to the AANES's policies.

Worn Out Alliances

The KNC joining the SNC represented a significant shift in the Council's participation in the Syrian political file. The SNC was the

only political platform that represented the Syrian opposition for a long time. The KNC was represented in the SNC in the position of Vice President of the Coalition; as well as representation on the political committee; and 8 members in the General Assembly.

However, the relationship of the alliance or the political interaction of the KNC within the Coalition was politically exhausting for both parties. Disputes over the future political vision for Syria continued, especially with regard to the aspect of the regime, in addition to the differences that emerged in the political positions of the military operations carried out by Turkey inside Syria. The KNC was not able to fully adopt the position of the SNC, and it was unable to change its own position or the SNC's position on these events. Therefore, since the KNC joined the SNC, the two sides have not been able to reach an agreement that strengthens the structure of the National Coalition. This matter is partly due to the nature of the blocs joining the SNC, and on the other hand, due to the lack of clarity about the nature of the organizational identity of the two parties.

The second alliance that the KNC entered into since its founding is ties with the Peace and Freedom Front (PFF). The KNC also had strong relations with the Assyrian Democratic Organization (ADO); as well as some political representatives of the Arab tribes inside

Syria. All of these social and political components made up the PFF; which focused on coordinating political action between the various communities in Northeast Syria. The PFF created something like a collective identity which includes a number of different nationalities and races. This new formation puts forward several points related to the general concepts and principles of patriotism, considering it a comprehensive framework for Syrians, and a basis for building the Syrian state. As for the items related to the form of the state and the nature of its governance systems, the PFF agreed on "decentralization" without specifying its political or administrative dimensions. A point from which the KNC and the Arab Council in Jazira and the Euphrates were able to start from in order bridge the gap between their proposals.¹³

However, the Coalition's efforts currently focus on creating united delegations to send to some official meetings. But the various participating sides have failed to inherit the benefits of the National Coalition into their own party and organizational structures.

¹³Th Peace and Freedom Front, Hope for Effectiveness in a Reality Full of Challenges, Bedir Mulla Rashid, Source: Omran Center for Studies, 8/31/2020, <https://bit.ly/3Jsu5SL>

The Duality of Inside and Abroad

The KNC's activities has been concentrated inside Syria since the beginning of the Syrian revolution until the beginning of 2015 when (Dohuk Agreement) was signed with TEV-DEM Movement for a Democratic Society . But following the entry of international anti-Isis forces into northern Syria and their support to the SDF, the KNC's political activity decreased in favor of the AANES which received support from Western countries. The AANES also ramped up its previous pressure campaign against the KNC forcing it to close all its offices.¹⁴ This is when the KNC's identity and power started to shift and slowly form new circles of political influence and activism. Whereas the first sphere of influence was established before the Duhok Agreement through which the KNC had a notable presence in majority Kurdish towns and cities in Syria. A second circle of influence developed in the form of the KNC members that were present in Kurdistan region of Iraq -Erbil under the auspices of the KRI. A third circle of influence developed in the form of the KNC's representatives that made up the Council's bloc in the SNC. The first political sphere of influence (the one which kept inside Syria

¹⁴As the campaigns of arrest and harassment against the leaders of the Council continued, which prompted the latter to hold many demonstrations, and organize media campaigns to stop PYD -AANES practices.

) was capable of maintaining some level of influence and control on the Erbil group given its physical closeness and the party members' ability to physically travel on a regular basis between Iraq and Syria. Furthermore, the KDP's Syria branch had a strong presence in Erbil, setting up a permanent base there. However, the third Istanbul based sphere of influence was unable to maintain the same level of influence in Erbil through the Council's Istanbul representatives and their membership in the SNC. The Istanbul sphere of influence focused its work from the start of the revolution on participating in protests and other events related to Kurds.¹⁵

This started to change as the Kurdish Democratic Progressive Party led by the late Hamid Haj Darwish, pulled out of the KNC following its fourteenth¹⁶ general assembly on 27/11/2015.¹⁷⁾

¹⁵Bahzad Ibrahim is a well-known Kurdish figure as a result of his involvement in partisan work within the Kurdish Progressive Democratic Party in Syria, and commercial business between Bulgaria and Turkey for several decades, and his possession of financial resources and connections that enabled him to provide valuable support to the Council, as he was one of the main facilitators during the process of the Kurdish Council joining the Coalition.

¹⁶The final statement of the fourteenth conference (the conference of the martyrs of the Kurdish Progressive Democratic Party in Syria), The Democratic Party, 2015, link: <http://www.dimoqrati.info/?p=32921>

¹⁷Although the party tried to remain in the coalition, it was unable to achieve this goal.

Things only got worse for the KNC representatives based in Istanbul after the group's leader Dr. Behzad Ibrahim stepped down from the position. On the other hand, the KNC members in Istanbul, as part of the SNC, were more involved in external Syria related political relations such as in Geneva and Astana.¹⁸ The KNC's Istanbul representatives became more relevant both inside and outside Syria under the leadership of Shivan Jaziri who held a number of meetings and consultations with European state representatives about Syria. These activities increased even more after Othman Mulla Muslim, another party figure in 2016. The Istanbul group of KNC representatives in the SNC took on the role of representing the Council internationally through its membership in the SNC. However, the group's leadership role remained vacant as Kurdish figures represented in the SNC changed. Following those changes came the global Covid-19 pandemic during which diplomatic movements were significantly reduced due to restrictions imposed by governments and authorities around the world. All of this resulted in a general decrease in Kurdish political activity in Turkey.

¹⁸The "Syrian Negotiation Committee": Five years under internal and external pressure, Enab Baladi, 2020, Link: <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/439733>

The impact of new political and security agreements between the countries participating in the Astana Process caused even more decline in the KNC's political activities. The changes were even greater after Turkey launched Operation Olive Branch in Afrin to push out the People's Protection Units (YPG) from the region. The new realities on the ground following the operation split the KNC into two wings: the first was directly integrated into the political and administrative developments during the operation; and participated in meetings aimed at creating a new local administration for the Afrin region. All the while at the decision-making center in Qamishli announcements disapproving the operation were released swiftly. This resulted in major changes in the types of rhetoric coming from within the KNC creating two distinct types of political rhetoric. The first located inside Syria and hindered its support for the Syrian revolution and SNC politically, raised the revolution flag, commemorated the revolution's anniversary every year, refers to areas under the control of Turkish backed groups as "occupied", and refer to the armed groups as "takfiri" or "terrorists". The second supported the SNC and the Syrian revolution flag, saw it necessary to engage politically and administratively with the new realities on the ground in Afrin, and did not view Turkey's presence in Afrin or other areas as "occupation". This split affected the KNC's relations

with Turkey and the SNC. The group located inside Syria refused to engage in any partisan or political activities in Afrin, Rasul Ayn, Tal Abyad; they even refused to visit these areas arguing that going there would make the KNC an accomplice to violations there. They also argued that making a visit would give legitimacy to the presence and actions of the armed groups there. This group resorted to releasing annual and other occasional official statements.¹⁹

The second group called on the KNC to relaunch its political activities in cities under Turkish and the opposition Syrian National Army (SNA) control. This group released regular statements and held public meetings calling on residents of Afrin, Rasul Ayn, and Tal Abyad to return; and made attempts to decrease the presence of military personnel there.²⁰

Points of Strength of the KNC

The KNC gets its institutional and political strength from a number of points related to the Council's consistent overlapping public support of the same demands made by the Syrian people regarding

¹⁹Saud Al-Mulla's statements spark a crisis in the KNC," Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, 2021, Link: <https://bit.ly/3Tz1b8V>

²⁰Dr.. Abdul Hakim Bashar: There are malicious parties working to abort the process of returning the people of Afrin to their homes, Rebaz Agency, 2022, link: <https://bit.ly/3MEqXWR>

the regime; or demands regarding the political future of the Kurdish people in Syria.

1. Nationalistic Demands within National Borders

Since its establishment the KNC outlined a number of concepts and principles that were the basis of their call to change the governance system in Syria, outlined their political positions regarding Syria's future, and the relationship between Syria's various communities. The KNC and its ideas about the Kurdish issue and political principles still have a widespread support base despite the difficulties it faces in trying to maintain that support in the wake of suppressive policies carried out by the PYD. Instead, the PYD focuses on tightening the grip on citizens through engaging them in administrative structures, public works, and by using the security forces. In response, the general public reacted negatively to the PKK being in control of most aspects of daily life in northeast Syria.²¹ The public reacted negatively to the way security forces treated them; the spread of violence in political spheres, including kidnappings and

²¹Mazloum Abdi: Four thousand from the PKK were killed in Syria, Source: Enab Baladi, Date: 04/12/2020, Link: <https://bit.ly/3ANINIW>, and for more information, you can also review: Mazloum Abdi acknowledges the presence of fighters for Hezbollah "PKK" in Syria, Source: Enab Baladi, Date: 11/26/2020, Link: <https://bit.ly/3RyEINF>

arrests; and aggressive rhetoric as well. This resulted in large numbers of cultural and intellectual leaders distancing themselves from the PYD. It should be noted that this happened despite large numbers of citizens who joined the AANES due to difficult economic circumstances. However, the KNC's position on Kurdish issues was a main factor in its ability to retain a base of support. This and other issues are considered non-negotiable positions and reflect the Syrian Kurdish community's demands, including: constitutional recognition of a national Kurdish identity, "where Kurdish people live on their ancestral land, ending all anti-Kurdish laws in Syria, including the ban on teaching the Kurdish language in school, to pay reparations for those affected by such laws until now, and the establishment of a decentralized political system that respects Syria's territorial sovereignty".

KNC Vision Coincides With Public Opinion

At the start of May 2011 representatives of around 11 Kurdish political parties and youth organizations held two meetings: the first was held in the Alyan region in the rural part of eastern Qamishli province. The second meeting took place in mid-May in the same location. Both of the meetings were extremely important for the Kurdish parties as Syria was experiencing major changes. The

meetings resulted in a consensus that the parties wanted to avoid violence and killing, and instead allow for peaceful protests and a comprehensive national dialogue among the country's political actors. The demands were consistent with that of the Syrian public, confirming the need to end all violence and detentions, holding a national dialogue with all of the national political parties, and supporting the public protests around the country through multiple public statements condemning massacres and detentions.²² In addition, Kurdish demands sought to eliminate all the racist laws and regulations implemented by the Baath Party in the past. The Kurdish public wanted to resolve the Kurdish nationalist issue democratically and justly within the context of national territorial sovereignty, and constitutional recognition of the Kurdish ethnicity as a native part of Syria.²³ These Kurdish political parties also rejected an invitation by the Syrian regime Bashar al-Assad to engage in talks.²⁴

²²For more: See the data page on the official website of the Kurdish National Council, Link: <https://www.r-enks.net/?cat=49>.

²³The Kurdish parties in Syria propose an initiative to solve the Syrian crisis, Welate me website, 6/15/2011, Link: <https://bit.ly/3v9Llsp>, and for more: Why did the Kurdish parties refuse to meet with al-Assad, Hamza Hamki, Rock Online, 2/8/2017, Link: <https://bit.ly/3IjBVOv>

²⁴Al-Assad calls on the Kurds and international condemnation of violence, Al-Jazeera Net, 4/6/2011, Link: <https://bit.ly/3sdtpey>

Joining Syrian Opposition Forces

Syrian Kurdish parties joined the Syrian revolution before 2011 in the form of seven political parties that joined together under the umbrella of the Damascus Declaration for National Democratic Change (October 16, 2005). They all agreed on the necessity to create political change in Syria and to pursue a democratic solution to the Kurdish issue while taking into account Syria's territorial and national unity. Some of these parties participated in the creation of the National Coordination Council for Democratic Change (NCCDC) on June 25, 2011.²⁵

However, the relationship has always remained ambiguous, especially with the NCCDC, as the original position of the committee envisioned "a democratic solution to the Kurdish issue within a framework of Syrian territorial integrity that does not contradict the fact that Syria is an integral part of the Arab world."

Alongside the NCCDC formed inside Syrian territory, opposition members also formed the Syrian National Council in 2011, but the KNC did not join it. The relationship with the Syrian National

²⁵The Syrian Kurds and their political choices, Ali Al-Abdullah, Al-Jazeera Net, 21/2/2012, link: <https://bit.ly/3hcFryp>

Council was dependent on the general positions taken towards the Assad regime and the Syrian future system. After a series of negotiations and discussions, the KNC eventually joined the Syrian National Coalition. The relationship between the two was more positive due to converging positions on general Syrian issues, especially the need to topple the Assad regime and its symbols. Some tensions did remain because of SNC_position toward the decentralized governance approach_ The Syrian National Council published the National Charter: “The Kurdish Question in Syria” in April 2012, excluding from the document the wording that recognizes the Kurdish nation in Syria, which was included in the draft final statement of the Friends of Syria meeting in Tunisia on 25/2/2012, which caused an increase in the extent of the discourse between them.

The relationship with the Syrian National Council remained based on general positions towards the Syrian regime, until the Kurdish National Council joined the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces after a series of long negotiations and dialogues. The relationship between them witnessed consensus on general Syrian issues, such as the position toward the Syrian regime, and the need to overthrow it with its symbols, but it

remained tense due to the National Coalition's rejection of the KNC's demand to adopt political decentralization in Syria. The alternative presented by the National Coalition was constitutional recognition of the Kurdish ethnicity in future revisions, solving the Kurdish issue by removing any oppressive laws or regulations and paying reparations to victims of previous policies, and recognizing Kurdish national rights within a united Syria territorially and nationally.²⁶ The relationship between the two was under a lot of back and forth pressure resulting from statements made from time to time regarding the KNC's vision for the decentralized governance system in a future

²⁶1- The National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces affirms its commitment to the constitutional recognition of the national identity of the Kurdish people, the consideration of the Kurdish issue as an essential part of the national issue and the general democracy in the country, and the recognition of the national rights of the Kurdish people within the framework of the unity of the Syrian land and people.

2- The Coalition affirms that the new Syria is a pluralistic, civil, democratic state, with a republican-parliamentary system based on the principle of equal citizenship, separation of powers, rotation of power and the rule of law, and the adoption of an administrative decentralization system that enhances the powers of local authorities...The Kurdish National Council then reserved the following paragraph of the third item (Adopting a system of administrative decentralization to enhance the powers of local authorities) and believes that the best formula for the Syrian state is a federal state formula, and the Kurdish National Council will work to achieve this. During this period, it entered into 3 agreements with the AANES and PYD, all of which failed, and the Council held the other party responsible for the failure, and the political tools in the work between them seemed different, and the form of belonging to the nation between democracy or Kurdish played the core of the conflict and the basis for the differences between them.

Syria; and regarding the military operations that took place in Afrin, Rasul Ayn, and Tal Abyad.²⁷ Furthermore, some SNC members rejected any attempt at dialogue between the KNC and the AANES sponsored by the United States. Then SNC President Nasr Alhariri called on Turkey to lead an international intervention to push out SDF- PKK forces from all Syrian territory including Tal Rifaat and Manbij which triggered a response from the KNC in which they released a statement saying that such operations were a violation of Syria's territorial sovereignty; and a violation of the Syrian revolution's principles and values that will worsen relations between different parties in the SNC.²⁸ Currently the KNC is an essential part of the Syrian opposition, it is represented by at least one member of the political committees; and has a special independent²⁹ status as a member of the Higher Negotiations Committee (HNC) and a representative of the SNC; as well as having a representative in the

²⁷Kurdish National Council, Orient Net, Publication Date: 2021, Link: <https://bit.ly/3ENPgji>

²⁸ Division in the coalition regarding a call for Turkey's intervention against the SDF, Enab Baladi website, 6/20/2021, link: <https://bit.ly/3xhkuvB>

²⁹ Muhammad Abdul Sattar, The Kurdish political body gains more independence in the negotiating committee, Syria Direct, 9/18/2018, published at: <https://bit.ly/3xgr0T6>

small group of the Constitutional Committee.³⁰ Despite the many crises experienced in the relationship between the KNC and other parts of the Syrian opposition, they continue to maintain a political alliance. However, the relationship is not up to everyone's desired standard. This brings us to two main issues: the KNC is able to create alliances with opposition powers at the center of decision-making circles but is unable to consistently capitalize on those relationships.

KNC Foreign Relations and Adopting the International Position About the Regime

The number of detentions of protesters increased significantly in only a few months following the first protests in Syria. This was met with more intense protests as regional, Arab, and international pressure increased on the Assad regime. At the same time the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations passed a resolution condemning violence against the protesters, forced disappearances and torture that killed tens of civilians in Syrian prisons.³¹ The KNC's position

³⁰The Syrian Peace and Freedom Front announces its founding statement: Principles and Concepts, 9/30/2020, Link: <https://bit.ly/3BKUJ6Q>

³¹Syrian Kurdish opposition: Participants in the revolution and we want a democratic, pluralistic Syria, DW website, 11/25/2011, Link: <https://bit.ly/3vesDzN>, and it is also possible to return to the positions of the most prominent countries concerned with the Syrian file since the start of the revolution, Al Jazeera Net website 14/3/2020, Link: <https://bit.ly/3heCgGl>

towards the Assad regime also coincided with that of Arab and Western nations, as well as the international community from the start of the revolution³² and then gradually increased in seriousness turning into threats resulting in international consensus supporting the demands of the Syrian people. The Friends of Syria (FOS) group established in Paris suggested more aggressive steps would be taken against the regime if it did not abide by the plan proposed by the UN and Arab Envoy to Syria Kofi Annan. Then the UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution allowing for an international observers force to oversee a ceasefire in Syria. An initial reconnaissance group of 30 observers was sent to Syria.³³ At the same time, the United States accused Syrian authorities of using “barbaric” tactics to dispel protesters in Daraa.³⁴ During this time the KNC was holding a series of talks and meetings³⁵ with American and European

³²- Timeline of UN efforts in Syria, Al-Jazeera Net, 15/7/2012, Link: <https://bit.ly/3q7wTOj>, and for more information, you can also refer to Friends of Syria warn Damascus..., France 24, 4/19 /2012, Link: <https://bit.ly/3JhJ7eL>

³³- The UN Security Council issues a resolution to send observers to Syria, whose vanguard arrives on Sunday, France 24, 4/14/2012, Link: <https://bit.ly/3u39s9J>

³⁴- The United States accuses the local authorities of using barbaric means to suppress the demonstrations, 4/5/2011, Link: <https://bit.ly/3q7T5b8>

³⁵- According to what Dr. Abdul Hakim Bashar said via a phone call, that the meetings were in the name of the Kurdish National Council, accompanied by the Kurdish negotiating delegation, and sometimes alone, and all the meetings confirmed the Kurdish National Council’s involvement and its compatibility with the international position on the Syrian revolution, as was the case between January

officials at their embassies in the KRI, Turkey and other locations. The meetings were to confirm that the KNC's position matched that of the international community towards the Syrian revolution and the Assad regime. The discussions focused on what the future political process looks like in Syria; the KNC expressing their support for the Syrian people; and confirming its support of the international community's position towards the Syrian revolution and the Assad regime. Following these developments, the Kurdish community in Europe held a meeting in Erbil sponsored by then KRI President Masoud Barzani at which 200 Kurdish representatives from 25 different countries were in attendance. This is considered the main turning point of the Syrian Kurdish community's relationship with the outside world. The KNC is considered the closest ally of the KDP-Iraq, which is one of the largest and most powerful Kurdish parties in

and May 2012. The Kurdish National Council held the following series of meetings: the meeting with Alastair Burt, the British Minister of Development and the Minister of State for Middle East Affairs, the meeting with Fred Hoff, Director of the Middle East Department in the US State Department, the meeting with Mrs. Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, and a meeting with William Hick, the British Foreign Minister Bulgarian Foreign Minister Nikolay Mladenov, French Foreign Minister Adviser Nicholas Cassian Bef, and British Foreign Affairs Minister Alistair Peter Fred Hoff in Washington, as well as with Robert Ford, and with US Deputy Secretary of State Geoffrey Feltman, meeting with Obama's personal advisor in the White House, As well as with Mr. Biden's advisor at the time, he was Vice President of America, the meeting with Senator John McCain and Joseph Lieberman in the US Congress building.

the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The KNC benefited from the KRI's diplomatic relations allowing it to promote the Council to European and Arab nations. The KRI also provided the KNC with technical and logistical support allowing the Council members to travel easily. The KRI also had a good relationship with Turkey, opening many doors for the KNC including being a member of the SNC where the Council was able to meet with all of the international actors and representatives working specifically on the Syrian issue. The KNC was even able to reach institutions like the Arab League but failed to establish strong relations with Gulf countries.

On an international level, the KNC benefited from three main interlinked factors:

1. KRI's own international relations established a base from which the KNC was able to secure many of the meetings with foreign actors and representatives specifically working on the Syrian file.
2. The KNC's membership in the SNC allowed the Council representative to attend all their meetings and conferences with supporting country and institutional representatives. KNC members were also able to participate in the different attempts at reaching a political solution including in Cairo, Saudi Arabia, London Vienna, and Geneva.

3. Being the only representative of Kurdish people in the Syrian opposition also gave the KNC some advantages, but the Council failed to sustain them under pressure from the expansion of the PYD's influence inside Syria.

Conclusion

The Syrian file wanes between a liquid political reality moving forward through the constitutional talks or a freeze of political activity following each round of talks. With the fragile geographical boundaries holding for now, dividing Syria into three distinct zones along geographic and ethnic lines; the KNC lacks a clear physical or active presence inside any of these areas in Syria. This is especially the case in areas where the KNC was traditionally active and present. This significantly increases pressure on the KNC. These realities require the KNC to make major changes and work more on its organizational structure. The KNC needs to build affiliated institutions, organizations, and centers. Writers and researchers should be empowered through conferences attended by academics, intellectuals, and researchers. A new mechanism for accepting new parties into the Council and distributing responsibilities through its administrative structures in a clear institutionalized way. Here special attention should be paid to cases in which political parties want to exit the KNC. The Council must also clarify its relationship with the SNC, especially regarding non-consensus issues. The KNC should have contingency plans prepared with cadres and plans if an intra-Kurdish dialogue succeeded, resulting in the Council officially joining the AANES. (Assuming

that the KNC's condition of removing the PKK from the region is met) The KNC must also establish good relations with the Arab community in Deir Ezzor and Raqqa. The KNC will not succeed if it limits its relations to the areas where it is active. Political action will not gain momentum if it is a short-term vision isolated in a single geographic area and exclusive to a single ethnic group. The KNC must expand its activities beyond Qamishli city; which is an oasis isolated from a larger national political scene. The political agenda must not remain local and adopt a wider scope including international and regional politics. This is why the Syrian opposition began expanding its network in the international community to create a political front that could manage the country in the future.

The KNC must increase pressure on affiliated media, rights, and research organizations and use its international relations to increase pressure on the AANES to cease oppressive or obstructive action against the Council and its members. The KNC must also clarify its position on a number of issues, including the fates of Afrin, Rasul Ayn and Tal Abyad and how to ensure people are able to return to their homes. These steps will be crucial for the KNC to regain the trust of its support base and enhance its ability to defend and advocate for their supporters' political demands.

Appendix

Appendix 1: KNC Member Parties and Organizations

Main Figures		Membersh ip status (Withdra wn, Current, Dismissed)	Party or Organizati on
Saud Al Mulla, Chairman of the Council and Secretary of the Party, Abdul Hakim Bashar, Member of the Political Bureau and Vice President of the Coalition. Mohamed Ismail, official of the Central Information Office. The party was previously called the Kurdish Democratic Party in Syria (Al-Parti), then the parties	PDK-S	Member	Kurdish Democratic Party of Syria

<p>joined (Yakiti Kurdistan, the secretary, Abdul Basit Hamo, Azadi al-Kurdi, his secretary, Mustafa Oso, and Azadi al-Kurdi, his secretary, Mustafa Juma. The four parties were among the founding parties of the KNC.</p>			
<p>Suleiman Oso, Secretary of the Party, Abdullah Gado, Member of the Political Body of the Coalition, Ibrahim Biro, Member of the Foreign Relations Office, Fuad Aliko, Former Secretary.</p>	Yekiti	Member	The Yekiti Party of Kurdistan - Syria
<p>General Secretary of the party: Nimet Daoud. A well-known figure as well</p>	WEKHE VI	Member	Kurdish Democratic Equality

Ridwan Sido, rights activist and party leader			Party in Syria
Party Coordinator: Faisal Yusuf	TCKS	Member	Kurdish Reform Movement - Syria
Taher Safouk	PDNKS	Member	The Kurdish National Democratic Party of Syria
Salah Darwish, Ahmad Suleiman	PDPKS	Withdrawn	Kurdish Democratic Progressive Party
Jamal Sheikh Baqi	PDKS	Withdrawn	Kurdistan Democratic Party of Syria

Mohamad Musa, Saleh Gado	LPKS	Withdrawn	Left Party of Kurds in Syria
Muhyiddin Sheikh Ali, Mustafa Mashayekh	PYDKS	Dismissed	Kurdish Democratic Unity Party
Nasiraddin Ibrahim - currently a member of the AANES	PDKSI	Dismissed	Kurdish Democratic Party
Fawzi Shangali, Member of AANES		Dismissed	The Kurdish Democratic Accord Party in Syria
Youth Organizations in the KNC			
Hajar Hasan	YXCDK -R	Member	Students and Youth Union of Democratic

			Kurdistan-Rojava
Fawaz Mohamad	TCK	Member but experience d several breakoffs	Kurdish Youth Movement
Women's Organizations in the KNC			
Arya Jumuah	YJK-S	Member	Kurdistan Women's Union - Syria
Hayat Kajo	YJK	Member	Kurdish Women's Union
Najah Hivo	HJKS	Member	Kurdish Women's Union Rodoz

Kalawish Kamil		Member	Kurdish Women's Union
Janar Hano		Member	Free Kurdish Women

Appendix 2: Official outlets of the KNC's organizations

Most of these profiles on social networking sites do not have an official status and individuals from local councils and council representatives abroad work on them through their own efforts.

Local councils and representatives of the Kurdish National Council	
Council's page on FB	Martyr Nasraddin Barhak's Local Council in Chil Agha/Aljawadiyeh
Council's page on FB	Local Council in Girkê Legê - Maabada
Council's page on FB	The Local Council of the Kurdish National Council in Syria - Derika Hamko / Derik Al-Malikiyah

Council's page on FB + second page stopped	The Kurdish National Council in Syria - Tal Tamr Region
Council's page on FB	The Local Council in Qamishlo - Eastern Neighborhood
Council's page on FB	The Local Council in Qamishlo - Western Neighborhood
Council's page on FB	Local Council in Tirispi - Qahtaniye
Council's page on FB	Local Council in Al Hassaka
Council's page on FB	Local Council in Sanjak - Rural Qamishlo
Council's page on FB	Local Council in Serekaniye - Rasul Ayn
Council's page on FB , Second page	-The Kurdish National Council in "Kobani
Representatives of the Kurdish National Council Outside Syria	
KNC European Mission FB	European Mission
KNC KRI Mission FB	KRI MISSION
KNC Turkey - Syria Mission FB	KNC Turkey and Syria Mission

KNC Belgium FB	Kurdish National Council in Syria - Belgium Office
Suspended KNC Bodies	
KNC Germany FB	Kurdish National Council - Northern Germany
KNC Berlin - East Germany FB (stopped)	KNC Mission in Berlin- East Germany
KNC Tal Abyad FB	The KNC Council for Tal Abyad

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