

# 2016/3/1: The new PKK Part 2

## The new PKK

### Between extremism, political violence and strategic challenges (part 2)

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For our analysis of the ideology and the organisational structures of the Labour Party of Kurdistan PKK and of the Union of the Societies of Kurdistan KCK, two incidents are important which happened between the finalization of the manuscript of this two-part study in the middle of December 2015 and its print: Firstly, the publication of the secret talks between Öcalan, Kurd politicians and representatives of the Turkish government, which had taken place 2012 – 2014, and secondly, the resolutions of the Congress for a Democratic Society (DTK) from 27<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (for DTK, see the first part of this study). The secret talks were published in the end of November 2015 by the publishing house Mezopotamya in Neuss-on-Rhine with an astonishing level of detail and liberality. Their contents, however, was not discussed in the Turkish press before the end of January 2016. Talk notes confirm known topics and show how great the influence of the PKK-head Abdullah Öcalan on the organisation is, and also that his relationship with Kandil was tense from time to time. What is surprising is the confidential tone between him and the representatives of the Turkish state. Moreover, the importance of another political paper of Öcalan, his “draft version of the democratic autonomy of Kurdistan” which he had written by the end of December 2014, becomes obvious. This paper must be read as the variant of the “KCK-Agreement” adapted for Turkey. Anyway, the deductions made by the DTK can be read like an abbreviated version of Öcalan’s draft. Its claims also concern the establishment of special on-sight military forces assigned to the PKK, i.e. in the Kurd cities of south-east Turkey. These forces must be understood in the double context of the military structures of KCK/PKK and its expansion. The measures of the Turkish authorities especially against the PKK, which had been expected by observers, began after the first parliamentary elections in June 2015 and have lasted until today. In their stringency, however, they were, and still are, surprising. The reasons for this can be found in Erdogan’s disappointment because of the behaviour of the Kurd HDP (Democratic Party of the Peoples) with respect to the topic of presidential legal authorities, and in his frustration because of the course of the peace talks he had with Öcalan. Another reason is certainly the way how battles are fought, as urban warfare in town areas leaves only few other possibilities for the inexperienced YDG-H (youth organisation of the forbidden PKK) than to fight to the last. Misgivings that Turkey is at the beginning of a civil war are groundless. Something like that had been predicted in the 1990ies already. The parameters, however, have changed since then: Firstly, now the war is fought in the cities, and for this reason the classical methods of fighting uprisings – resettling the population from the country into the cities where the people can be controlled in a supposedly easier way – do not work any longer. Secondly, now the war can last for a longer time, as armour piercing weapons are easier to procure because of the situation in Syria.

