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Transformation of PKK to KCK

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Abstract

Having accelerated after 2001, formation process of KCK (Group of Communities in Kurdistan) began upon the definition of PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) as a terrorist organization within the changing dynamics of the world. The reason behind this change is to ensure the spread of the political policies adopted and goals set by KCK throughout the society.

Today, terrorist organizations regard the violence they use to proclaim their activities and thus enhance their efficiency as a “communication strategy” [1]. This is an attempt to convey their political discourses to the state organizations in their region sometimes under the name of PKK and sometimes under the names of KCK, accepted as local actions of PKK, which change its direction according to the changing dynamics.

Keywords: terrorist organizations; Transformation; PKK; KCK

1. Introduction

The concepts of terror and terrorist will be described after mentioning various considerations in this study. It will be seen that different activities have been carried out, particularly in USA, and international treaties have been signed on this matter. Then, the formation process of PKK, which is accepted as a terrorist organization will be explained in general terms. After discussing the extent of discourses of the terrorist organization PKK and scope and diversity of its activities, the difference of the activities in rural and urban areas in Turkey and the violent communication in the activity areas will be explained.

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Activity area of KCK will be analyzed under different titles and thus more clear information will be given about the organization of KCK. Following are the titles to be analyzed on this matter: 1- Origin of KCK, 2- Extent of activity, 3- Structural (organizational) model of KCK, 4- Judgment in KCK organization. These titles do not cover the institutions and bodies in KCK contract, taken as reference in this article; however, it provides a general organizational chart of KCK. Thus, relation between KCK and PKK and this transformation process will be clarified.

Finally, it will be attempted to explain the relation between KCK and PKK, studies of various authors on this subject, declarations in media and its extent. It will be discussed whether PKK forms a ‘top frame’ model for PKK or carries out its activities as an “urban organization” supporting PKK’s requests of autonomy or independence in the political area. Thereafter, it will be explained what is the extent of the relationship between KCK-BDP and DTK and whether they are inclusive or independent organizations, together with their areas of activity. In the light of all these analyses, dynamics of the process of transformation of PKK to KCK and relations between these dynamics will be discussed.

2. Concepts of terror and terrorist

The word ‘terör’ (terror) is taken from French to Turkish. However, the word itself is Latin. The concept of terror is defined differently in government policies according to the countries and political systems. The common point of this concept may be expressed with the damage to the civil people. Terror means intimidating the government and its citizens through systematic activities and obtain the intended philosophical or ideological results in order to achieve the intended goals in case of not gaining an edge in the political or military area. The aim here is to achieve the intended political goals by collapsing the ruling party or the government. Those who carry out these actions are called “terrorists”.

As there is no common definition of terror, governments do not have the facility to easily take action to fight against terrorism internationally. Therefore, the first problem to be solved is the formation of a “common definition of terror” in order to prevent terrorism, which is not limited to a single country.

Terrorist activities may sometimes be outside the state structure and sometimes become an issue as organizations supported by the state. Terrorist actions occurred in different manners before and after the cold war in the world. Finally, a international fight was jointly put up against terrorism with the execution of Lisbon Treaty in 2009. According to two articles of Lisbon Treaty, the countries having signed this treaty are required to put their civil and military facilities into the service of European Union to apply a ‘common security and defense’ policy. In the other article, it is stated that European Union and member countries are required to struggle together in case of a terrorist attack to any member country. This treaty is one of the major examples of the need for an international organization to fight against terrorism.

3. Formation process of PKK

It is known that all terrorist organizations go through a three-phase dimension. The first phase is showing its existence, in other words, gaining recognition as an organization by the government executives and, for this purpose, becoming a current issue through various actions of violence and conflict in the social order. The second phase is directing the public with oppressive and violent discourses in the created disorder atmosphere and bringing the governmental structure to the desired order. The final phase is eliminating the pressure and authority of the government on the terrorist organization and achieving dominance. The terrorist organization PKK carry out activities in order to achieve all these three phases.

Established in 1974, this organization extends to Syria, Iraq and Iran outside Turkey. Founder of this organization, name of which is translated into Turkish as Kürdistan İşçi Partisi (Kurdistan Workers' Party), is known to be Abdullah Öcalan; however, it has been developed with Marxist and Leninist opinions and discourses. "The terrorist organization PKK has a structure in which organizational changes and transformations have occurred more frequently when compared to other terrorist organizations in the world" [2]

The main purpose of this organization is to establish a Kurdish state with an independent and socialist order especially in regions with intensive populations of Kurdish people in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. However, its main area of activity is known to be Turkey. Activities in the other countries mentioned are conducted over Turkey.

After Abdullah Öcalan, adopted as the leader of PKK, was arrested and imprisoned in a high-security closed prison in İmralı, he instructed organization members to go to the Northern Iraq and carry out activities in a way to influence the domestic politics in Turkey and Iraq. Attempts made especially after the activities of inaction did not result in the favor of the terrorist organization PKK.

Following the unfavorable developments and attacks to the Twin Tower on September 11, discourses of countries, even the ones not of the same opinion with Turkey, about the concepts of terror and terrorism changed and a international common struggle was initiated. In consequence, activities of PKK were interrupted and Turkey started to gain support in this struggle from different countries, particularly USA.

Supporting attitude of USA was interrupted in 2003. USA's intervention in Iraq and the increasing chaos in the country, the terrorist organization PKK settled in Iraq. The author expresses that "the terrorist organization has seen Iraq as a training center due to the gap of authority in the area" [3]. The author states that the process of PKK's transition to the stage of guerrilla is as follows: "It tried to switch to the stage of guerrilla, which it deems an advance stage, in the early 1990s." [4].

The terrorist organization PKK also tried to convey its discourses by taking place in the political life of Turkey via different political parties. These discourses included discriminative expressions of race-based separatism in the country. Targets of political parties in politics should meet the needs of their voters. However, as specified by the author, arguments were about keeping PKK's political goals alive. "It is stated that they prefer emphasizing separatist discourses and generate negative emotional political arguments" [3]. It should be noted that emotional expressions function as an effective means to influence the civil citizens according to the data

obtained from the media. Particularly the fact that individuals living in rural areas maintain their social lives and determine their relationships highly on the basis of sentimental values expands the impact area of these discourses, even if they are oppressive.

It was declared as a terrorist organization by various international organizations due to their activities out of the scope of their establishment and purposes. These organizations are known to be: NATO, UN, USA and EU. Two different ways have been adopted for counter-terrorism. The first way is to rule out all resources of the terrorist organization. These may be psychological, economic, political, sociological or cultural. The second way is the easy method of reaching an agreement with terror without making an analysis to the core. In the current period, it is seen that policies of Turkish Government on this matter have been inadequate.

4. Activity area of KCK

4.1 Origin

KCK was founded by the participation of 213 members from Syria, Iran and Iraq, namely the Middle East, and different countries from Europe to the structure accepted as the legislative council of PKK in May 2005. After this date, a KCK contract was signed to designate the general boundaries and areas of KCK. The expanded version of KCK in Turkish is Kürdistan Topluluklar Birliği (Group of Communities in Kurdistan). It is stated in this contract that KCK would be a socialist and federal organization. Studies conducted by civil thought organizations such as Wise Man Center for Strategic Studies, National Security and Strategy Center, Center for Eurasian Strategic Studies and International Center for Terrorism and Transnational Crime on the existence and activities of KCK constitute another source of information concerning KCK.

KCK incorporates activities of PKK and therefore the Government has established various institutions to prevent the activities of this organization in Turkey as of 2009. The terrorist organization PKK continued its activities in 2002, 2003 and 2005 respectively under the titles of KADEK (Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress), KONGRA/GEL and KKK. Finally, it emerged under the title of KCK as the urban organization of PKK, in the narrow sense, in 2007. An author states the following for KCK: “KCK covers PKK, HPG (People’s Defense Forces), TAK (Kurdistan Freedom Falcons), ÖSB (Self-Defense Units), BDP (“Democratic Regions Party) and DTK (Democratic Society Congress); in other words, it is a frame of violence containing all these organizations” [5]. As may be understood from this statement, KCK have pursued its activities under various names.

The terrorist organization have targeted to “establish a united and independent Kurdistan state on the territories of Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran” since the day in was founded. KCK contract aims to structure the organization as a state system and gather the units and members of the terrorist organization within a systematic structure and addresses not only to Kurdish people, but also to the “other minorities” living on these territories, which makes it different from the previous organization. PKK is framed in the Article 36 of KCK contract. According to KCK Contract “Everyone having born and living in Kurdistan or faithful to KCK system is a citizen (Art. 5)”. “Each KCK citizen is liable to pay taxes as an obligation (Art. 10)”. As seen, various measures and interventions

are carried out. KCK is described with different expressions. Some of these are as follows: Urban structure of PKK, civil extension of PKK, secret civil organization of PKK.

4.2 Dimension of Activity

After attack to the Twin Towers in September 2001 by KCK, definition of terrorist organization has changed throughout the world. Following this definition, PKK has brought up new goals and discourses.

It is seen that the terrorist organization PKK, or with the changed name KCK, carries on its activities in Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq and some European countries like France and, instead of same actions, carries out different activities according to the country and social conditions.

Matters like the source of financial activities and trainings of using guns and various attack techniques vary according to the country. Especially today, there are training camps, or with its new name, KCK activities of armament and bomb carried out by the terrorist organization in Iraq, besides the terrorist actions in Syria. Apart from these, the political structuring and financial supports are mostly carried out in European countries. Additionally, “organizations of hajj and umrah through Kurdistan Islamic Union (CIK)” [6] and financial resources obtained from this structure expand the living area of the terrorist organisation.

Activities of PKK, or KCK as its urban structure, vary in rural areas or city centers. Besides armed and bomb attacks at various places and times in Turkey, particularly in Istanbul, they try to declare their policies that they adopt and want to make others adopt by means of violent communication through meetings and propagandas. In rural areas, there are different kinds of activities like kidnapping civil citizens and particularly attacking to the areas where the governmental agencies are located with bombs and guns, instead of setting cars on fire or breaking windows of stores. An author states the intensity of violence in rural areas by the provinces in Turkey as follows: “It is seen that rurally supported violent actions are mostly carried out in Hakkari, Diyarbakır and Şırna neighboring to the rural geography where the organization members live” [7].

4.3 Structural (Organizational) Model of KCK

The founding charter constitutes the main source in the structure of KCK as an organization. This founding contract is referred to as Koma Civaken Contract, namely KCK Contract. Agencies and institutions in the contract do not constitute an original structure; the current concepts are repeated or, when necessary, adapted.

The state structure mentioned in KCK contract is a confederal state rather than a unitary state. As understood, an autonomous government is prescribed. Additionally, it is stated in the contract this confederal structure is a democratic and socialist. The confederal system requires the presence of executive, legislative and judicial powers. At this point, KCK tries to achieve this aim with the concept of ‘independent municipality’.

While the confederal structure requires the state to be independent within its own state structure, this is specified in the Article 2 of KCK contract with the word “Non-state”. However, activities of KCK reveal the presence of

an organization that wants autonomy. Article 2 of KCK contract is as follows: "KCK has a structure encompassing vertical, horizontal and autonomous bodies as an organizational model" [8]. As understood from this article, the regulations of legislative, executive and judicial powers in KCK structure reveals the process of becoming a state.

It is specified in KCK contract that, besides Kurdish people, individuals from other nationalities may be citizens under the conditions stipulated in the system. The conditions in which individuals, even if they are of Kurdish origin, are deprived of citizenship are also specified in the contract. In scope of the regulations of the structure of PKK transforming into KCK under changing conditions, the concept of individual, which is one of 3 elements of sovereignty, is added to the contract.

It is stated that Abdullah Öcalan is the leader of this structure. In addition, members of the executive council are stated as the directors of this structure.

The relation between KCK and PKK and the transformation process among these structures, which is the subject of this study, are also specified in the contract. In this regard, it is observed that KCK has started its terrorist actions originating from PKK. According to the contract, PKK does not constitute a political and administrative structure, but functions as a moral, philosophical and ideological areas for KCK, each action of PKK is also for KCK and they are attached to each other in terms of members. In this extent, KCK carries on its terrorist activities with people having a higher level of education and influences the actions of PKK. It is also emphasized in this contract that the ideological source of KCK's actions is PKK.

This example of constitution was developed by KCK with certain goals. They aim to have Abdullah Öcalan, who is accepted as the founder and the leader, released, gain a autonomous state structure and subsist with a confederal system. The homeland, which is another element of sovereignty, covers the provinces in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, where Kurdish population is intensive, and also the specified areas in Syria, Iran and Iraq. Presence of all these systems shows that PKK, or with its changing structure KCK, tries to gain a seat in the political life with a document including the legislative, executive and judicial bodies as in the constitutions.

The following definition is made about the organizational structure of KCK: "Organizational model of KCK appears to be a hierarchical model. Some bodies have an autonomous structure and some are directly within the structure of KCK" [2]. KCK will establish political academies in order to include and guide the public into its activities and get through all segments of the society.

4.4 Judgment in KCK Structure

Presence of a judicial body is another element to gain autonomy in the state structure constituted by KCK. Activities of the terrorist organization involves more violence, however KCK attempts to introduce itself with its political goals.

It is stated in KCK contract that there will be three specific kinds of court for judgment. These are People's Freedom Court, Administrative Court and People's Court. It is specified that judgment for military affairs will

be separately conducted in Supreme Military Court. Finally, for matters regarding the organization of Kurdish Women's Movement (KJB), judicial bodies of KJB will be competent. This indicates a sort of special court. It is understood that special regulations regarding judgment are not included much and it is attempted to draw a scheme of the requirements of an autonomous state structure.

The flexibility in the activities of the organization also reveals itself in the judicial area. The main reason is that activities of the terrorist organization PKK are illegal and damage the civil people and therefore KCK is structured in a way to be accepted in the international area. An author summarizes this case as follows: "In this period of favorable developments in the attempts of democratization in Turkey and the increasing expansion of its scope, the organization makes its own expansion" [2]. Thus, KCK has taken steps in gaining dominance over everyone in a way to be accepted also in the psychological sense.

5. Relationship between KCK and PKK

Relationship between KCK and PKK are discussed under two titles. These are 1- KCK, the Urban Structure of PKK and 2- KCK, The Top-Frame Structure of PKK. Various descriptions are made on the basis of these two definitions.

Comments of various authors and press statements concerning whether KCK is an inclusive top frame or the urban structure of PKK are as follows: "KCK organization, allegedly, functions as a bridge between the illegal Kurdish political movement (PKK) and legal BDP (DPT)" [9]. "KCK is an entity that may be referred as "PKK's attempt to adapt itself to the law. Removing PKK from the mountains require a transition process" [10]. "KCK is not the urban structure of PKK, it is an organization above PKK. KCK is an organization serving as an alternative of the state and frame organization of PKK" [11]. "KCK Presidency of Executive Council stated that attacks to politically banned Ahmet Türk were invective, every honored and proud Kurd should take this as an attack to himself and his honor and every step required to bring this to account should be taken" [12].

The above-given evaluations exactly describes the situation between PKK and KCK. KCK attempts to contact with different violent actions carried out in the name of the terrorist organization in both urban and rural areas. There are remarks about PKK in the Article 37 of KCK contract. "PKK is an ideological and moral structure rather than a classical party that targets government. It is an ideological, free and moral organization in the areas of science and arts. KCK is the ideological power of the system. It is responsible for realizing the philosophy and ideology of leadership. In this extent, they are involved in the democratic institutionalism of democratic confederalism bodies. Each unit within KCK system are attached to KCK's structure in ideological, moral and philosophical dimensions. As understood from this article, the terrorist organization PKK forms the ideological, moral and philosophical bases of KCK structure. In this regard, KCK has designated legislative, executive and judicial bodies in KCK contract. According to the statements on the press, KCK's discourses, activities and promises addressing its target audience reveals the policy of this structure.

Considering all these statements, KCK is a "Top Frame" that encompasses PKK. It is stated in the Article 39 of KCK Contract that the youth section of the organization is also accountable to KCK. In the article 44 of KCK,

it is specified that the terrorist organization PKK is managed by KCK and all decisions are taken by KCK. In this regard, it is also stated that the definition of urban structure is not adequate to define KCK. "It may be suggested that urban structure of the terrorist organization is not an adequate definition for KCK" [13]. Another evaluation on KCK is as follows: "It is seen that KCK is an illegal and armed frame organization that also covers PKK" [2]. As understood, the expression "urban structure" is not a valid and adequate definition for KCK.

6. Relationship among KCK-BDP-DTK

In order to control the activities of BDP (Democratic Regions Party), DTK (Demokratic Society Congress) was established as an intermediate structure in consequence of the emergence of KCK as a top frame. "It was attempted to develop an intermediate form with the structure of DTK by virtue of the operations carried out during the application of Shadow Party system under the roof of KCK for a while" [2]. As stated by the author, DTK supports and maintains activities of the organization as a binding form between KCK and BDP.

The main purpose of KCK is to become a state and pave the way for the presence of the political forms specified in their contract. "Role of KCK in Kurdish politics may be accepted as a current and more complex version of PKK's directing illegal activities in the political area which is spread grassroots. In this regard, it is seen that KCK's activities are oriented at the political area, like BDP. The complexity between BDP and KCK reveals itself at this point.

BDP is one of the political parties having a legal place in Turkish Government, but have certain relations with KCK, which is an illegal organization. KCK impedes BDP's attempts for democracy and directs it by various bodies. "Activities of KCK-TM is in an illegal position of 'Shadow Party' in a sense and it has an effective role in the critical decisions of BDP" [2]. As may be understood from these statements, it is observed that BDP is not independent in the political life and carries out activities for various illegal terrorist organizations.

Presence of BDP provides a mechanism for KCK to carry on its activities and discourses in the political field. According to the statement of Anadolu Agency on December 3, 2010, a number of managers from BDP stated that they felt uncomfortable with the officials of KCK-TM and their activities were restricted and fell behind this illegal organization.

Another activity carried out by DTK is Democratic Autonomy Workshop established in 2010. Presence of this workshop put DTK on the agenda in Turkey again. The following statement was given in the press concerning the main purpose of DTK with its activities: "It is specified in the draft text of this workshop that the goal was the establishment of Democratic Autonomous Kurdistan" [14]. In consequence of the activities in DTK Workshop, the extent of Abdullah Öcalan's requests of democratic autonomy was declared. As understood, KCK tries to enhance its area of dominance from rural sections to the urban sections, covering PKK, and achieve its political goals by legal or illegal means. In this process, DTK presents KCK the data that will provide connections with BDP.

7. Conclusion

Emergence of the concept of terror dates back to the emergence of mankind and this concept has enhanced its area of activity so as to cover masses. Results of terror has aggrieved civil people and become a threat for humanity. As specified in the article, the intended goal could not be achieved in the political area by means of war or political struggle and therefore it was attempted to achieve it through armed organizations. States have established various agencies and institutions to prevent these structures that threaten their existence and unity and unsettle the atmosphere of peace and confidence.

After international institutions and states accepted PKK as a terrorist organization, the struggle of AKP Government against the terrorist organization PKK has been enhanced today. Trying to keep up with the changing dynamics, PKK has emerged again as KCK with the democracy, freedom, autonomy, confederalism and other discourses. The terrorist organization PKK has adopted an offensive and racist discourse and a violent communication model with armed and bomb attacks in both urban and rural areas. At this point, KCK has come to the stage and made up the deficiency of a political mechanism to liberalize the activities having been carried out till the present. KCK contract, which is mentioned in the article, serves as a constitutional text including various agencies, institutions and concepts and covering a state organization model.

It is understood that KCK is not just an “urban structure” and this concept does not exactly described KCK. According to the statements in the contract and the press, it is understood that KCK constitutes a “top frame” model for PKK and units of this terrorist organization. Considering the information given in the contract, philosophical, moral and political discourses of PKK will constitute a basis for KCK. Additionally, presence of those who are active in the terrorist organization PKK among the management members of the institutions and boards of the units mentioned in KCK contract indicates that the organization attempts to take place in the political area.

KCK has three main requests. These are the release of Abdullah Öcalan, a free leader; autonomy; and a state with a confederal structure. Three elements are required for sovereignty. These are: Mainland (territory), independence and human (citizen). As it is understood that terrorist activities of PKK will not be sufficient to obtain these elements, KCK tries to achieve this goal by means of the political mechanisms it generates. Considering the legislative, executive and judicial bodies introduced by KCK, it is understood that it establishes a “state system” parallel to Turkish State.

PKK'S activities are intended more at the life and property of civil citizens and their inclusion in weapon and bomb training in rural areas, while bomb attacks that cause collective deaths, damage to stores or houses, plundering or suicide bomb are more common in cities. As democratic became more effective in Turkey every passing day, the terrorist organization PKK changed its activities and adopted non-violent communication manners, addressing the public by means of demonstrations, meetings or various media organizations. In this process, KCK came to the scene and PKK gained efficiency in the political area. It infiltrated especially the legal political parties somehow, tried to influence them and notified its own discourses and requests to AKP Government. As these attempts were not sufficient, it tried to exercise control over the political party BDP

through a shadow organization named DTK. DTK emerged as a unit that enabled the activities of the terrorist organization PKK, which is managed by KCK.

As understood, PKK now carries on its activities under the roof of KCK to have a voice in the political area, influence all sections of the public and be accepted in the international area. Data obtained from civil thought organizations like BİLGESAM, USAM, ASAM and UTSAM, articles of different authors and information on the media, works and statements regarding KCK shed light on the studies and regulations of the authorized agencies of the government as a data source.

PKK's independence policy involving a violent communication attempted to be realized in three stages, like all terrorist organizations, has become invalid. At this point, as stated in the above-given article, KCK came to the fore where the terrorist organization PKK remained incapable and carried out activities in order to infuse its presence and requests within the changing dynamics in the world. All studies show that no terror organization is now able to influence people with violence and conflict. Therefore, KCK's activities not only address Kurdish people living in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia in Turkey and in Syria, Iran and Iraq with an intensive Kurdish population, but also other segments of the public.

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