

# Online symposium

**"Decolonizing Knowledge and Science.  
Breaking Isolation and Weaving Solidarity  
with the Universities of North and  
East Syria / Rojava"**

*In Memory of the Martyr of Civil Resistance  
at the Tishreen Dam, Roniza Mihemed,  
undergraduate student of Rojava University*

**February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**10:00 – 16:30 Central European Time**

Join here (ZOOM-Link):

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86163878922?pwd=jfn8VbUJkWGOUFmrLLr90MpMcp1Zqd.1>

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**Organizers:** Universities of the North and East Syria (UNES),  
Center for Solidarity with Alternative Universities (CSUA),  
Kurd Akad, Global Network of Solidarity with UNES

## Program

- 10:00 - 10:15 Opening speech by the Center for Solidarity with Alternative Universities (CSUA)
- 10:15 - 10:30 Introduction: Living Solidarity – Decolonizing Academia by the Symposium Organizing Committee
- 10:30 - 10:45 Overview of the Universities in NES by the Foreign Relations Office of the Universities in DAANES
- 10:45 - 12:00 Lectures by all three universities with a focus on Jineolojî, Sociology, Science & Technology and *Xwebûn* (Research Projects), followed by Q&A
- 12:00 - 13:00 Break
- 13:00 - 13:30 Introduction to the four working groups
- 13:30 - 15:00 Working Group meetings
- 15:00 - 15:15 Break
- 15:15 - 16:15 Presentation of results and suggestions from working group meetings
- 16:15 - 16:30 Conclusion and Future Work

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Following our Dialogue event held online in May 2024, this online symposium aims to consolidate and strengthen the solidarity with the three universities of the North and East Syria (UNES) and Rojava, supporting broader recognition of their work and mission.

We envision that solidarity with the universities begins with defending their right to exist, self-organize, and build a grassroots democratic, socially, and ecologically just society. Since November 2024, however, Syria's political landscape has changed dramatically. The Assad regime has fallen, and Turkey, along with its mercenary forces, has launched attacks on Til Rifet, Manbij and the rest of Rojava, disrupting education in all three UNES. A significant portion of students' families lived in these attacked areas. Many students, alongside teaching staff and fellow students, mobilized to aid refugees from these regions.

Turkish occupation forces and their mercenaries continue to attack militarily strategic areas, including the vicinity of the Tishreen Dam and Qaraqozakh Bridge, which are crucial gateways to the regions east of the Euphrates. These regions are vital for electricity production and water supply for Syrian metropolitan areas.

In response, people of all communities within the NES actively protest the Turkish invaders' attacks while defending these critical infrastructures. Turkish forces have escalated their aggression by targeting peaceful protesters, committing crimes against humanity, and killing dozens of

demonstrators, including Ronîza Mihemed, an undergraduate student of Rojava University.

It is more important than ever to break the isolation of the UNES, caused by the attacks and atrocities of the Turkish state, other imperialist actors, and the power structures of the global academic system, characterized by geopolitical, racist, and sexist violence.

Recognition of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES) and the participation of the UNES in the rebuilding of Syria are essential. DAANES represents the only democratic and secular political project in the country, ensuring self-governance, cultural and linguistic freedom, and the rights of all ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities. Its role in shaping the future of Syria is vital. The model it provides is exemplary for the region and for the global progressive movements.

We envision that solidarity with the UNES and Rojava begins with defending their right to exist, self-organize, and build a grassroots democratic, socially and ecologically just society.

Our solidarity must also prioritize the protection of the lives of students, lecturers, and administrative staff. Your participation and contribution to the symposium will help develop deep-rooted but practical solidarity with the UNES through your theoretical insights and practical experiences. We call on all interested groups, individuals and institutions to join and support this initiative.

Following our October 2024 call for the Symposium we have established four Working Groups to frame the symposium within a practical environment for participants. These groups organized several internal meetings prior to the symposium, and their contributions will be essential for developing further the solidarity with the UNES.

The following working groups will present their findings, and interested participants will have the opportunity to engage in discussions during the symposium:

1. International Teaching Cooperation
2. International Research Cooperation
3. Access to Resources and Equipment for the UNES – Translation of Educational Materials
4. Recognition/Accreditation of the UNES

By grounding the symposium in these working groups, we aim to maintain a practical focus in the program and discussions.



**KURD-AKAD**

Tora Akademîsyenên Kurd  
Network of Kurdish Professionals  
Netzwerk kurdischer AkademikerInnen