

Photos available from [bristolkurdishsolidarity@riseup.net](mailto:bristolkurdishsolidarity@riseup.net).  
Comment available from 07593 771675 and 07593 771674

## **Anna Campbell's Friends Occupy Airbus with Rooftop Art Installation as Turkish PM Meets with May**

Friends of a female British fighter who was killed by Turkish forces have occupied the roof of an Airbus facility in Filton. They are protesting at the company's ongoing sale of military hardware to the Turkish army. Bristolian Anna Campbell was killed in an airstrike on 15th March as she tried to protect civilians fleeing the invasion of Afrin in Northern Syria.

The action coincides with a meeting in London between Turkey's President Erdogan, and Theresa May.

The occupiers are rotating three large banner portraits of women who have been killed fighting for freedom with the YPJ (Women's Protection Units) of North Syria/West Kurdistan.

One of the rooftop occupiers, Liz explained:

*"The Bristol arms industry wants to pretend that the people it kills don't have stories. So we have brought them the face of our friend, and the heroes who inspired her. The women of the YPJ have been critical in liberating the world from ISIS, and have been repaid with betrayal. We are here to shout their names from the rooftops. Anna Campbell, Sara Merdîn, Serhildan, Arîn Mîrkan, Barîn Kobanê, we honour you and we miss you."* [1][2]

Anna travelled to Syria to learn from, and defend, the women's revolution of Rojava – a Kurdish utopian experiment in equality and ecological sustainability that has been critical in confronting and defeating the spread of ISIS. In January 2018 Rojava also started to come under attack from its neighbour Turkey in the region of Afrin. Its main city was acting as a vital refuge for people from all parts of the Syrian conflict. Turkish forces have now completely taken over the main city and thousands have fled.

A number of companies in the Filton area have contracts to supply the Turkish military. Airbus manufactures the wing for the A400M there, a multi-role transport aircraft that are sold to the Turkish military. So far Turkey has had delivery of four A400M planes of a total order of 10. [3] The Turkish President is currently on a three day visit to the UK.

A rooftop occupier Paul said:

*"As evidence mounts that Erdogan's government are recruiting former ISIS and al-Qaeda fighters, Theresa May is sitting down with this known human rights abuser to sell him more weapons. She is complicit in the death of Anna, YPJ fighters and hundreds of Kurdish civilians. It's simple, we have to stop arming Turkey. Now."*

The trio have not said how long they intend to stay in occupation, but they are believed to have camping equipment with them. [4] They will be sending out updates on #ErdoganNotWelcome.

A protest is being held in central London by Kurdish community groups and supporters.

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**Notes to Editors**

1. Arîn Mîrkan was a commander in the YPJ who died in the battle of Kobane in 2014, and whose sacrifice was a turning point in the battle against ISIS. In Rojava, north Syria, she is known as a symbol of resistance to fascism and of women's freedom. Today her family is among the civilians displaced from Afrin by the Turkish military invasion.

<https://roarmag.org/magazine/dilar-dirik-kurdish-anti-fascism>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzfjMFct2Ck>

2. Barîn Kobanê was a 23 year old fighter with the YPJ. She was in one of the units deployed to help defend Afrin from invasion. Barîn died trying to protect civilians from Turkish mercenaries. There have been widespread reports that Turkey has been employing former ISIS and Al-Qaeda fighters on their border territories, with all the atrocities this will inevitable entail. Either way, there is graphic evidence in Barîn's case that the Turkish soldiers who killed her hated women. They filmed themselves with her mutilated body and proudly posted the footage on social media.

3. For further information see the Campaign Against the Arms trade

<https://www.caat.org.uk/resources/mapping/organisation/3815>

4. The portraits used in the art installation were created by three different artists, all female friends of Anna. The idea for the protest – of occupying a Bristol Arms manufacturers roof with pictures of its casualties, was one that Anna had been involved in discussing a couple of years ago.