



Stop Criminalising The Kurdish Community

Report on Metropolitan Police Raid at the Homes of Kurdish Activists and the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) in London



27 NOVEMBER 2024



www.handsoffkurds.com

www.kurdishassembly.org

info@handsoffkurds.com

Together, we can ensure that justice, fairness, and truth prevail.



Executive Summary

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) in Haringey on 27 November 2024 marks a critical turning point in the relationship between the Kurdish community and law enforcement in the United Kingdom.

Under the guise of counter-terrorism legislation, the Metropolitan Police deployed hundreds of officers, including riot police and armed units, to storm a peaceful community organisation, as well as the homes of seven individuals, linked to the KCC. This excessive, unjustified, and damaging raid has disrupted the lives of peaceful individuals, targeted a vital community institution, and raised serious concerns about the erosion of civil liberties, the misuse of police powers, and the potential fracture of community cohesion.

Background and Impact:

The KCC, established in 1992, has been a cornerstone for the Kurdish community in London. Over the years, the KCC has grown into a vital institution for the Kurdish diaspora in London, particularly in the Haringey area. Offering a wide range of services, the centre has become a lifeline for thousands, addressing the socio-economic, cultural, and emotional needs of the community.

Despite its longstanding commitment to nonviolence and adherence to British law, the KCC found itself targeted by a raid that has left enduring scars on the community.

Misuse of Counter-Terrorism Laws:

The operation involved hundreds of officers, including riot police and armed units, creating an atmosphere of intimidation and fear. The raid was carried out under counter-terrorism legislation, on both the KCC and seven individuals, misapplied to a peaceful community organisation. However, these powers were designed to address credible and imminent threats to national security, not to target peaceful community organisations or law-abiding individuals. The excessive use of force, including physical violence and humiliation, has been emblematic of the broader trend of militarised policing in the UK.

Excessive Force and

Intimidation: The scale and militarised nature of the raid on the KCC were grossly



disproportionate to the perceived threat. Eyewitness accounts reveal disturbing incidents of physical violence and humiliation, underscoring the unnecessary and excessive use of force.

The police special forces forcibly entered homes at 4am in the morning while people were asleep, dragging individuals outside. Eyewitness accounts reveal disturbing incidents of physical violence and humiliation. One particularly harrowing event involved a 15-year-old boy who was assaulted by police as they arrested his father. Several other individuals, including those sheltering at the KCC, were forcibly dragged outside into the cold rain and held for hours without proper clothing or access to basic needs. In one tragic case, the wife of a detainee suffered a heart attack while in handcuffs.



Psychological and Social Toll: The raid inflicted deep psychological and social trauma on the Kurdish community, disrupting their sense of security and trust in law enforcement. Vulnerable groups, including women, children, and the elderly, are particularly affected by the closure of the KCC and the loss of its essential services. The psychological impact extends well beyond those directly involved in the raid, with the entire Kurdish community now feeling a heightened sense of vulnerability and fear.



Impact on Civil Liberties:

The raid on the KCC raises profound concerns about the erosion of civil liberties in the UK. Core democratic rights such as freedom of expression, association, and assembly are fundamental protections against authoritarianism. The use of counter-terrorism powers to target the Kurdish community undermines these principles, exposing the fragility of civil liberties in an era of expanding state surveillance and control.

Intimidation and Social Division:

The tactics employed during the raid, compounded by the distribution of police leaflets in the neighbourhood, framing the Kurdish community as a security threat, have deepened fear and division. The overwhelming police presence and aggressive actions created an atmosphere of intimidation, isolating the Kurdish community and sowing distrust and suspicion.

Resource Misallocation:

The vast resources dedicated to the raid on the KCC raise serious concerns about the priorities and accountability within law enforcement. This extravagant expenditure of public funds, coupled with the disruption caused to local residents, underscores a clear misallocation of resources.

Systemic Issues and Geopolitical Influence:

The raid on the KCC cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader geopolitical context in which it occurred.

The operation's timing, coinciding with high-level diplomatic talks between the UK and Turkey, raises significant concerns about the influence of foreign interests on domestic law enforcement.

Call for Accountability and Reform:

We request an independent investigation into the police tactics used during the raid and the broader implications for civil liberties. There is a need for accountability, transparency, and reform in the application of counter-terrorism measures to prevent such injustices in the future.

Impact of the Raid on the

Kurdish Community: The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) caused significant psychological trauma among the Kurdish community, with long-lasting effects. The KCC, which provided essential services to vulnerable members, has been closed, leaving many without critical support and increasing feelings of isolation. Economically, the raid damaged the community's reputation, deterring business interactions and worsening existing financial difficulties. Trust between the Kurdish community and law enforcement has been severely damaged, with many feeling betrayed by the operation. Additionally, police leaflets labelling the Kurdish community as a security threat have led to increased hate speech, discrimination, and hostility towards Kurds.

Key Demands Following the Kurdish Community Centre Raid

1.Immediate Release of Detainees:

Free all individuals detained during the raid.

2.Reopening of the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC):

Restore the KCC's operations to resume essential services, foster community cohesion, and rebuild trust. [Kurdish Community Centre was reopened on 5 November 2024 at 12:00]

3.Independent Investigation:

Conduct a transparent inquiry into police tactics, resource allocation, and the raid's justification to ensure accountability and prevent future abuses.

4.Reform of Counter-Terrorism Laws:

Strengthen safeguards, clarify guidelines, and enhance oversight to prevent misuse against peaceful communities and legitimate activism.

5.Public Apology: Issue a formal apology from the Metropolitan Police and local authorities, acknowledging harm caused and reaffirming commitments to fairness and justice.

6.End Harassment of the

Kurdish Community: Cease targeted scrutiny, hate speech, and harmful narratives that stigmatize the Kurdish community.

Legislative Safeguards:

Implement systemic reforms to protect marginalized communities, promote fair policing, and uphold democratic values.

Concerns About External Influence:

- Was the raid influenced by demands or pressure from the Turkish government?
- Were Turkish officials or law enforcement involved in planning or executing the operation?
- Have detainees' identities been shared with Turkish authorities, and can the UK ensure the safety of detainees' families in Turkey?

These demands underscore the urgent need for justice, accountability, and policy reform to rebuild trust and safeguard the rights of marginalized communities.

Introduction

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) in Haringey on November 27, 2024, marks a critical turning point in the relationship between the Kurdish community and law enforcement in the United Kingdom. Conducted by the Metropolitan Police under the guise of counter-terrorism legislation, the operation has been widely criticized as excessive, unjustified, and damaging. It disrupted the lives of peaceful individuals, targeted a vital community institution, and raised serious concerns about the erosion of civil liberties, the misuse of police powers, and the potential fracture of community cohesion.

In response to the raid, Kurds across the United Kingdom have held several demonstrations to voice their outrage and demand accountability. These included a mass protest in central London on December 1, 2024, where thousands gathered to condemn the actions of law enforcement and express solidarity with the KCC and the Kurdish community at large.



This report seeks to offer a thorough and nuanced account of the raid and its far-reaching implications. It chronicles the events leading up to and following the operation, analyses the tactics used by the police, and critically examines the broader context of counter-terrorism laws and their impact on marginalized communities. Furthermore, it explores the deep psychological and social toll on the Kurdish community, assessing the broader consequences for civil liberties and the strains on social cohesion in Haringey and across the UK.

The Kurdish community in the UK has been a peaceful and integral part of British society for decades. The KCC, established in 1992, has long served as a cultural hub, providing essential services, fostering cultural preservation, and supporting the integration of Kurdish people into British life. Despite its longstanding commitment to nonviolence and adherence to British law, the KCC found itself targeted by a raid that has left enduring scars on the community.

This report aims not only to document these events but also to stimulate much-needed conversation about the misuse of counter-terrorism measures and their impact on vulnerable communities. By highlighting the human and societal costs of such actions, we hope to provide a platform for accountability and reform. Our ultimate goal is to encourage dialogue, promote a more equitable approach to law enforcement, and ensure that the values of justice, fairness, and community trust are upheld.

The Kurdish Community Centre – A Cornerstone of the Community

The Kurdish Community Centre (KCC), founded in 1992, evolved from the Kurdish Workers Association (KWA), which was established in the late 1980s to support refugees fleeing the escalating violence and persecution in their homeland. Over the years, the KCC has grown into a vital institution for the Kurdish diaspora in London, particularly in the Haringey area. Offering a wide range of services, the centre has become a lifeline for thousands, addressing the socio-economic, cultural, and emotional needs of the community. It has played a

crucial role in preserving Kurdish identity while promoting integration into British society, serving as a resource for generations of Kurds building new lives in the UK.

The Kurdish community in the UK is made up of individuals who have sought refuge from the systemic oppression faced by Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. For decades, Kurdish people in these countries have endured severe repression of their language, culture, and political rights. Entire villages have been razed, communities displaced, and individuals subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, and execution. For many who found refuge in the UK, the KCC has been a sanctuary, helping them navigate the challenges of settling in a new country while preserving their heritage and sense of community.



The KCC offers a diverse range of services tailored to meet the unique needs of this community. It provides essential welfare support, including advice on housing, healthcare, and education, assisting those facing significant barriers to accessing these critical services. Its educational programs include supplementary schools for children and vocational training for adults, helping to empower the next generation with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed. The centre also organizes cultural events, language courses, and advocacy initiatives that allow Kurdish traditions to flourish within the multicultural landscape of London.

For the most vulnerable members of the community, the KCC has been indispensable. Women's programs provide support and empowerment, addressing issues such as domestic violence, language barriers, and social isolation. The elderly benefit from social activities that counteract loneliness and foster a sense of belonging, while children and young people participate in programs that improve their educational outcomes and help them navigate the complexities of growing up in a new country. The KCC is also a vibrant platform for Kurdish musicians, artists, and writers, contributing to London's rich cultural diversity. Throughout its history, the KCC has always operated within the bounds of British law. It has maintained positive relationships with local authorities, the Metropolitan Police, and other community organizations, working collaboratively to ensure compliance and promote social harmony. The centre has consistently been a model of peaceful advocacy and community engagement, embodying the Kurdish community's deep commitment to the values of democracy, equality, and justice.

However, on November 27, 2024, the KCC became the target of a heavy-handed raid by the police, an event that disrupted its operations, traumatized the community, and raised serious concerns about the misuse of counter-terrorism laws. The raid has had a lasting impact on the centre's members, who now question the motives behind such actions. This report will explore the details of the raid, examine the tactics employed, and assess the wider implications for civil liberties. It will also call for greater accountability, transparency, and reform in the application of counter-terrorism measures, to prevent such injustices from happening again in the future.

The Kurdish Community Centre Siege

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) on November 27, 2024, stands as a stark and troubling example of the misuse of counter-terrorism laws and the excessive, heavy-handed tactics employed by law enforcement in the UK. This operation not only disrupted the lives of individuals and families but also had profound and lasting consequences for civil liberties, community cohesion, and public trust in the police. The siege highlights deep systemic issues in the application of counter-terrorism powers and raises critical questions about their compatibility with democratic values and the protection of fundamental rights.

The operation, which targeted a peaceful and law-abiding community institution, has had far-reaching implications, both for the Kurdish community in the UK and for broader discussions about the balance between security and civil freedoms. In its aftermath, the raid has fuelled concerns over the growing erosion of civil liberties and the increasing militarization of policing practices, particularly when applied to marginalized communities. As such, this event calls for urgent reflection on the role of counter-terrorism laws in a society that upholds democratic principles and human rights.



Unnecessary and Excessive use of force by the Police

The scale and militarized nature of the raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) were grossly disproportionate to the perceived threat. The Metropolitan Police deployed hundreds of officers, including riot police and armed units, to storm a peaceful community organization. Overhead, helicopters and drones hovered, while dozens of police vans lined the streets of Haringay, creating an atmosphere of intimidation and fear. Doors were battered down with sledgehammers, masked officers forcibly entered homes, and individuals were dragged from the KCC and their residences.

Eyewitness accounts from the operation reveal disturbing incidents of physical violence and humiliation. One particularly harrowing event involved a 15-year-old boy who was assaulted by police as they arrested his father. Several other individuals, including those sheltering at the KCC, were forcibly dragged outside into the cold rain and held for hours without proper clothing or access to basic needs. In one tragic case, the wife of a detainee suffered a heart attack while in handcuffs. These actions underscore the unnecessary and excessive use of force, emblematic of the broader trend of militarized policing in the UK. Rather than addressing legitimate security concerns, these tactics disproportionately target marginalized communities, inflicting lasting trauma and eroding public trust in law enforcement.

The sealing of homes, leaving entire families—including women, children, and the elderly—homeless, further highlights the punitive and collective nature of the operation. These measures went far beyond the scope of any legitimate law enforcement objective, constituting acts of intimidation aimed at silencing and destabilizing a community. Instead of promoting safety or justice, such tactics only served to deepen divisions and foster an atmosphere of fear and suspicion.



Misuse of Counter-Terrorism Laws

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) was carried out under the provisions of counter-terrorism legislation, specifically invoking the powers outlined in the new Terrorism Act. However, these powers were designed to address credible and imminent threats to national security, not to target peaceful community organizations or law-abiding individuals. The KCC is well-established for its lawful activities, including cultural preservation, welfare support, and advocacy for human rights. To frame such an institution as a security threat not only undermines the legitimate use of counter-terrorism laws but also risks alienating communities that are essential allies in the fight against genuine threats to public safety.

The broad and often vague language within counter-terrorism legislation creates significant opportunities for misuse, allowing political dissent and advocacy to be conflated with criminal activity. In this case, Kurdish activism—long associated with peaceful resistance and the struggle for cultural rights—was equated with terrorism, reinforcing harmful stereotypes and unjustly criminalizing a community that has consistently adhered to nonviolent forms of political expression. This weaponization of counter-terrorism laws not only infringes on fundamental civil liberties but also sets a dangerous precedent for the suppression of dissent, eroding the freedoms that are supposed to underpin a democratic society.

The overreach of such laws raises serious concerns about the balance between security and freedom, particularly in how they disproportionately affect marginalized groups. When counter-terrorism measures are applied indiscriminately, they risk undermining public trust in the very institutions meant to protect society, while diverting resources away from addressing real threats. The KCC raid is a glaring example of how these powers can be misused, with far-reaching consequences for both the Kurdish community and the broader fabric of UK democracy.

Impact on Civil Liberties

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) raises profound concerns about the erosion of civil liberties in the UK. Core democratic rights such as freedom of expression, association, and assembly are fundamental protections against authoritarianism, ensuring that individuals and communities can freely voice their beliefs and engage in peaceful advocacy. However, the use of counter-terrorism powers to target the Kurdish community undermines these principles, exposing the fragility of civil liberties in an era of expanding state surveillance and control.

The closure of the KCC has had an immediate and devastating impact on thousands of individuals who relied on its essential services, including welfare support, language classes, and cultural programs. Vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and the elderly, have been particularly affected, losing access to resources that help them navigate their lives in the UK. More than just a community centre, the KCC served as a vital platform for peaceful activism and cultural expression, fostering a space for inclusion, mutual understanding, and support. Its disruption silences a critical voice for justice and human rights.

The broader implications for civil liberties are deeply troubling. The stigmatisation of lawful political expression as a security threat creates a chilling effect, where individuals and organisations may be deterred from engaging in activism or advocacy for fear of being branded as extremists or terrorists. This undermines the very foundations of democracy, where open dissent, debate, and the right to protest are essential for progress, accountability, and the protection of rights. When communities are silenced in this way, the social contract between citizens and the state is weakened, and public trust in democratic institutions erodes. The KCC raid, in this sense, is not just an attack on a single institution but a direct assault on the freedoms that underpin a healthy, functioning democracy.

Intimidation and Social Division

The tactics employed during the raid, coupled with the distribution of police leaflets depicting the Kurdish community as a security threat, have fostered fear, division, and suspicion. The overwhelming presence of police and their aggressive actions created an atmosphere of intimidation, isolating the Kurdish community and eroding trust in law enforcement. By framing a peaceful, law-abiding group as potential extremists, the operation has had profound consequences, amplifying societal divisions and emboldening far-right groups. These groups have exploited the situation to escalate anti-Kurdish rhetoric, further polarizing public opinion and inflaming social tensions.

In Haringay, a neighbourhood long celebrated for its multiculturalism and community solidarity, the raid has strained relationships between the Kurdish community and their neighbours. While many local residents and



businesses have shown solidarity, the narrative advanced by the raid has alienated others, undermining a sense of shared community and threatening the social cohesion of the area. This is not merely an issue of immediate reactions—it has the potential to cause long-term damage. Increased isolation, reduced community engagement, and a deepening rift between residents and law enforcement are likely consequences if this trend continues. As fear and suspicion take root, rebuilding trust becomes increasingly difficult, and the impact of the raid extends far beyond the Kurdish community, potentially affecting the broader social fabric of Harringay.

The tactics used in the raid were clearly designed to do more than enforce the law; they represent a form of psychological warfare aimed at discrediting, humiliating, and undermining the Kurdish community. These actions are part of a broader effort to target Kurdish activists and the institutions that support and advocate for their rights, justifying their assault on Kurdish activism by branding it as a security threat.

Hunger Strikes: A Desperate Response

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) and the detention of activists have driven members of the Kurdish community to take drastic measures, including hunger strikes, as a form of protest. Eight individuals have initiated hunger strikes outside the KCC, while three detainees—Mr. A.P., Ms. T.B., and Mr. M.A.—continue their strikes in custody. Vigils are being held 24 hours a day at the KCC, uniting the community in solidarity while drawing attention to the deteriorating health of the strikers, who are experiencing extreme weakness, weight loss, and severe physical strain.

Hunger strikes are rarely undertaken lightly; they are acts of last resort in the face of systemic repression and state-sanctioned silencing of peaceful advocacy. For the Kurdish community, these strikes symbolize defiance against the criminalization of their activism and a powerful call for justice. The ongoing vigils, while a source of solidarity, underscore the deep psychological toll the raid and its aftermath have inflicted on the community, amplifying feelings of vulnerability and despair.

The hunger strikes highlight the urgent need for accountability and redress. They expose the broader systemic issues of misuse of counter-terrorism laws and erosion of civil liberties. The targeting of the KCC not only silences Kurdish voices but indirectly supports the oppression of Kurds globally, including political prisoners in Turkey and civilians under attack in Syria. Without immediate action—such as releasing detainees, reopening the KCC, and initiating an independent investigation—this crisis will worsen, further alienating the Kurdish community and deepening the harm caused by the raid.

Resource Misallocation

The vast resources dedicated to the raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) raise serious concerns about the priorities and accountability within law enforcement. Hundreds of officers, along with helicopters, drones, and specialized equipment, were mobilized for an operation targeting a community centre and a handful of individuals. This extravagant expenditure of public funds, coupled with the disruption caused to local residents, underscores a clear misallocation of resources—especially in a time when the UK is grappling with rising crime rates and stretched public services.

This misuse of resources not only diverts attention and funding away from addressing real, pressing security concerns, but it also undermines public trust in law enforcement. It gives the impression that political motives, rather than public safety, are driving operational decisions. By prioritizing the targeting of a peaceful community over tackling genuine threats, the authorities risk damaging their credibility and diminishing their effectiveness in safeguarding public welfare. In a climate of strained resources and growing concerns about crime and social instability, this kind of mismanagement sends a troubling message about the state's commitment to serving and protecting all citizens, regardless of their background or political beliefs.

Systemic Issues and Geopolitical Influence

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) cannot be separated from the broader geopolitical context in which it occurred. The operation coincided with high-level diplomatic talks between the UK and Turkey, raising significant concerns about the influence of foreign interests on domestic law enforcement. Turkey's well-documented history of suppressing Kurdish activism, combined with the UK's strategic alliance with Turkey, has drawn scrutiny for potentially enabling repression under the guise of counter-terrorism.

Kurdish politicians and activists are currently enduring a sustained campaign of suppression in Turkey, where thousands are imprisoned as political prisoners. Mass raids on Kurdish homes, offices, and organizations have become routine, targeting individuals based solely on their political affiliations or efforts to advocate for Kurdish rights. The Turkish government's approach to criminalizing dissent has fostered a climate of fear and repression,

effectively silencing many voices that challenge state policies. Simultaneously, the conditions in Syria are rapidly deteriorating as jihadist groups, supported and financed by Turkey, carry out attacks on Kurdish civilians across multiple fronts. These offensives have caused immense suffering, with countless Kurdish civilians displaced, injured, or killed. The Kurdish struggle to protect their people and lands in Syria has been met with silence or complicity from the international community, further exacerbating their vulnerability.



By targeting the Kurdish Community Centre, the UK has, in effect, undermined Kurdish efforts to organize and voice opposition to these egregious acts of oppression. The ability to organize is central to raising awareness and mobilizing support against injustices such as mass imprisonment and the destruction of civilian lives in Syria. Stifling Kurdish activism in the UK not only isolates the community but also enables the continuation of these atrocities unchecked. The criminalization of Kurdish activism reflects deeper systemic biases embedded within both law enforcement and the broader political landscape. This case highlights how domestic policies can be shaped by international alliances, allowing the priorities of foreign partners—such as Turkey—to overshadow the UK's commitments to human rights and civil liberties. By targeting a peaceful community, the operation appears to have been driven by geopolitical considerations rather than credible security threats.

The implications of these systemic issues extend far beyond the Kurdish community. They pose a broader danger to all marginalized groups advocating for social change or challenging entrenched power structures. The raid exemplifies how political expediency can undermine justice and equality, potentially silencing dissent and criminalizing peaceful advocacy for human rights. If left unchecked, such trends could have far-reaching consequences, jeopardizing the rights of all citizens to engage in activism, protest, and political expression.

The intersection of foreign influence and domestic policy, as evidenced in the KCC raid, underscores the urgent need for transparency and accountability. It calls for a re-evaluation of the frameworks governing counter-terrorism measures to ensure that they are not exploited to serve political interests at the expense of civil liberties and democratic values. The UK must resist external pressures that compromise its principles, ensuring that peaceful activism and the right to self-organization are protected for all communities.

Erosion of Trust in Institutions and Authorities

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) has profoundly eroded trust between the Kurdish community and state institutions, including law enforcement, local councils, and the judiciary. Once a trusted partner in promoting safety, integration, and mutual understanding, the KCC's targeting has left the Kurdish community feeling betrayed by institutions meant to protect and serve them. This aggressive and unjustified action has shattered long-standing relationships and intensified perceptions of systemic bias.

The aggressive tactics used against a peaceful organization have reinforced the belief that the police target communities based on ethnicity or political affiliations rather than genuine threats. Many Kurds now see law enforcement as enforcers of political agendas, fostering alienation and raising doubts about fair treatment under UK law. Local councils, traditionally allies of community organizations like the KCC, are now viewed as neglectful of their duty to protect marginalized groups. Their silence and lack of opposition to the raid have deepened feelings of abandonment, highlighting institutional failures to support grassroots initiatives addressing critical social needs.

The judiciary also faces criticism for failing to hold law enforcement accountable for overreach. Counter-terrorism laws, used to marginalize peaceful advocacy, are seen as tools to suppress dissent, with judicial decisions often favoring state interests over justice for communities like the Kurds. This perceived bias further erodes confidence in the legal system and amplifies feelings of exclusion and inequality.

The consequences of this breakdown in trust extend far beyond the Kurdish community, undermining public confidence in the fairness of governance. When state actions appear politically motivated, the democratic principle of equality under the law is compromised, isolating communities and polarizing society. The raid's chilling effect on civil society discourages advocacy and cultural expression, limiting opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

Rebuilding trust requires accountability for overreach, a reevaluation of counter-terrorism laws, and proactive support for marginalized communities. Without these steps, the damage caused by this raid risks deepening divisions, threatening social cohesion, and undermining the values of an inclusive democracy.

Impacts on the Kurdish Community

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) and the subsequent actions taken against homes in Haringey have had devastating, far-reaching consequences for the Kurdish community in London. Beyond the immediate disruption of daily life, the psychological, social, economic, and cultural impacts have been profound and long-lasting. This section examines how these events have affected individuals, families, and the broader community, shedding light on the deep and lasting harm caused by disproportionate and aggressive policing tactics.

For many in the Kurdish community, the raid has created a climate of fear, distrust, and trauma that will likely persist for years. The psychological toll has been significant, with many individuals reporting heightened anxiety, stress, and a sense of betrayal. The feeling of being targeted, not because of any criminal activity but because of their identity or political beliefs, has led to an erosion of confidence in the state and its institutions.

Socially, the raid has fractured the sense of belonging and solidarity that has long existed within the Kurdish community. The KCC has been a vital space for cultural expression, social cohesion, and mutual support. Its disruption has left many without access to essential services, such as welfare advice, language classes, and community events, that have helped countless individuals navigate life in the UK. For vulnerable groups—such as women, children, and the elderly—the raid has had an especially harsh impact, severing critical sources of support and exacerbating feelings of isolation.

Economically, the raid has disrupted the livelihoods of those who depend on the KCC for vocational training, employment support, and community-based initiatives. Many individuals who were already facing economic challenges now find themselves with even fewer resources or opportunities. For local businesses and services in Haringay, the raid has also created uncertainty, with the area's reputation and the sense of security undermined by such aggressive policing.

Culturally, the raid has silenced an important platform for Kurdish identity and political expression. The KCC has long been a space where Kurdish culture, history, and language were celebrated, and where individuals could engage in peaceful advocacy for human rights. Its closure has stifled this cultural expression, further marginalizing a community that already faces significant political and social challenges. The raid has also sent a chilling message to other communities advocating for justice and equality, reinforcing the notion that peaceful activism can be criminalized under the guise of national security.

Taken together, these impacts paint a picture of a community in distress, struggling with the immediate and long-term consequences of a law enforcement operation that was disproportionate, unnecessary, and deeply damaging. The effects of the raid extend far beyond the KCC itself, reverberating throughout the lives of those who call Haringay—and the wider UK—home.

Psychological Trauma and Fear

The raid inflicted profound psychological harm on members of the Kurdish community, leaving many individuals traumatized by the violent and intrusive nature of the operation. Witnessing masked officers storm homes, using excessive force, and ransacking personal spaces created a climate of fear and anxiety. For children, the experience was especially harrowing. One account of a 15-year-old boy being physically assaulted while trying to protect his father has particularly shocked the community. Such incidents have deepened the trauma, with families reporting increased anxiety, sleep disturbances, and heightened fear, both among children and adults alike.

The psychological impact extends well beyond those directly involved in the raid. The entire Kurdish community now feels a heightened sense of vulnerability, with many fearing they could be the next target of similar aggressive tactics. This pervasive sense of insecurity has fostered a climate of mistrust, where individuals feel unsafe in their own homes and neighbourhoods. For many, the very institutions that should offer protection—such as law enforcement and local authorities—are now viewed with suspicion and fear, further compounding the trauma.

The long-term effects of this psychological harm are likely to endure for years. Many individuals may struggle with lasting emotional and mental health issues, including the potential development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as a result of their exposure to violence and intimidation. This widespread trauma is not only detrimental to the well-being of those directly affected but also poses a serious challenge to the overall social cohesion and mental health of the community. The scars left by the raid will take time to heal, and the emotional toll may last for generations, perpetuating cycles of fear and distrust within the Kurdish community.

Disruption of Social Support Networks

The Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) has long been a vital social hub, providing essential services and support to some of the most vulnerable members of the Kurdish community, including women, the elderly, and children. Its sudden closure has had a devastating impact, leaving many individuals without the resources and assistance they depend on for daily life. Women who participated in support groups, elderly members who relied on the centre for companionship and recreational activities, and children who attended educational programs have all been left without critical support. The closure of the KCC has also fractured the strong sense of community solidarity that it fostered. The centre was more than just a service provider—it was a safe space where people could come together, share experiences, and offer one another emotional and practical support. Without this central gathering point, many individuals feel increasingly isolated and disconnected from their community. The absence of this crucial network of support not only heightens the emotional toll of the raid but also amplifies feelings of abandonment and vulnerability. For many, the KCC was a lifeline that helped them navigate the challenges of life in the UK, and its disruption has created a void that is difficult to fill. In addition to the direct impact on individuals, the dismantling of this social fabric has wider consequences for the community's resilience. Social support networks are essential for emotional well-being, especially for marginalized groups facing systemic barriers. The loss of the KCC as a pillar of community cohesion has left many feeling adrift and uncertain about the future. The emotional and social isolation caused by its closure will continue to be felt for years to come, underscoring the profound consequences of undermining the spaces that foster collective strength and solidarity.

Economic Impact

The raid and its aftermath have had significant economic repercussions for the Kurdish community, further exacerbating existing challenges. Many Kurdish individuals operate small businesses across London and the wider UK, making vital contributions to the local economy. However, the criminalization of the community following the raid has cast a dark shadow over their reputations, potentially deterring customers, suppliers, and business partners from engaging with Kurdish-owned enterprises. This reputational damage could result in lost revenue, fewer opportunities for growth, and an increased sense of economic insecurity.

The economic impact extends beyond individual business owners. The stigmatization of the Kurdish community, fuelled by the perception of criminality and terrorism, could lead to broader economic disadvantages. Kurdish individuals may find themselves facing increased barriers to employment, with potential employers less inclined to hire from a community perceived as "under suspicion." Similarly, opportunities for collaboration, whether in the form of partnerships, networking, or investment, may become harder to access, further marginalizing Kurdish people within the economic landscape.

This economic marginalization not only harms individuals but also undermines the broader contribution of the Kurdish community to the UK economy. It threatens to create a vicious cycle of disenfranchisement, where

economic exclusion feeds into social and political alienation. The long-term consequences could include diminished social mobility, reduced entrepreneurial activity, and a further entrenchment of inequality within the community.



Cultural Stigmatization and Marginalization

The police's dissemination of leaflets labelling the Kurdish community as a security threat has had a profoundly stigmatising effect. This narrative, further amplified by far-right groups on social media and in public discourse, has contributed to a rise in hate speech, discrimination, and hostility towards Kurds. Community members have reported increasing incidents of harassment and targeted abuse, deepening their sense of vulnerability and isolation in an already hostile environment.

The raid on the KCC, a long-standing symbol of Kurdish cultural identity and resilience, has sent a chilling message to the community. The KCC was not only a space for cultural preservation but also a vital platform for showcasing the Kurdish community's contributions to British society. By criminalising the centre and its activities, the authorities have sent a signal that Kurdish culture and political expression are unwelcome and suspect.

This cultural marginalisation threatens to erode the community's ability to celebrate their heritage and identity, further distancing them from the broader social fabric. The broader criminalisation of Kurdish political and cultural activities risks pushing an already vulnerable group further to the margins of society, intensifying feelings of exclusion and alienation. When a community's cultural expressions are criminalised, it not only stifles their voice but also undermines the principles of diversity and inclusion that are supposed to define a democratic society.

Impact on Vulnerable Groups

The closure of the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) has had a particularly devastating effect on the most vulnerable members of the Kurdish community. Women who depended on the centre for support with domestic violence, language barriers, and social isolation now find themselves without a critical lifeline. The centre was a place where they could access counselling, legal assistance, and emotional support—services that are now unavailable, leaving many women feeling increasingly isolated and without options.

Elderly community members, who relied on the KCC for companionship and social activities, are also facing heightened loneliness and disconnection. For many older Kurds, the KCC was a vital space to combat isolation, stay active, and maintain a sense of belonging in a foreign country. Its closure has compounded the already difficult challenges they face, leaving them with fewer opportunities for social interaction and support. Children, who attended educational programs, language classes, and cultural activities at the KCC, have lost a safe space



for learning, growth, and socialisation. The KCC was a crucial resource for Kurdish children to bridge the gap between their cultural heritage and the mainstream education system, providing both academic support and a sense of identity. Without it, many children now face barriers to their educational development, as well as a loss of connection to their Kurdish roots.

The broader impact on these vulnerable groups cannot be overstated. The KCC was more than just a community centre; it was a sanctuary for those who needed it most. Its closure has left a void that cannot easily be filled, deepening the emotional, social, and economic challenges already faced by these individuals. The effects of this disruption will be felt for years to come, further marginalising those who were already at risk.

Loss of Advocacy and Representation

The Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) has long been a vital voice for the Kurdish community, advocating for their rights and raising awareness about the challenges faced by Kurds both in their homelands and in the diaspora. The closure of the KCC has silenced a critical platform for advocacy, severely limiting the community's ability to engage with policymakers, raise their concerns, and represent their interests in the public sphere. This loss is particularly devastating at a time when the Kurdish community is facing increased scrutiny, stigmatisation, and marginalisation. The KCC served not only as a space for cultural preservation but also as a key conduit for voicing issues ranging from human rights abuses in Kurdish-majority regions to the everyday struggles faced by Kurds living in the UK. Without this platform, the community's capacity to engage in meaningful dialogue and advocate for their rights has been significantly diminished.

Moreover, the closure undermines the community's efforts to counter harmful stereotypes and combat the criminalisation of Kurdish activism. As the Kurdish community grapples with growing prejudice, the loss of such an important advocacy hub makes it even more difficult to challenge negative portrayals and push for the systemic change needed to ensure equality and justice. This further marginalises a community that already faces considerable barriers to full participation in British society.

Our Demands

The Kurdish community in London has been profoundly impacted by the raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) and the subsequent actions of law enforcement. These events have caused irreparable harm to individuals, families, and the community as a whole. In response to the trauma inflicted, we present the following demands, aimed at securing justice, accountability, and the restoration of trust between the Kurdish community and the Metropolitan Police. These demands reflect the urgent need to address the harm caused, prevent future abuses, and protect the rights of marginalised communities across the UK.

Questions Regarding External Influence and Collusion

Was the assault on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) instigated due to demands from the Turkish state?

We seek clarification on whether the actions taken by UK law enforcement were influenced by requests or pressure from the Turkish government. Given the longstanding tensions between the Turkish state and Kurdish activism, it is essential to understand whether these events were shaped by external political considerations.

Were Turkish officials or law enforcement personnel involved in the raids, particularly at the Kurdish Community Centre?

It is critical to determine whether any personnel from the Turkish state, including police or intelligence officers, were present or involved in the planning or execution of the raid on the KCC and associated actions. Transparency in this regard is vital to ensure that UK sovereignty and the protection of British citizens' rights were not compromised.

Has the Turkish government been informed of the identities of the detainees, and can the British government guarantee the safety of detainees' relatives in Turkey?

If the Turkish authorities have been informed about the identities of those detained, we request assurances from the British government that the families of these individuals—many of whom reside in Turkey—will not face reprisals, arrests, or persecution. The UK government must guarantee that the rights and safety of detainees' families will be protected from any form of retaliation or political targeting.



Immediate Release of All Detainees

We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all individuals detained during the raid, including Mr A. P. who has been on hunger strike in protest of the unjust nature of his detention. These individuals have been held without credible evidence, under the pretext of counter-terrorism laws that have been misapplied in this case. Their detention is not only unlawful but also a stark violation of the principles of justice, due process, and human dignity.

The physical and psychological toll on the detainees—many of whom were subjected to excessive force and humiliation during their arrests—cannot be overstated. Families have been left in distress, with their homes sealed off and children traumatised by the events. The trauma caused by the raid is compounded by the unjust detention of these individuals, many of whom have had no opportunity to contest their treatment or seek legal recourse.

The immediate release of those detained is a necessary first step toward addressing the harm inflicted on the Kurdish community. It is also an essential measure for restoring faith in law enforcement and reaffirming the commitment to justice and fairness. Holding individuals without evidence, on the basis of dubious counter-terrorism powers, undermines the rule of law and deepens the rift between communities and the institutions that should protect them. The restoration of liberty to those unjustly detained is crucial not only for the affected individuals and their families but for the broader community's trust in the integrity of the justice system.

Reopening of the Kurdish Community Centre

The Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) has been a vital lifeline for the Kurdish community for over three decades, offering essential services to women, children, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups. Its sudden closure has cut off thousands of individuals from critical resources, including welfare advice, educational programs, and cultural activities. The KCC must be reopened immediately to allow it to resume its work and continue supporting the community without further delay or disruption.

The closure of the KCC is not just the loss of a physical space; it is an attack on the cultural identity and social cohesion of the Kurdish community. The centre has long been a hub for cultural preservation, advocacy, and mutual support, and its absence has left a void that cannot easily be filled. Reopening the centre is not only a matter of restoring vital services but also a crucial step toward healing the deep wounds caused by the raid. It will enable the community to rebuild trust, restore its sense of security, and reaffirm its place within British society.

In addition to serving as a community resource, the KCC is a symbol of Kurdish resilience and cultural pride. Its restoration is essential for the community's emotional recovery and for reinforcing its capacity to contribute positively to the multicultural fabric of the UK. Reopening the KCC is not just an act of rectifying a wrong—it is a reaffirmation of the values of inclusion, diversity, and respect that should define any democratic society.

Independent Investigation into Police Tactics

We demand a full, independent investigation into the actions of the Metropolitan Police during the raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC). This investigation must rigorously examine the use of excessive force, the justification for the operation, and the treatment of both detainees and residents during the raid. The findings of this inquiry must be made public and transparent, to ensure accountability and to prevent similar abuses of power in the future.

The deployment of riot police, armed units, helicopters, and drones for an operation that was, at its core, politically motivated is a gross misuse of resources and a clear violation of the principles of proportionality in policing. The excessive tactics employed are not only damaging to the individuals involved but also undermine public trust in law enforcement.

An independent inquiry must address these systemic issues head-on, identifying not only the failures in the operation itself but also the broader cultural and structural problems within law enforcement that allow such actions to occur. This inquiry should propose concrete steps to rebuild trust between police forces and marginalised communities, ensuring that policing in the UK is both fair and accountable. Only through such an investigation can the public be assured that future operations will be conducted with respect for the rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their background or political beliefs.



Reform of Counter-Terrorism Laws

The misuse of counter-terrorism legislation to target a peaceful, law-abiding community sets a dangerous and troubling precedent. We demand urgent reforms to ensure these laws are applied with greater precision, accountability, and fairness. The current broad and vague definitions within counter-terrorism laws create a significant risk of misuse, disproportionately impacting minority communities and suppressing legitimate political dissent.

Reforms must include the establishment of clearer, more specific guidelines for law enforcement, ensuring that counter-terrorism powers are only used when there is credible, evidence-based threat. There must also be enhanced oversight mechanisms, including independent bodies to monitor the application of these laws, to ensure they are not used as tools for political repression or cultural marginalisation.

In addition, safeguards are necessary to prevent the criminalisation of cultural, social, and political activities that are protected under democratic principles. Activities that promote cultural heritage, political advocacy, or human rights should never be equated with terrorism or security threats.

Without these reforms, the risk of further abuses remains high, undermining the integrity of counter-terrorism efforts and alienating the very communities that are crucial allies in combating genuine threats to national security. For counter-terrorism laws to be effective, they must be just, transparent, and applied in a manner that upholds civil liberties and fosters trust within all communities.

Public Apology from the Metropolitan Police and Local Authorities

The harm caused by the raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) extends far beyond those directly affected; it has deeply eroded the trust of an entire community in the institutions that are supposed to protect and serve them. We demand a formal, public apology from the Metropolitan Police and local authorities, acknowledging the profound harm caused by their actions and reaffirming their commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of all communities, particularly those that are often marginalised.

This apology must not only address the specific impact of the raid but also recognise the positive contributions the KCC has made to British society over the past three decades. The KCC has long been a model of peaceful advocacy, cultural preservation, and community integration, and its work should be celebrated, not criminalised. Local authorities and the Metropolitan Police must offer a clear commitment that the centre's essential work will not be hindered in the future by overreach or unjustified policing.

A public gesture of accountability is crucial for rebuilding trust, demonstrating that law enforcement respects and upholds the core values of fairness, justice, and equality. Without such an apology, the damage done to the relationship between the Kurdish community and state institutions will be harder to heal, leaving a lasting scar on community cohesion and the integrity of policing in the UK.

Immediate Halt to the Harassment of the Kurdish Community

Since the raid, members of the Kurdish community have endured increased scrutiny, intimidation, and harassment—both online and offline. Far-right groups have exploited the situation to spread hate speech and target individuals, while law enforcement has continued to invoke counter-terrorism laws to justify oppressive actions. We demand an immediate cessation of these harmful practices and a clear commitment to safeguarding the Kurdish community from further abuse and discrimination.

The vilification of the Kurdish community must end now. The police leaflets that unjustly portrayed Kurds as a security threat have only fuelled prejudice, discrimination, and hostility, further dividing communities and creating an atmosphere of fear. Law enforcement must take responsibility for its role in exacerbating this climate of hostility and ensure that the Kurdish community is protected from harassment and intimidation.

The safety and dignity of the Kurdish community should be a priority, not just in law enforcement actions, but in the public narrative as well. We call on authorities to take concrete steps to combat hate speech, challenge harmful stereotypes, and ensure that the Kurdish community can live without fear of discrimination or violence.

Legislative and Policy Reforms to Safeguard Marginalised Communities

We call for comprehensive reforms to policing and legislation to prevent the misuse of power against marginalised communities. These reforms must include a thorough review of the application of counter-terrorism laws, the introduction of robust community oversight mechanisms, and a sustained commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion within law enforcement agencies. These steps are critical for addressing systemic biases and ensuring that all communities are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.

Rebuilding trust requires more than just addressing isolated incidents; it necessitates a commitment to long-term, structural change. This includes fostering greater accountability and transparency within law enforcement, as well as creating meaningful channels for dialogue and collaboration with affected communities. Only by implementing these reforms can we ensure that policing serves the needs of all citizens and upholds the values of justice and equality in practice.



Concluding Statement

The raid on the Kurdish Community Centre (KCC) and the associated homes in Haringey marks a deeply troubling chapter in the relationship between law enforcement and the Kurdish community in London. What was framed as a counter-terrorism operation has, instead, exposed severe flaws in policing tactics, the misuse of counter-terrorism laws, and a disregard for the social, cultural, and peaceful nature of a law-abiding community. The profound psychological, social, and economic impacts of this operation demand immediate attention, accountability, and systemic reform.

For over five decades, the Kurdish community has been a positive and integral part of British society. The KCC has long stood as a vital institution, providing essential services, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering integration and mutual understanding. Its closure has disrupted the lives of thousands, particularly the most vulnerable—women, children, and the elderly. By targeting the KCC and its members, law enforcement has not only violated basic principles of justice but has also undermined years of trust-building between the Kurdish community and British institutions.

The police tactics employed during the raid raise serious concerns about proportionality, accountability, and the misuse of counter-terrorism laws. The deployment of riot police, armed units, helicopters, and drones to execute an operation against a peaceful community was widely perceived as excessive and unnecessary. The seizure of homes, the destruction of personal property, the sealing of residences, and the physical and psychological harm inflicted on individuals and families further compounded the trauma caused by this unjust operation. These actions not only contravene the principles of fairness and equality but risk alienating a community that has consistently demonstrated its commitment to peaceful and lawful activities.

The broader implications of this raid extend far beyond the Kurdish community. It highlights systemic issues in the application of counter-terrorism laws, which have been weaponised to suppress dissent, criminalise cultural and political expression, and disproportionately target marginalised communities. This raid sets a dangerous precedent, eroding civil liberties and undermining the democratic values that Britain prides itself on upholding.



The chilling effect on activism, the stigmatisation of vulnerable groups, and the erosion of public trust in law enforcement demand urgent and comprehensive reform.

The response to these events must be swift, decisive, and grounded in justice. We call for the immediate release of all detainees, including those currently on hunger strike, and the reopening of the KCC to restore its critical services. An independent investigation into the police's tactics and the misuse of counter-terrorism laws is essential to ensure accountability, transparency, and the prevention of future abuses of power. Additionally, the Metropolitan Police and local authorities must issue a public apology for the harm caused, accompanied by a commitment to rebuilding trust with the Kurdish community.

Moving forward, it is imperative to address the systemic biases and legislative flaws that have allowed such injustices to occur. Counter-terrorism laws must be reformed to include clearer definitions, enhanced oversight, and safeguards to prevent their misuse against peaceful communities. Policymakers and law enforcement agencies must also engage in meaningful dialogue with the Kurdish community to better understand their concerns and foster collaboration.

The Kurdish community in London remains resilient in the face of these challenges. Its members continue to contribute positively to British society, advocating for justice, equality, and peace. The road to healing and reconciliation begins with genuine accountability and a commitment to upholding the principles of democracy and human rights for all.

Summary Report on Inhumane Treatment and Medical Negligence of Victims

1. Incident Report: Individual A (Initials: H.B.)

In the early hours of 27th November 2024, Mr. H.B., who was staying at his sister's house due to ill health, endured a distressing experience. At around 3:00 a.m., he was startled by loud noises and initially believed it was a burglary. Attempting to protect his sister, he confronted the intruders, only to discover that they were police officers. During the ensuing chaos, Mr. H.B. was struck on the head by a police officer. Despite informing the officers of his medical conditions (diabetes and asthma), he was handcuffed and transported to a hospital in his nightwear, without consideration for his well-being. The freezing conditions, lack of care, and emotional distress further aggravated his situation.

2. Incident Report: Individual B (Initials: Z.B.)

Mr. Z.B., a 27-year-old asylum seeker who arrived in the UK in March 2023, was caught in an aggressive police raid at a community centre (KCC) on the same date. At approximately 2:50 a.m., he was awoken by loud noises and was immediately detained, along with several others, under harsh and intimidating conditions. Despite requests for basic necessities, including clothing and access to a toilet, Mr. Z.B. was met with verbal abuse from the officers. Additionally, the officers twisted his handcuffs, causing significant pain. Mr. Z.B. sustained wrist injuries and continues to experience emotional distress. After the raid, he was left homeless and without access to his financial resources or personal belongings, further increasing his vulnerability. His account emphasizes the excessive use of force and lack of empathy by the authorities during the raid.

3. Incident Report: Individual C (Initials: H.A.)

Ms. H.A. was hospitalized after a traumatic police raid at her residence. Around 2:00 a.m. on the same date, a group of masked, heavily armed police officers stormed her home in a sudden and aggressive manner. The officers restrained Ms. H.A. by handcuffing her, exacerbating her physical and emotional distress. During the raid, she began experiencing symptoms of a heart attack but received no immediate medical attention until she was taken to a hospital. Mrs. H.A. was left isolated in a critical condition, without any family support during this time. Her account reveals a profound sense of helplessness, including chronic anxiety, sleeplessness, and ongoing insecurity. She is awaiting further medical treatment for her heart condition while coping with the psychological impact of the raid.

Conclusion and Recommendations:



The experiences of these individuals highlight severe deficiencies in police procedures during the raids, resulting in significant harm and trauma to innocent individuals. The emotional, physical, and psychological consequences demand urgent action. Recommendations for addressing these issues include:

- A comprehensive review of police protocols during raids, with a focus on humane treatment, adherence to legal and ethical standards, and safeguarding the rights of detainees.
- Ensuring immediate medical care and basic needs for individuals detained during raids.
- Offering psychological support and compensation for victims to address the emotional and financial impact of these incidents.

These incidents serve as a stark reminder of the need for systemic reform to prevent such occurrences in the future, ensuring that trust between communities and law enforcement is restored and maintained.

KURDISH PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY IN BRITAIN

Fairfax Hall,
11 Portland Gardens,
London, N4 1HU
www.kurdishassembly.org
info@kurdishassembly.org