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Ra's al-'Ayn: Fighting again between FSA an YPG

KURDWATCH, January 26, 2013—On January 6, 2013, the ceasefire [**further information**] between the Democratic Union Party's (PYD) People's Defense Units (YPG) and units of the Free Syrian Army in Ra's al-'Ayn (Serê Kaniyê) was broken again. Since this time there has been continued fighting using heavy artillery. Activists report that several armed Kurdish groups are participating on the side of the Free Syrian army, including the Mish'al-at-Tammu-Brigade.

Several battalions of the Islamic group Jabhat al-Nasrah are also fighting in the ranks of the FSA. Leading politicians of several member-parties in the Kurdish National Council – for example 'Abdulahkim Bashar's Kurdish Democratic Party and the Kurdish Left Party in Syria – expressed their readiness to support the YPG. Members of the Kurdish Advancement Party in Syria and the Kurdish Democratic Union Party in Syria (Democratic Yekîti) already do so. At least eleven PYG-members and six civilians have been killed to date. Activists also report dozens of deaths on the FSA side. On January 18, the Kurdish National Council called for an end to the fighting, the release of all prisoners, and the condemnation of the attacks by the leadership of the Free Syrian Army and the National Alliance. In a statement, the Syrian National Council also called for an end to the fighting, but without taking sides.

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