

## **Dialogue and Negotiation Instead of Weapons and Violence, Problems Will Only Get Worse**

On the night of 5/9/2024, a security force in the city of Sulaymaniyah raided the central office of the Chawder Cultural Center, which includes several organisations such as Radio Media, the Galawej website, the Chawder website, the Rwanje & Rexne website, the Dabran platform, the Chawder Sculpture project, and the Chawder Gallery. For the past twenty-six years, these organization's have served the Kurdish intellectual and literary movement with dedication.

PAY, as an organization that stands outside political and ideological biases, sees it as our duty to stand against any attempt to silence, shut down, or end cultural and media institutions. We fundamentally believe in the right to diversity, the supremacy of law, and the avoidance of force in political and partisan conflicts.

In this context, as the PAY Foundation for Education and Development, we strongly condemn this act and believe it will negatively impact the reputation of the capital of Kurdish intellectualism. It is a misguided step that we view as an effort to blur the lines of diversity. PAY, as a non-governmental, independent, and nonprofit organization committed to the advocacy of freedom of expression, considers it our duty to call upon other civil organizations not to remain silent against the violation of human rights, freedom of expression, and lawlessness and abuses against the public based on ideological differences. This is true whether it happens in any city or town of Kurdistan or comes from any authority or group.

It is disgraceful and catastrophic that a cultural and intellectual center in the capital of intellectualism is shut down by force when the appropriate response should have been to counter critique with words. Intellectual and interpretive differences should not be resolved through brute force or weapons, just as former President Mam Jalal (Jalal Talabani) often emphasized this principle. Whatever the cause, it must be addressed through dialogue, negotiation, and legal channels, not by resorting to military force. Closing and obstructing these institutions harm the progress of Kurdish literature and intellectualism and add further disgrace when such actions occur in the heart of intellectualism.

This incident occurs at a time when the Kurdistan Region is facing various external threats and risks that have become a global spectacle, and no one is taking responsibility! Internally, we are on the eve of parliamentary elections, and these circumstances demand that political and social peace be established, and that the rule of law is displayed externally in a civilized manner. Efforts should be made to ensure that citizens live in prosperity and move beyond the difficult circumstances they are currently experiencing, not the opposite.

Therefore, we call on the esteemed President of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan to find a solution to these issues through legal means and without resorting to violence.

In Solidarity.

**PAY Foundation For Education & Development**  
7/9/2024