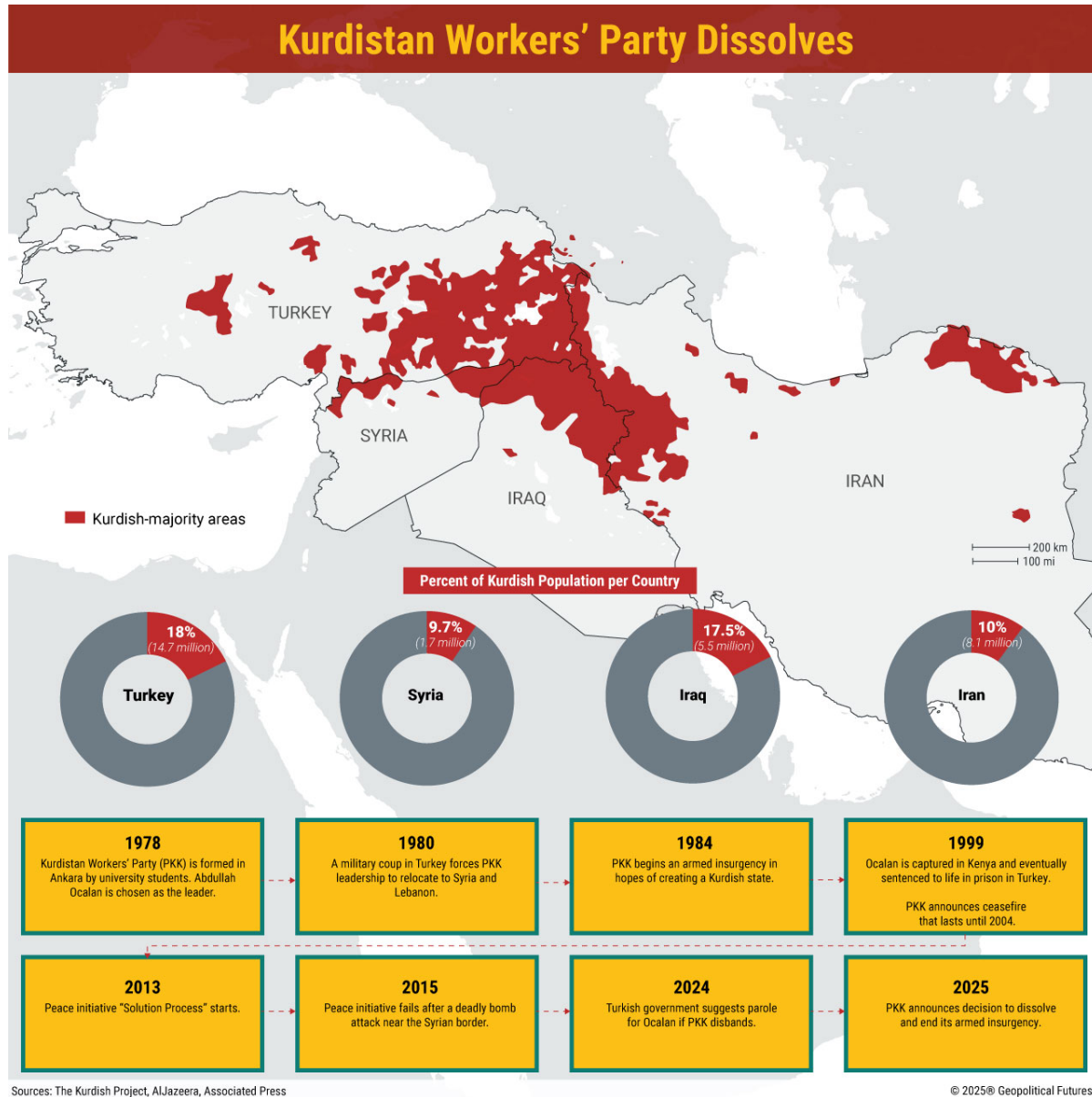


A Pivotal Moment for the Kurdish Question

by Geopolitical Futures - May 16, 2025



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The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), founded in 1978 by Abdullah Ocalan, spent decades waging an insurgency against the Turkish state in pursuit of Kurdish independence. Over time, the group shifted

its goals toward autonomy and cultural rights. Though the PKK once enjoyed substantial support – especially in the 1980s and 1990s – it became increasingly isolated, particularly after the collapse of the 2013-15 peace process. Turkish military pressure, shifting regional dynamics and changing Kurdish public sentiment gradually eroded the group’s influence and operational capacity.

In May 2025, the PKK announced its dissolution and the end of its armed struggle, following a February call by Ocalan for the group to disband. In a statement issued after its 12th Congress, the organization declared it had “fulfilled its mission” by breaking decades of political denial and embedding the Kurdish issue in Turkey’s national discourse. The leadership called on fighters to disarm and reintegrate into society, framing the shift as a move from militancy to democratic politics.

But this was less about ideology than survival. Turkish drones and intelligence services had decimated PKK ranks. Foreign support had dried up, while popular Kurdish movements increasingly embraced legal political channels over armed resistance. Internal fragmentation also pushed the organization toward diplomacy as the last viable path.

For Turkey, the PKK’s dissolution marks a significant milestone. But the risk now lies in failing to seize the opportunity. If Ankara cracks down on Kurdish political expression, it could undermine the legitimacy of the peace. If it enacts real reforms, the end of the PKK could signal not just the close of a conflict but the beginning of a durable political solution to the Kurdish question.

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