

# THE IMRALI POST

YOU HEARD HIS NAME. LEARN HIS STORY. DEMAND HIS FREEDOM.

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## Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

## Hunergeha Welat releases new clip

ANF | 24 APRIL 2023

Hunergeha Welat released a new song and clip called *Li herî jorê*. Composer and musician Mahmoud Be-razi wrote the music, while Ibrahimî Faqe and director Sero Hindi wrote the lyrics. Hindi also directed the video. The choreography is by Rojda Dendara and the main singer is Servan Badini.

You can watch the video from here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIHuQrM89Zs>

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## Group of activists from Lucerne takes over Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 26 APRIL 2023

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil was launched on 25 June 2012 in Strasbourg with the aim of ensuring the physical freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and breaking the absolute isolation imposed on him. The vigil continues in its 566th week.

A group of activists from Lucerne took over the vigil.

The group includes Ercan Güneş, Gökhan Babayığit and Abdurrahim İlbaş.

Ercan Güneş, speaking on behalf of the group, said that they have been holding the vigil in front of international institutions in Strasbourg to demand freedom for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been in captivity for a quarter of a century. He added that the Kurdish leader "enlightens the entire Middle East with its libertarian ideas. The fascist Turkish state does not want to free him and in fact deepens the isolation regime in which he is kept. He has not been allowed to meet with his lawyers and family for two years. Kurds and Kurdistan are all kept in isolation. The AKP-MHP fascist regime should know that their policies of war, destruction and denial will collapse in the near future. Its economy has already collapsed. On 14 May, the democratic forces will end the AKP-MHP fascist rule."

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## A video-diary of the ‘We Want Our World Back’ conference

ANF | 27 APRIL 2023

The Network for an Alternative Quest has published a video summarizing the “We Want Our World Back” conference that was held in Hamburg on 7-8 and 9 April.

Despite the last minute withdrawal of the university rooms by the rector, the conference was held in an alternative place. This year's conference focused on the critique of capitalist modernity, but our discussions have shown us that it is more important than ever to discuss alternatives, organize and educate ourselves. Thus, the main theme of this year's conference will focus on rebuilding: Arts, Education, and building Democratic Confederalism.

You can watch from here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhRj0qyRPow>



## Families of Öcalan and other prisoners in İmralı once again apply for a visit

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 APRIL 2023

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan has been kept in absolute isolation in İmralı and has not been heard from for more than two years. His brother Mehmet Öcalan and Öcalan's guardian, Mazlum Dinç, applied once again to the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office requesting a visit.

Similarly, the families of other prisoners in İmralı applied for a visit. Ömer Hayri Konar's brother Ali Konar, Hamili Yıldırım's brother Polat Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş's sister Melihe Çetin submitted their request.

There has been no news from Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan since 21 March 2021.



## Women in Aleppo rally to demand “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | ALEPPO | 29 APRIL 2023

Öcalan has been held as a political hostage on the prison island of Imrali, most of the time under conditions of total isolation, since his arrest and deportation to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy on 15 February 1999.

Kurds and their friends are going into action all around the world to demand the lifting of Abdullah Öcalan's incommunicado detention and the resumption of peace negotiations and conditions for the Kurdish leader in which he can live and work freely in order to contribute to the solution of the Kurdish question.

Women took to the streets in the Sheikh Maqsood neighborhood of Aleppo on Saturday to demand freedom for Öcalan.

Speaking during the demonstration organized by the Union of Young Women, Nadiya Yûsif, spokesperson of the union, stated that women organized, got to know themselves and made achievements under the umbrella of the slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadî” (Woman, Life, Freedom), generated by Öcalan.

Nadiya Yûsif vowed that they would continue their struggle, following in the footsteps of Öcalan until the freedom of women and society is achieved.



## Kurdish activists march for “Freedom for Öcalan” in Paris

ANF | PARIS | 1 MAY 2023

Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan has been held as a political hostage on the prison island of Imrali, most of the time under conditions of total isolation, since his arrest and deportation to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy on 15 February 1999.

Kurds and their friends are going into action all around the world to demand the lifting of Abdullah Öcalan's incommunicado detention and the resumption of peace negotiations and conditions for the Kurdish leader in which he can live and work freely in order to contribute to the solution to the Kurdish question.

Activists of the Kurdish Revolutionary Youth Movement Tevgera Ciwanên Şoreşger staged a march in the Parisian suburb of Melun on Monday to demand freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.

The march was followed by a rally in the town center, where activists denounced the aggravated isolation regime imposed on the Kurdish leader who has not been heard from for two years



# Military aggression and occupation

## Turkish attack in Til Temir kills 3 children

ANF | TIL TEMIR | 25 APRIL 2023

The Turkish state attacked the village of Elebid in Til Temir with howitzers at around 6pm local time on Monday.

10-year-old Meryem Xidir Iwês, Ebdilezîz Xidir Iwês (8) and Îtidal Iwês (9) died, while Zehra Xidir Iwês (14) and Diya'a Xidir Iwês (6) were injured.

The injured children were taken to the Martyr Lêgerîn Hospital in Til Temir.



## 32 political parties support Autonomous Administration's proposal for a solution to Syrian crisis

ANF | 25 APRIL 2023

32 political parties and forces expressed their support for the Autonomous Administration's resolution declaration and said: "We believe in dialogue for the solution of the problems and issues in Syria. We also call for brotherhood, common life and a democratic political solution."

The statement added: "We did not think of breaking up Syria. However, the enemies of democracy and some parties are making propaganda saying that this is what we want. Our project was clear from the beginning. We want a democratic, pluralistic and decentralized Syria. They accuse our parties of separatism, but in fact it is the Turkish state that is trying to break up Syria, as its policies show."

The statement continued: "As parties and political forces, we support the declaration issued by the Autonomous Administration. We renew our seriousness and demand for a political solution to the Syrian crisis. We have presented many initiatives and roadmaps for the solution to this crisis. We believe in a political solution to end the crisis and support the Autonomous Administration's declaration and all its initiatives. We especially support Geneva's first statement, UN resolution 2254.



## SDF fighter killed by Turkish drone attack in Kobanê

ANF | KOBANE | 25 APRIL 2023

A car exploded in the south of Kobanê at 10.30 am local time. According to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the cause of the explosion was a Turkish drone attack, killing one fighter.

For years, Turkey has been using drones for extralegal killings in the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria. The attacks are directed against representatives of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) structures, members of combat units and the civilian population. Since the beginning of the year, Turkey has carried out at least twelve drone attacks in northern Syria. Last year, Turkey carried out at least 130 drone attacks, killing 87 people and injuring 151 others.

On Monday evening, three children were killed in artillery attacks by the Turkish army near Til Temir, and two others were injured, some seriously.



## 25 April is Memorial Day for the martyrs of Rojava

ANF | 25 APRIL 2023

This Tuesday, 25 April, is the day of remembrance for the fallen of North and East Syria. The Autonomous Administration (AANES) decided in 2021 to introduce the commemoration day. The date marks a deep turning point in the Rojava revolution, because on this day in 2017, the Turkish Air Force bombed the headquarters of the People's and Women's Defense Units (YPG-YPJ) on Mount Qereçox near Dêrik. Fourteen female and six male fighters died, eighteen others were injured, some seriously.

### 26 fighter jets bomb Qereçox

Located in the border triangle of Syria-Iraq-Turkey, Mount Qereçox is of strategic importance. It used to be a meeting point for trade, and in 1956 the first oil drilling in Syria took place here.

The attack took place on 25 April 2017, at around 2 am. More than two dozen Turkish Air Force fighter-bombers entered Syrian airspace controlled by the international coalition against ISIS. The target was a site complex that housed not only the headquarters of the YPG and YPJ general headquarters, but also the building of the press center, the Dengê Rojava radio station, a printing shop and other military facilities.

### Three of the Qereçox martyrs were media workers

Already in the early years of the Rojava revolution, Qereçox played an important role in terms of defense. The self-protection units "Yekîneyên Xweparastina Gel" (YXG), which were founded in 2011 shortly after the emergence of the "Arab Spring" in Syria, use it for their military training. After the restructuring of the YXG into the YPG, the headquarters of the task force was established on the Qereçox at the end of 2013. A few months earlier, a group of Kurdish students founded the radio station Rojava FM there. The radio station was later converted into the YPG press center. Three of those killed on 25 April were employees of the press centre.

### Simultaneous air strikes in Shengal

At the same time as the attacks against the YPG and YPJ in Rojava, Turkish fighter jets also flew air strikes on the main Yazidi settlement area of Shengal on the other side of the border. Bombings have been reported near several refugee camps housing thousands of survivors of ISIS genocide and femicide in the region since August 2014. Five Peshmerga fighters from the southern Kurdish autonomous government were killed. These were Turkey's first air raids on Shengal.

### Muslim: "Turkey attacks those who fight the terrorists"

Salih Muslim, then co-chair of the Democratic Unity Party (PYD), accused Turkey of supporting terrorists. "Instead of attacking ISIS, Turkey is attacking those who are fighting the terrorists," he told the media at the time. Erdoğan stated that the US, Russia and the southern Kurdish government had been informed in advance of the air strikes. Washington said the airstrikes were carried out without the consent of the US and the US-led international anti-IS alliance, which paradoxically includes Turkey as a member - and whose main ally in Syria is the SDF.



### HPG: Turkey continuous to attacks on guerrilla areas

ANF | BEHDINAN

In its daily statement about the war in Kurdistan, the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) reported uninterrupted attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

**25 April 2023** - According to the HPG, the guerrilla positions in the Zap and Xakurke regions were bombed 48 times by the Turkish army last weekend.

In the region of Zap, the Turkish army attacked the Girê Cûdî resistance area with heavy weapons on April 23. An armed confrontation erupted after guerrillas responded to the attack to defend themselves.



In the region of Xakurkê, the areas of Goşînê, Girê Berbizina and Lolan waterside were shelled by fighter jets three times on April 23.

On April 22 and 23, the area of Geliyê Lolan in Xakurke, the area of Girê Cûdî, and the guerrilla positions in Çemço and Sîda were targeted by 45 attacks with howitzers, mortars, tanks and heavy weapons.

**26 April 2023** - According to the press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), the Turkish army has carried out at least 77 attacks against the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) since 24 April. Guerrillas from the HPG and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) exercised their right to self-defence and two soldiers were killed.

HPG reported a confrontation with the Turkish army in Sîda on 25 April when the guerrillas responded to three attacks carried out with heavy weapons. In the Girê Cûdî resistance area, the Turkish army carried out several attacks with heavy weapons on the same day. At 9.00 a.m., the YJA Star counterattacked, killing one soldier. Another soldier died after guerrillas responded to an attack by the Turkish invading forces at 4.20 pm.

On 24, 25 and 26 April, the Turkish army attacked the Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî resistance areas as well as guerrilla positions in the Çemço and Sîda areas eight times with attack helicopters and 69 times with howitzers, tanks and heavy weapons.

**27 April 2023** - According to the daily statement by the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), the Turkish army continues its attacks on guerrilla areas in the Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

In the Zap region, the Turkish army attacked the guerrilla positions in Sîda and the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area with heavy weapons on Wednesday, April 26. Guerrillas responded to the attack to defend themselves, which resulted in a confrontation in both cases.

The guerrilla positions in Sîda were bombed with banned weapons on the same day.

The HPG also reported three air strikes on 25 and 26 April against Dola Mîranê in the Gare region, as well as 24 bombardments with howitzers and heavy weapons against Girê Cûdî, Girê FM, Çemço and Sîda.

**29 April 2023** - HPG stated that: "The Turkish army attacked two of our companions in the mountains of Van's Çaldıran district on 25 April 2023. Our comrades Ekin and Rosîda responded to the attack to protect themselves. A battle ensued in which they sacrificially fought to their last breath and fell. Comrades Ekin and Rosîda were leading militants of our women's liberation struggle. They insisted on freedom and proved to be Apoist militants with their unbending stand against the enemy, occupying an honourable place in the history of our people. As their comrades, we will intensify the struggle handed over to us by Ekin and Rosîda in the consciousness of being worthy of them. We give our word that we will make their dreams of a free life with Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] in a free Kurdistan come true."

HPG offered their condolences to the families of the martyrs, the people of the Serhed region and the people of Kurdistan.

**30 April 2023** - According to the daily statement by the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), the Turkish army continues its attacks on guerrilla areas in the Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

On April 28, the Girê Cûdî and Girê Amediyê resistance areas were shelled twice by fighter jets.

On April 28, 29 and 30, the Girê Bahar, Girê Cûdî, Girê FM and Girê Amediyê resistance areas, as well as the guerrilla positions in Çemço and Sîda were targeted by 39 attacks with howitzers and heavy weapons.

**2 May 2023** - On April 29, Turkish troops responded to the guerrillas in Metina, facing a response from the guerrillas with heavy weapons.

On May 1, the Turkish army attacked the Gire Cûdî Resistance Area in the Zap region with heavy weapons. Guerrillas responded to the attack to defend themselves.

On April 29, as well as on May 1 and 2, the areas of Girê Çarçêl, Girê Amediyê, Girê Şehîd Pîrdoğan, Girê Cûdî and Deşta Kafya were targeted by 9 strikes by fighter jets.

On April 29 and 30, and on May 1, the vicinity of the Tirvaniş village in Metina, as well as the Girê Cûdî, Girê FM and Girê Amediyê resistance areas, and the guerrilla positions in Çemço and Sîda were shelled twice by attack helicopters and 15 times with howitzers, tanks, mortars and heavy weapons.

HPG added that the Turkish invasion forces are trying to demolish the guerrilla positions in Sîda with heavy construction equipment.

Çemço and Sida belong to the Sheladize sub-district near the town of Amadiya in Duhok governorate and have been the focus of the occupation forces since the partial withdrawal of the Turkish army from the Zap region at the end of last year.

Turkey's attacks continue despite a ceasefire announced by the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK). The decision was taken after the devastating earthquake disaster in the Turkish-Syrian border area on 6 February. The Kurdish guerrillas, which include the HPG and the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops), are implementing the call for a cessation of all hostilities and are in a defensive position.

In a statement on February 9, the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), an umbrella organization of the Kurdish freedom movement of which the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) is also a member, called for a halt of military actions in Turkey, in metropolises and cities. "It is necessary to prevent the people from experiencing even more suffering in this affliction", said Cemil Bayık, co-chairman of the executive council of the KCK.

The Central Headquarters of the People's Defence Forces (HSM) expressed support for the KCK's call and said on February 11 that the guerrillas were ready to do their part to alleviate the suffering of people.

On March 27, the KCK Executive Council co-chair Besê Hozat announced that the unilateral ceasefire would remain in place until after the elections to be held in Turkey on May 14.



## A car explodes in Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 26 APRIL 2023

A car exploded in the northern Syrian city of Manbij late Tuesday afternoon. No one was injured in the alleged attack, according to the Asayîş internal security forces and the Manbij military council. The vehicle burned ablaze in front of a residential building.

The detonation was apparently triggered by an explosive device that had been attached under the SUV. The bomb exploded at around 5pm not far from the Sheikh Aqeel cemetery in the south of the city, near a gas station. Luckily, no one got hurt. There is no information about the owners of the vehicle.

Security forces have launched investigations into whether the Islamic State might have organized the attack. The crime pattern points to sleeper cells of the jihadist militia, the security forces said.



## Two YJA Star guerrillas martyred in Van countryside

ANF | BEHDINAN | 29 APRIL 2023

In a statement about the ongoing war in Kurdistan, the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) reported ongoing Turkish attacks despite the fact that the Kurdish freedom movement stopped all actions after the earthquake in the Turkish-Syrian border area at the beginning of February and is in a defensive position. The decision of inaction is valid until the elections in Turkey on 14 May.



## Governor declares 14 areas in Sirnak "temporary special security zones"

ANF | SIRNAK | 2 MAY 2023

The "prohibitions" and "special security zones" that the Turkish state has systematically and arbitrarily declared in Kurdish provinces for years continue, especially in Sirnak and Hakkari.

14 areas in Sirnak and Cizre, Silopi, Uludere and Beytüşşebap were declared "temporary special security zones" for 15 days from 1 to 15 May. This means that entry and exit are strictly controlled when not forbidden.

The same regions were declared "special security zones" for 15 days from 16 to 30 April by the governor.

On 8 April, entry to the highlands of four villages in the Yuksekova district of Hakkari was prohibited.



## HPG publishes balance sheet of war for the month of April

ANF | BEHDINAN | 2 MAY 2023

The HPG Press Center released the balance sheet of war for the month of April.

The statement said: "The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas, the will of freedom and the main defense force of our oppressed people, continue to defend the lands of Kurdistan against the colonial powers, even in the most difficult conditions. The sworn enemy of the Kurdish people, the fascist AKP-MHP regime continues its attacks using all the means at its disposal. This fascist regime, which collapsed politically and economically, is trying to survive by continuing the dirty war it launched to destroy the free will of the Kurdish people. Despite all these attacks, our guerrillas did not give way to the colonialists and made history with the resistance they carried out."

The statement added: "The fascist AKP-MHP regime, which has built its existence on the destruction of the Kurdish people and wants to get results with dirty war methods, has increased its attacks ahead of the elections and wants to get results by deceiving the public with fake news and fake victory stories. The war criminal AKP-MHP regime, which carried out tens of attacks with thousands of invaders and unlimited technical support in Bakur Kurdistan from Mardin to Botan, from Botan to Serhed, could not get the desired results against the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas that are armed with self-sacrificing determination."

### Medya Defense Zones bombed 1081 times

The statement confirmed that, as far as guerrillas could detect, "the resistance positions in the Medya Defense Zones were bombed 1081 times, 76 times with warplanes, 61 times with combat helicopters, and 944 times with tanks, cannons, howitzers and heavy weapons. The colonial Turkish army added new ones to its war crimes and used chemical weapons and banned bombs 8 times against the guerrilla's resistance positions. The fascist regime's reckless perpetration of all kinds of crimes against humanity and war and its hope for help are the last struggles of the regime, which is on the verge of collapse. There were clashes with the invaders as our guerrillas responded to the enemy. In these clashes, 2 invaders were killed, 1 surveillance camera system and a gun were destroyed.

The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas, which restructured themselves as the Democratic Modernity Guerrillas and became the hope of freedom for women, youths and all the oppressed, keep the hope of a free future

alive thanks to the efforts of our immortal comrades who fought to the last breath against the invaders. Our comrades Xebatkar Bagok, Bager Wan, Hêjar Zozan, Rosîda Bawer, Ekin Rizgar Manzikert, who fell as martyrs in Bakur Kurdistan in April, and our comrade Botan Goyi, who joined the caravan of martyrs in the Medya Defense Zones, have written their names in the resistance history of our people. The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas, that inherited the struggle of Dilxwaz Gabar and Gulchiya Gabarlar and took it as a basis to achieve victory, will crown the cause of freedom with victory.”

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## Turkish army bombs a village in Sulaymaniyah countryside

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 2 MAY 2023

According to reports from the ground, Turkish armed drones bombed the Gelale village in the Şarbajêr town of Sulaymaniyah at around 13:00 local time on Tuesday.

Information on the outcome of the attack could not be obtained. Local authorities have not made any statement so far.

The invading Turkish state has been escalating its attacks against civilian settlements in South Kurdistan, especially since April 2022. While the increasingly ongoing attacks have killed many civilians, dozens of villages have been evacuated.

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## Curfew in 9 neighbourhoods in Nusaybin

ANF | MARDIN | 2 MAY 2023

9 rural neighbourhoods in the Nusaybin district of Mardin province have been subjected to a curfew on Tuesday on the grounds of a military operation. The curfew covering the neighbourhoods and hamlets of Tekağaç, Sapanlı, Mağaracık, Arpalı, Bahminin, Kaleli, Şekrin, Yol and Güneli went into effect as of 04.00 this morning.

In another statement in the following hours, the governor's office announced that the curfew was lifted as of 09:30.

Local sources report that aerial and military activity continues from time to time.

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# Human Rights Violations

At least 150 journalists, politicians, artists, lawyers taken into custody by police

ANF | AMED | 25 APRIL 2023

In the new police political operation, apparently based in Amed, many houses were raided in various cities.

During the searches of the houses, the police confiscated some books and digital materials. Among those raided and taken into custody were Mesopotamia Agency (MA) editor Abdurrahman Gök, MA reporter Ahmet Kanbal, Yeni Yaşam Newspaper Editor-in-Chief Osman Akın, Xwebûn Owner Kadri Esen; Lawyers Association for Freedom (ÖHD) Amed Branch Co-chair lawyer Halise Dakalı, lawyers Özüm Vurgun, Bünyamin Şeker, Berdan Acun, Pirozhan Karali, press advisor to Democratic Regions Party (DBP) co-chair Saliha Aydeniz, Sezen Mercan, Yavuz Akkuzu from Amed City Theater, Özcan Ateş and Elvan Koçer Yıldırım.

Mezopotamya Agency (MA) owner Ferhat Çelik, on the other hand, could not be detained because he was not at the address raided. Searches were continuing at many addresses.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) deputy co-chair Tayyip Temel said: "On the eve of the election, he [Erdogan] again clung to detention operations for fear of losing power. In the morning, dozens of our friends, including party members, journalists, artists and lawyers, were detained in Amed...You will not be able to avoid losing!"

**Özdemir: At least 150 people taken into custody**

Diyarbakir Bar Association Deputy Chair Mehdi Özdemir said that approximately 150 people were detained by order of the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

Özdemir said, "The operation is still continuing. Detentions continue. Searches continue in the offices of many of our lawyer friends. No reason has been given so far. This is an operation aimed at different groups. There are artists, politicians, civil society representatives and lawyers among the arrested."

**ÖHD: We will not remain silent**

The Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) said on its social media account that a large number of journalists, artists, politicians and citizens were detained in Amed, Batman and Urfa.

The ÖHD wrote: "As part of an investigation conducted in Diyarbakır this morning, many of our members' houses were raided and our members detained. Searches continue in our association building.

We do not remain silent against the political operations carried out against our association and our members during the election process! We have learned that journalists, artists, politicians and citizens from Urfa province have also been detained. Defense will not be silent! We will stand by our members, colleagues and clients!"

— ★ —

## Number of detainees in Amed-based operation increases

ANF | 25 APRIL 2023

Two weeks before the May 14 elections, police raids took place in 21 provinces on Tuesday as part of an investigation based in Amed (Diyarbakır).

Among those detained are journalists, politicians, lawyers, union leaders and artists.

At least 126 people are reported to have been detained so far. An arbitrary and systematic accusation of "membership in an organization" is cited to justify the detentions.

At least 10 journalists, 25 lawyers and numerous artists are among those detained.

The names of 72 detainees have been clarified so far: Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) Editor Abdurrahman Gök, MA reporters Ahmet Kanbal and Mehmet Şah Oruç, JINNEWS correspondent Beritan Canözer, Yeni Yaşam Newspaper Editor-in-Chief Osman Akın, Xwebûn Newspaper publisher Kadri Esen, journalists Mehmet Yalçın, Mikail Barut, Salih Keleş and Remzi Akkaya, HDP deputy co-chair responsible for organization, Özlem Gündüz, HDP Central Executive Board (MYK) member Mahfuz Güteryüz, as well as Mehmet Öner, Halise Dakalı, Resul Temur, Pirozhan Karali, Muhittin Muğuş, Özüm Vurgun, Bünyamin Şeker, Fırat Taşkın, Zozan Acar, Büşra Eylül Özgültekin, Burhan Arta, Jiyan Sametoğlu, Metin Özbadem, Gurbet Özbey Öner, Adile Salman, Şerzan Yelboğa, Süleyman Şahin, Gülistan Ataş, Fırat Yıldız, Serhat Hezer, Kenan Anğay, Şirin Şen, Bahar Oktay, Berdan Acun, Havva Bildik, Halil Delen, Habat Mimkara, Devrim Demir, Yavuz Akkuzu, Özcan Ateş, Elvan Köçer Yıldırım, Şahperi Alphan, Sezen Mercan, Maria Öztöpuş, Suat Mustafa Şenci, Veysel Moray, Hüsamettin Kılıç, Şehmus Karadağ, Semira Akkor, Faris Türk, Tarık Zafer Yazgan, Nurettin Bakan, Nasip Gültekin, Eşref Yaşa, Alattin Zuğurli, Haydullah Zuğurli, Doğan Hatun, Rıfat Roni, Gani Alkan, Sezgin Bayram, Sena Özbey, Şahperi Alphan Bayhan, Sadettin İnal, Kibar Suvari, Velat Ersin, Kevve Çelik, Mahir Yıldız, Mesut Gever, Abdulvahap İrmak, Senar Fidancan and Mesut Baskın.

### Detention warrants for 216 people

The Amed, Van, Urfa, Batman and Mardin branches of the Lawyers Association for Freedom (ÖHD) were raided in the morning as part of the investigation in which detention warrants have been issued for 216 people.

The names of the detained lawyers are as follows: Mehmet Öner, Halise Dakalı, Özüm Vurgun, Bünyamin Şeker, Berdan Acun, Pirozhan Kaleli, Resul Temur, Fırat Taşkın, Salih Tekin, Sozan Acar, Büşra Eylül Özgültekin, Burhan Artan, Şerzan Yelboğa, Süleyman Şahin, Gülistan Ataş, Fırat Yıldız, Serhat Hezer, Kenan Aygay, Şirrin Şen, Bahar Okay, Riha'dan Gurbet Özbey, Ruşen Doğan, Metin Özbadem, Mêrdîn'den Kenan Anğay and Jiyan Samedoğlu.

### Operation against Kurdish artists

The Amed City Theatre, the Dicle Culture and Art Association, the Mesopotamia Culture and Art Association and the BKM were also raided by the police. Some of those detained during the raids are as follows: Devrim Demir, Yavuz Akkuzu, Elvan Köçer Yıldırım, Özcan Ateş, Sena Özbey, Şahperi Alphan Bayhan, Sadettin İnal, Kibar Suvari, Velat Ersin ve Kevve Çelik, Mesut Baskın.



## Hearing of Kenan Ayaz facing extradition to Germany held in Nicosia

ANF | NICOSIA | 25 APRIL 2023

The appeal proceedings against the extradition of Kenan Ayaz to Germany have begun in Cyprus. The long-time Kurdish activist was arrested on 15 March at the airport in the port city of Larnaca on the basis of a German extradition request for alleged PKK membership, as he was about to fly to Sweden for a family visit. Since then, the 49-year-old activist has been in custody. While a Cypriot court submitted the extradition request on 19 April, Ayaz appealed against this decision and the proceedings are ongoing. Ayaz spent twelve years in prison in Turkey because of his political identity.

The hearing in the case took place in Nicosia on Tuesday. In front of the courthouse, numerous people demanded the immediate release of Kenan Ayaz. The hearing was adjourned until 9 May, and the final decision on extradition is to be made on 16 May.

When Ayaz was brought back to prison from the court, he greeted his supporters and shouted "Freedom for Kurdistan, freedom for Abdullah Öcalan" and "Kurdistan will be the grave of fascism" together with them.

Meanwhile, the public protest against Ayaz's imprisonment continues in Cyprus. An anarchist group demanded his release with a banner on a bridge in Nicosia.

The Federal Republic of Germany is increasingly persecuting Kurds abroad on behalf of the Erdogan regime. In order to achieve the transfer of Kurdish activists from abroad and to be able to accuse them of alleged PKK membership, the Federal German prosecution authorities are using all legal means to get hold of them. A Kurdish woman from Belgium was extradited in November 2022, a Kurdish man from France in January 2023 and an activist from Italy in early March. All of them are now in custody in Germany.





## 33 bar associations call for restrictions imposed on lawyers and other detainees to be lifted

ANF | 26 APRIL 2023

Reactions to the political police operations based in Amed continue. 33 bar associations protested the over 150 arrests. Many of the people taken into custody are lawyers. In a joint written statement titled "We follow the investigation against our colleagues", the 33 bar associations said: "On Tuesday morning, more than a hundred people, including 25 lawyers from Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Batman and Şırnak Bar Associations, were taken into custody within the scope of an investigation carried out by Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office."

### Ban on visits by lawyers

The statement underlined that the raids on the houses of the lawyers taken into custody were carried out without "the Bar Association representative and the public prosecutor who must be present in the searches pursuant to Article 58 of the Law on Advocacy Law No. 1136." The statement added that "a ban on visits by lawyers was imposed for 24 hours and a restraining order on the investigation file has also been imposed. Lawyers are people who work in the judiciary and can always apply to the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office if they are called. The collective detention of our colleagues prior to the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections by not applying the summons procedure is unacceptable."

### Call for a fair hearing

The statement called for the protection of the rights of all those taken into custody within the framework of the right to a fair trial. "We call for the removal of the ban and the restriction decision. We state that we will closely follow the judicial process involving our colleagues."

The bar associations that made the statement are as follows: "Adana Bar Association, Adıyaman Bar Association, Ağrı Bar Association, Ankara Bar Association, Ardahan Bar Association, Artvin Bar Association, Aydın Bar Association, Balıkesir Bar Association, Batman Bar Association, Bingöl Bar Association, Bitlis Bar Association, Bolu Bar Association, Burdur Bar Association, Mardin Bar Association, Bursa Bar Association", , Kastamonu Bar, Muş Bar, Diyarbakır Bar, Siirt Bar, Eskişehir Bar, Sinop Bar, Urfa Bar, Hakkari Bar, Hatay Bar, Iğdır Bar, Isparta Bar, Tekirdağ Bar, Tunceli Bar, Van Bar, İzmir Bar, Kars Bar, Yalova Bar Association, Şırnak Bar Association"



## Mother and sister of martyr Agit Ipek among those taken into custody

ANF | AMED | 26 APRIL 2023

As part of the Amed-based investigation carried out on Tuesday, at least 126 people, including many journalists, politicians, lawyers, union leaders and artists, were taken into custody following house raids in 21 provinces. Among those detained was Halise Aksoy, the mother of martyr Agit Ipek, whose remains were delivered to the family by post. Agit Ipek had fallen a martyr in clashes with the Turkish army in Dersim.

Halise Aksoy's house in Amed was among those raided on Tuesday morning. Aksoy was later detained and taken to the Provincial Security Directorate. Simultaneously, the police raided the house of Aksoy's daughter, Mizgin Karataş, and detained her and her husband, Harun Karataş. The 4-year-old child of the Karataş was also taken to the police station. The child, who was kept there all day, was eventually handed over to his relatives in the evening.



## Body of YJA Star guerrilla handed over to family after 6 months

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 26 APRIL 2023

Two guerrilla fighters were martyred on Mount Cudi in Şırnak, Northern Kurdistan as the guerrillas hit a Turkish military unit near the village of Serdehlê on 7 September 2022. Several soldiers were killed and injured during the course of the action.

On the Mistê Elî slope, fighting erupted between the guerrillas and Turkish troops and the area was bombed by the Turkish army. YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) guerrilla Ezda Meşkan (Şehla Tekin) and HPG (People's Defense Forces) guerrilla Mahir Başkale (Emrah Duman) fought bravely in the battle and under the bombardment until their last breath and fell as martyrs.

The body of YJA Star guerrilla Ezda Meşkan was buried in the cemetery of the nameless in Şırnak province without a revelation of her DNA results.

Following a DNA match after six months, Meşkan's family came to Şırnak from Hatay and exhumed their daughter's body from the cemetery of the nameless. The family set out for the Yüksekova district of Hakkari to bid farewell to their fallen daughter.

### Background

Ezda Meşkan was born in the village of Meşkan in Gever (Yüksekova) district of Hakkari. Many people from the village and her relatives joined the Kurdish liberation struggle. Ezda grew up in a corresponding

atmosphere and met guerrilla fighters as a child. The decisive factor in her decision to join the armed struggle was the murder of PKK co-founder Sakine Cansız in Paris in January 2013. On 15 August 2013, she went to the mountains and did basic training in Xakurke. Afterwards, she took part in the defence of Maxmur and Kirkuk against ISIS and played a major role in beating back the Islamists. During this time, she became deeply involved with patriarchal structures of domination and came to believe that a new life must be built on women's freedom. She grappled with the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan and her own personality and finally went to Northern Kurdistan in 2016. In Botan, she focused on avenging the massacres committed by the Turkish state during the urban war. In the last six years, she took part in numerous guerrilla actions and developed into a leading commander of the YJA Star.

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## Journalist Gök jailed in Amed: Fascism will be defeated

ANF | AMED | 27 APRIL 2023

10 journalists were among the 128 people taken into custody in a series of coordinated dawn raids in 21 provinces in Turkey on 25 April.

Besides journalists, lawyers, rights defenders, political activists and artists were also taken into custody in the police operation which was carried out within the scope of an investigation launched by Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

The detained journalists include Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) editor Abdurrahman Gök and reporters Ahmet Kanbal and Mehmet Şah Oruç; editor-in-chief of Yeni Yaşam daily newspaper Osman Akın; the publisher of the only Kurdish print newspaper in Turkey, Xwebûn Weekly, Kadri Esen; JinNews reporter Beritan Canözer; and journalists Mehmet Yalçın, Mikail Barut, Salih Keleş and Remzi Akkaya.

After their referral to court, Abdurrahman Gök, Beritan Canözer, Mehmet Şah Oruç and Remzi Akkaya were imprisoned on Thursday afternoon.

Abdurrahman Gök, who was remanded in custody for alleged membership in a terrorist organization, meaning the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), reacted to the arrests, saying: "Fascism will be defeated. Do not worry! This fascist order will go away. Down with fascism, long live the free press!"

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## NESS in solidarity with the accused in the Kobani Trial

ANF | 27 APRIL 2023

The North and East Syria Solidarity (NESS) expressed their “strong solidarity with the accused in the Kobani trial and with all those opposing the repressive and anti-democratic Erdogan regime.”

The Co-Chair of NESS, Fionn Skiotis, also sent their condolences to all those affected by the February 6 earthquakes, defining them as a tragic and devastating blow.

“We will do all that we can here in Australia to raise awareness and take action in solidarity with your great cause - rest assured you have our loyal support at all times,” said the statement.

### Background

The Kobani Case was filed in 2020 against 108 people, including the HDP’s former co-chairs, Mr Selahattin Demirtaş and Ms Figen Yüksekdağ, current co-chair Ms Pervin Buldan, several current and former HDP deputies and mayors, and all the members of the HDP’s Central Executive Board of 2014. This case was launched as a counter move by the Turkish government just two weeks after the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights made its final judgment demanding the immediate release of Selahattin Demirtaş. The indictment in the Kobani Case is based on a Twitter message posted by the HDP on 6 October 2014. This called for democratic protests in solidarity with the people of Kobani, a Kurdish town in Northern Syria that was fighting against the attacks of ISIS, and also against Turkey’s embargo on the town. The prosecutor is calling for all the defendants to be given aggravated life sentences (without parole) 38 times for the crimes of “destroying the unity of the state and the integrity of the country” and “premeditated murder” of the people who lost their lives in the Kobani protests. Seventeen politicians are currently being held in pre-trial detention for this case.

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## 'Borders, Treaty of Lausanne, 1923-2023' exhibition opens in Lausanne

ANF | LAUSANNE | 27 APRIL 2023

The group art exhibition, promoted by the Municipality of Lausanne and the Lausanne History Museum, to mark the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne, which divided Kurdistan into four parts and subjected the ancient peoples of the region to genocides, has been opened to visitors on Thursday.

Lausanne Mayor Grégoire Junod, representatives of the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre, Sevgi Koyuncu on behalf of the Lausanne 2023 Committee, representatives of various Swiss political parties,

dozens of artists, writers and politicians from Turkey and Kurdistan attended the opening of the exhibition titled “Borders, Treaty of Lausanne, 1923-2023” at the Lausanne History Museum.

Laurent Golay, Director of the Lausanne History Museum, spoke about the exhibition and said: “This exhibition invites visitors to take a look back at the highlights and venues of the conference, which lasted nearly nine months before the Treaty of Lausanne was signed. The exhibition focuses on what happened that year in the capital of the Canton of Vaud, which hosted many international delegations, as well as the Beau-Rivage Palace and the Clinique Cecil, the historical institutions of the Treaty of Lausanne. The aim of the project is to establish connections between historical periods and to showcase contemporary artistic expression.”

Lausanne Mayor Grégoire Junod also delivered a speech, recalling that the map of the region was redrawn after the Treaty. Junod said: “The Treaty of Lausanne, signed on July 24, 1923, is the only treaty among the others signed after the war, that still affects the contemporary world.”

Junod continued: “This is a commemorative exhibition. This treaty, which took place in Lausanne and was called the peace treaty, unfortunately could not bring peace even after 100 years.” With this exhibition they organized to mark the 100th anniversary of the treaty, Junod said that they wanted to cast back the sufferings of peoples, especially the Kurds, the Armenians and the Greeks.

During the exhibition, a series of events will be held in which different narratives by the Kurds, the Armenians, the Greeks and the Turks affected by the Treaty of Lausanne will be discussed.

The exhibition 'Borders, Treaty of Lausanne, 1923 - 2023' will remain open to visitors at the Lausanne History Museum until October 8.



## European deputies call for release of Kenan Ayaz

ANF | STRASBOURG | 28 APRIL 2023

Kurdish politician Kenan Ayaz was detained at Larnaca airport as he was leaving to visit his family in Sweden on 15 March. The Cyprus police detained him acting upon a German state's arrest warrant and extradition request.

A group of European deputies from the Council of Europe gathered in front of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, to protest the extradition. In a statement, the deputies demanded the immediate release of Kenan Ayaz.

The statement underlined that Kenan Ayaz is fighting for human rights and liberties, and added that his detention was unacceptable. The MEPs also said that such arrests carried out by some European states against Kurds are actually serving the policy of the Turkish state.

The parliamentarians, who called for Cyprus to release Ayaz as soon as possible, stated that they would follow the issue until Ayaz was released.

France (La France Insoumise) Deputy Emmanuel Fernandes, Cyprus AKEL Deputy Georges Loucaides, Cyprus Socialist Party Deputy Constantinos Efstathiou, Iceland Althingi Party Deputy Jodis Skuladottir, Germany Die Linke Deputy Andrej Hunko, HDP Foreign Relations Commission Co-Spokesperson Feleknaş U HDP European Commission Representative Fayik Yağızay and DKTM Strasbourg members attended.

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## MEPs write to OPCW about need for independent investigation into Turkish use of chemical weapons

ANF | 28 APRIL 2023

A group of Members of the European Parliament wrote to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to express their concern "at the credible allegations of the use of chemical weapons by Turkey in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and at the lack of any independent investigation. The Chemical Weapons Convention was an achievement of great importance, especially since, as we read on your website, 98% of the globe – all but four countries – is covered by its protection. However, the Kurdish experience suggests that even within this 98%, coverage is not universal. Protection depends on having a state that will speak up on your behalf. The Kurds, notably, have no state of their own to make such a request."

The letter underlined that "the need for a request from a state seems to us to undermine the fundamental spirit of the Convention, denying its all-important universality, and restricting its ability to create the chemical weapon-free world that it was established to achieve.

With respect to the particular situation in Northern Iraq, where the Turkish army is fighting the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), we note that the Turkish government has even admitted to the military use of tear-gas, which, is, of course, banned by the Convention.<sup>1</sup> There are alarming reports by journalists who have spoken with local civilians who claim to have suffered symptoms associated with chemical attacks after Turkish bombing. <sup>2</sup> There are videos that appear to show Turkish soldiers putting hoses into the tunnels where the PKK fighters are sheltering, and other videos showing the death throes of two of the Kurdish guerrillas."

The letter continued: "

These last videos convinced Prof Şebnem Korur Fincancı, the head of the Turkish Medical Association, of the need for a proper independent investigation; but when she raised this, she was put in prison, only reinforcing fears that Turkey had something to hide. There has also been circumstantial evidence in the form of chemical containers and a gas mask cannister.<sup>5</sup> Combined, the evidence was sufficient for International

Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) also to call for an independent investigation.<sup>6</sup> They tried to carry out an investigative mission themselves, but when they wanted to go to the immediate area and meet with affected civilians, but they were not given permission to go there .

We presume that the evidence we have outlined above is very familiar to you – so you must already be aware of the urgent need for an independent investigation that can insist on going to where it is needed. Of course, we cannot assume the result of such an investigation, but if it does, indeed, show that Turkey has been using chemical weapons, this would be an essential first step in getting rid of them.

As elected European representatives, we consider it a duty to highlight this worrying situation and to do all in our power to ensure that it is properly investigated. Not to act in these circumstances could be tantamount to complicity with a war crime."

The letter is signed by:

ALFONSI Francois (Greens/EFA); SCHIEDER Andreas (S&D); VILLUMSEN Nikolaj (THE LEFT); ARENA Maria (S&D); AUKEN Margrete (Greens/EFA); BITEAU Benoit (Greens/EFA); BJÖRK Malin (THE LEFT); BOURGEOIS Geert (ECR); CAREME Damien (Greens/EFA); CASTALDO Fabio Massimo (NI); CHAIBI Leila (THE LEFT); COMIN I OLIVERES Antoni (NI); CORMAND David (Greens/EFA); CORRAO Ignazio (Greens/EFA); D'AMATO Rosa (Greens/EFA); DELBOS- CORFIELD Gwendoline (Greens/EFA); DELLI Karima (Greens/EFA); DEMIREL Oezlem (THE LEFT); FRAGKOS Emmanouil (ECR); GREGOROVÁ Markéta (Greens/EFA); GRUFFAT Claude (Greens/EFA); GUSMÃO José (THE LEFT); HEIDE Hannes (S&D); JADOT Yannick (Greens/EFA); KANKO Assita (ECR); LARROUTUROU Pierre (S&D); MACMANUS Chris (THE LEFT); MATIAS Marisa (THE LEFT); MELCHIOR Karen (Renew); MIRANDA Ana (Greens/EFA); PAPADAKIS Demetris (S&D); PEDICINI Piernicola (Greens/EFA); PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie (Greens/EFA); PISAPIA Giuliano (S&D); PONSATI Clara (NI); PUIGDEMONT Carles (NI); RIBA I GINER Diana (Greens/EFA); RIVASI Michèle (Greens/EFA); RODRÍGUEZ PALOP Eugenia (THE LEFT); ROOSE Caroline (Greens/EFA); SANTOS Isabel (S&D); SATOURI Mounir (Greens/EFA); SIDL Guenther (S&D); SINČIĆ Ivan Vilibor (NI); SMERIGLIO Massimiliano (S&D); SOLE Jordi (Greens/EFA); TOUSSAINT Marie (Greens/EFA); URBAN CRESPO Miguel (THE LEFT); VILLANUEVA RUIZ Idoia (THE LEFT); ŽDANOKA Tatjana (NI)

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## 25 detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 29 APRIL 2023

The Saturday Mothers have continued their action in Istanbul for their relatives who disappeared in state custody and the punishment of the perpetrators for the 944th week. Despite a contrary ruling by the Turkish Constitutional Court, the initiative was again denied access to their ancestral rally site in front of the Galatasaray High School on Istiklal Avenue. This Saturday, too, the square was besieged by the police.

When the Saturday Mothers and their supporters arrived, they were surrounded and 25 people were taken into custody. Journalists were obstructed while documenting the police crackdown.

Those detained include the Human Rights Association (IHD) Istanbul branch co-chair Gülseren Yoleri, Hrant Dink's son Arat Dink and HDP politician Veli Saçılık.

The Saturday Mothers' Initiative pointed out that decisions of the Constitutional Court are binding on all organs of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, and that the Governor's Office and the Istanbul police are disregarding them. "All actors exercising public power must abide by the decisions of the Constitutional Court, which are final and binding. Failure to comply with the constitutional provisions is a serious violation of the principle of the rule of law and the constitutional order on which this principle is based. There is no doubt that this situation entails criminal, administrative and legal responsibilities for those involved. Galatasaray is a place of remembrance where we hold our loved ones whose existence is denied. It is part of our endeavour to carry the events of the past into the present and the future. Being in Galatasaray Square is our constitutional right. We will not give up this right."



## More journalists taken into custody

ANF | ANKARA | 29 APRIL 2023

More houses were raided this morning in various cities, as a result of an Ankara-based investigation. Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) co-chair Dicle Müftüoğlu, Mesopotamia Agency (MA) Editor Sedat Yılmaz and his wife Selma Yılmaz were taken into custody in Amed. Many people, including Filiz Yılmaz, journalist Sedat Yılmaz' sister, were taken into custody in Istanbul.



## 48 of those detained in Amed-based operation sent to prison

ANF | AMED | 29 APRIL 2023

Two weeks before the May 14 elections, police raids took place in 21 provinces on Tuesday (April 25) as part of an investigation based in Amed (Diyarbakır). Among those detained are journalists, politicians, lawyers, union leaders and artists.

143 people were taken into custody as a result of the operations, while arrest warrants were issued against a total of 216 people. An arbitrary and systematic accusation of "membership in an organization" is cited to justify the detentions.



Out of the 143 detainees, 48 were sent to prison and 89 were released. Six people, including lawyer Gülistan Ataş, are still in police custody.

Those sent to prison are as follows:

Mesopotamia Agency (MA) Editor Abdurrahman Gök, JINNEWS Correspondent Beritan Canözer, journalists Mehmet Şah Oruç, Remzi Akkaya and Mikail Barut; lawyers Serhat Hezer, Burhan Arta and Özüm Vurgun; Halise Aksoy, mother of Agit Aksoy, whose remains were sent to her by post; Halise Aksoy's daughter Mizgin Karataş; as well as Erkan Vurmaz, Velat Esin, Nasır Tura, Mahir Yıldız, Helin Sayın, Hülya Ertaş, Ahmet Göğün, Şahin Tanrıverdi, Fikri Ay, Hilal Ada, Mehmet Yalçın, Mehmet Andok Bayram, Agit Kaysı, Alattin Zuğurlu, Faris Türk, Evin Doster, Nurettin Bakan, Devrim Roni Atik, Kadir Şenci, Berfin Can, Muhsin Acar, Osman Demir, Rümet Çetin, Mehdi Kaya, Cotkar Amara Yürek, Hamza Cihangir, Hasret Yelboğa, Suat Arda Işık, Şahin Biçimli, Hakim Kaya, Tacettin Araz, Nurullah Özgün, Abdulbari Mavlay, Ferit Aktepe, Şervan Doğan, Cesur Yılmaz, Süleyman Ulucan, Hamza Sümeli.

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## New police operation targets ESP members

ANF | ISTANBUL | 30 APRIL 2023

Many ESP, SKM, ETHA and SGDF members were taken into custody following raids carried out in 8 cities within the scope of an investigation launched by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. Among those detained are the co-chair of the Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP), Şahin Tümüklü, the editor of the ETHA news agency (ETHA), Nadiye Gürbüz, and candidates for the Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party).

The Oppressed Law Office shared the following post on its Twitter account: “We learned that many of our clients from ESP, SKM, ETHA and SGDF were detained in a police operation as part of an investigation launched by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. The file has confidentiality and lawyer restrictions.”

Among those detained are: ESP co-chair Şahin Tümüklü, ETHA editor Nadiye Namoğlu Gürbüz, ESP PM member Uğur Ok, Green Left Party Istanbul Candidate Burcu Ayyıldız, Green Left Party İzmir candidate Meryem Yıldırım, Green Left Party Eskişehir candidate Müslüm Koyun, Serdal Işık, Leyla Can, Sadrettin Polat, Selfinaz Göçmen, Hasan Polat, Sinem Çelebi, Kalender Polat, Merve Havalı, Bedran Çoğaltay, Adnan Özcan, Ebrar Uz, F. Deniz Kanpolat, Tuncay Yıldırım Özen.

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## Journalists detained in Amed taken to Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 30 APRIL 2023

A few weeks before the May 14 elections, Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation against 49 people and many were taken into custody as a result of police raids in 15 cities on April 29.

The Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) co-chair Dicle Müftüoğlu, Mesopotamia Agency (MA) Editor Sedat Yılmaz and his wife Selma Yılmaz are among those detained in Amed (Diyarbakır) on Saturday. Sedat Yılmaz's sister, Filiz Yılmaz, was detained in Istanbul in the scope of the same operation.

While a confidentiality order has been imposed on the investigation, the detainees were taken to the Ankara Department of Police.

The detentions came after the first wave of simultaneous operations carried out in 21 cities on April 25, in which over 200 people faced an arrest warrant. Of the 128 people taken into custody, at least 50 were sent to prison, including journalists and lawyers.



## 13-year-old child sued for insulting Erdoğan

ANF | 30 APRIL 2023

Charges have been brought in Istanbul against a 13-year-old child for insulting Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. According to the Birgün newspaper, the public prosecutor's office in the Gaziosmanpaşa district accuses the child of attacking "the honour, dignity and reputation of the President of the Republic". The case apparently stems from a complaint filed on CIMER, a web service of the Communications Centre of the Turkish President's Office, through which citizens can send complaints, messages and requests to the president. A juvenile court has accepted the indictment against the child, who was born in 2009.

According to the newspaper report, the background to the complaint filed with CIMER by Erdoğan supporters is a statement made by the child in a group chat on WhatsApp.

During questioning by the public prosecutor, he denied all accusations. It is unclear which concrete statement of the child, according to the prosecution, should correspond to the criminal offence of insulting the president.

The public prosecutor's office also had an expert opinion drawn up in order to rule out any restriction of the child's capacity to act. According to the report by Istanbul's forensic medicine department, the child has "no developmental deficits" and is capable of "assessing the legal significance of his actions and classifying the necessary consequences". It is not known when the trial will take place.

Depending on the severity of the case, insulting the president of Turkey can result in up to four years in prison, and that includes children. This is based on Article 299 of the Turkish Penal Code. In Turkey, the age of criminal responsibility is 13 - and even at that age, one can expect a prison sentence for allegedly insulting Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In 2022, according to statistics from the Turkish Ministry of Justice, 1075 minors were sued for violations of Article 299. The vast majority of those involved were between 15 and 17 years old at the time, but 53 charges involved children between 12 and 14 years old. In total, 16,753 people stood trial on charges of insulting the president in Turkey last year.

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## Police take six people into custody in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 1 MAY 2023

The members of the Struggle Union Platform and the İnşaat İş ve Enerji Sen trade union (part of the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions - DİSK), who wanted to march to Taksim in Istanbul to celebrate International Workers' Day were attacked by the police.

The Struggle Union Platform members marched from Elmadağ to Taksim chanting slogans such as "Long live May 1", "Biji Yek Gulan". Two people from the group were detained.

İnşaat İş ve Enerji Sen members also tried to march to Taksim Square but. Police attacked them and detained at least 4 people.

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## Street musicians protest ban on singing in Kurdish

ANF | ISTANBUL | 1 MAY 2023

Street musicians, who were prevented from singing after the bombing on Istiklal Street in Taksim, in Istanbul, on 13 November 2022, gathered in front of the French Consulate.

Police attacked the street musicians singing in Kurdish who wanted to protest the ban on Istiklal Street and forced them out of the area.

A woman passing in front of the consulate reacted by asking whether it was forbidden to sing or make art.

"They are attacking us because we are Kurds and because we sing our songs in Kurdish," the musicians said.

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## RSF Turkey demands prosecution of police officers who tortured journalists

ANF | ISTANBUL | 1 MAY 2023

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) – Turkey called for the prosecution of the police officers who tortured Mesopotamia Agency (MA) editor Sedat Yılmaz and Evrensel Newspaper journalist Eylem Nazlıer while in custody.

RSF Turkey representative Erol Önderoğlu demanded that the police officers who tortured journalists be identified and prosecuted and said "Keeping people handcuffed while in custody for 15 hours amounts to torture. We want the security guards who harassed Eylem Nazlıer in Istanbul and kicked journalist Sedat Yılmaz in the head in Ankara, to be identified and prosecuted."

### Journalists exposed to torture

Sedat Yılmaz, editor of the Mesopotamia Agency (MA) stated that the police officers tortured him, and that he had hearing loss because he was kicked in the head.

Journalists Eylem Nazlıer, Pınar Gayip, Serpil Ünal, Yadigar Aygün, Esra Soybir and Zeynep Kuray, were taken into custody in Kadıköy while trying to protest the arrest of their colleagues. After their release, Nazlıer said: "They put on reverse handcuffs. When I said they couldn't wear reverse handcuffs, the police told me 'You will learn to shut up' and threw me into their vehicle. Later, they brought Serpil Ünal to the detention vehicle. The police started slapping and punching me in the face."

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## Number of detainees in Istanbul-based operation rises to 32

ANF | ISTANBUL | 2 MAY 2023

Turkish police carried out dawn raids in six cities early this morning in the scope of an investigation launched by Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, in which 39 people face a detention warrant.

32 people have been taken into custody during the raids so far, including administrators and members of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party) Youth Assembly. The detainees, accused of "being members of a terrorist organization", have been taken to the Istanbul provincial police department.

The detainees are subject to a ban on access to lawyers for 24 hours and their file to a confidentiality order.

## Hundreds detained before elections

The police raids took place less than two weeks before the May 14 elections.

Hundreds of people were detained last week. On April 30, 23 people including ESP Co-Chair Şahin Tümüklü, ETHA news agency editor Nadiye Gürbüz, members of the Socialist Youth Associations Federation (SGDF), Green Left Party MP candidate Burcu Ayyıldız, Müslüm Koyun and Meryem Yıldırım were detained in Istanbul and Eskişehir based police operations in 8 provinces as part of two separate files.

As part of an investigation launched by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office that targeted 49 people, police raids took place in 15 provinces on April 29. In these police raids, Dicle Müftüoğlu, co-chair of the Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG), Sedat Yılmaz, an editor of the Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) and his wife Selma Yılmaz, and Sedat Yılmaz's sister Filiz Yılmaz were detained in Amed and Istanbul and taken to Ankara.

The detentions came after the Amed-based simultaneous operations that took place in 21 provinces on April 25. Detention warrants had been issued for more than 200 people, and 128 of them were detained. Numerous people, including journalists and lawyers, were then imprisoned.

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## Damascus embargo jeopardizes people's lives in Shehba

ANF | SHEHBA | 2 MAY 2023

Due to the embargo against the Shehba Canton imposed by the Damascus government for more than 9 months, fuel has run short and public services, mainly generators providing electricity, have been halted and countless problems have emerged in all areas of life.

The Environmental and Regional Administration of Afrin and Shehba Canton announced on April 27 that they would reduce the hours of electricity and water supply as fuel has run short. One day after the announcement, electricity was completely cut off.

### A dangerous situation

Most of the power lines were damaged by the mercenary groups controlling the region. 76 diesel generators were therefore installed to provide electricity in villages and the refugee camps in the region.

Speaking to ANHA, Mihemed Şêxo, Co-Chair of the Environmental and Regional Administration of Afrin and Shehba Canton, warned that the embargo posed a danger to the lives of citizens in the region. Şêxo added that water supplies and bakeries may also be stopped in the near future.

According to Şêxo, if the embargo continues, the service of 174 vehicles that distribute water and drinking water to citizens may be halted.

Waste collection vehicles that used to serve twice a week now collect garbage once a week due to lack of fuel. Waste collection may soon be halted, too.

This situation poses a threat to the environment and health of citizens with the arrival of summer and lack of water, very likely to spread diseases such as cholera among the people of the region.

## 2023 projects suspended

Şêxo revealed that they have not launched their 2023 projects so far due to the embargo.

The Environmental and Regional Administration of Afrin and Shehba Canton was planning to introduce several projects to improve the service quality in the canton. These projects included digging water wells, repairing ruins, constructing sewer systems and increasing the number of diesel generators.



## Swedish intellectuals: We fear that the new law will affect the Kurds

ANF | 2 MAY 2023

A new draft bill will be debated tomorrow (May 3) in Sweden. In an op-ed published by Aftonbladet, Swedish writers and intellectuals reacted to the draft bill, stating the following:

“After Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, Sweden and Finland applied for membership of the NATO defence alliance.

To our horror, the last two Swedish governments have taken a series of measures to satisfy Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has a firm grip on all legislative, judicial and executive powers.

Unfortunately, the list of Swedish foreign policy concessions is getting longer and longer.

During the NATO summit in Madrid in June 2022, Sweden and Finland pledged in a memorandum to "combat disinformation and prevent the misuse of domestic legislation for the benefit or promotion of terrorist organisations".

At the end of September, the Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP) reauthorised the export of Swedish products as military equipment to Turkey, which has a history of warfare with its neighbours.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson visited Erdogan's palace in Ankara last autumn and gave glory to a despot.

Days before the Prime Minister's visit, Foreign Minister Tobias Billström had distanced himself from the Kurdish freedom organisations People's Defence Units (YPG) and the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syrian Kurdistan, which have successfully fought the world's most dangerous terrorist movement, Daesh/IS, on the ground.

The recent deportation of two Kurds via Arlanda airport to Turkey was met with surprise and shock in the West. On Swedish Radio's 'Konflikt', several prominent Western jurists emphasised that the expulsion of Kurds in need of protection is unlawful.

In addition, the government's chief negotiator has made various statements criticising people with a Kurdish background.

But the more the government has given in, the more Erdogan has insulted Sweden and demanded more concessions.

Erdogan's rhetoric has made it sound like Sweden is a province of Turkey, and the president is using the Turkish veto in NATO to further increase the oppression of Kurds.

After the doll hanging and Koran burning, he has again used aggressive rhetoric against Sweden. The number of people he wants extradited from Sweden to Turkey has now increased again - from 33 to 130.

And despite the fact that Sweden has a well-functioning terrorism law, the government now even wants to restrict Swedish freedom of association.

Tomorrow, 3 May, the Swedish Parliament is expected to make it a criminal offence to "provide equipment, organise activities and provide transport for a terrorist organisation".

The government wants the law to be adopted despite the Legislative Council rejecting it because there is "a clear risk that the law will entail an excessively far-reaching criminalisation given the need that may exist".

We are concerned about the rule of law in Sweden. We fear that the new law will affect Kurds and Swedish-Kurdish associations that are primarily concerned with culture and language - civil rights that Turkey has suppressed for almost a hundred years.

Swedish-Kurds have previously been subjected to ruthless hunting in connection with the murder of Olof Palme, while there is evidence that the Turkish spy organisation MIT spoilt the murder investigation by planting the PKK red herring.

A similar agitation today would damage the rule of law in Sweden and the Swedish nation for a long time to come. We appeal to all members of parliament in Sweden: Think again when you, as an elected representative, press the button tomorrow."

The names of the intellectuals endorsing the op-ed are as follows:

Kurdo Baksi, author; Selma Brodrej, journalist; Anita D'Orazio, asylum counsellor; Göran Eriksson, former director of ABF Stockholm; Göran Greider, writer, editor-in-chief of the newspaper Dala-

Demokraten; Thomas Hammarberg, writer, former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights; Olof Kleberg, former editor-in-chief of Västernorrlands-Kuriren; Anita Klum, former Secretary General of Amnesty International; Anders Kompass, former ambassador and human rights representative for the UN; Arne Ruth, former editor-in-chief of Dagens Nyheter; Pierre Schori, former Minister for Migration Affairs and UN Ambassador; Olle Svenning, author; Gunilla Thorgren, author

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## General Elections in Turkey

Şenyaşar: We trust our will

ANF | URFA | 25 APRIL 2023

Election work continues in Turkey and all over North Kurdistan, where the Green Left Party is opening election offices, holding public meetings and canvassing.

The Green Left Party opened an election office in Urfa (Riha). Thousands of people attended the opening, as well as members of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), Free Women's Movement (TJA), Peace Mothers' Assembly.

**'We represent all peoples'**

Green Left Party Urfa candidate Ayşe Tutku said that they are heading towards a historic election and added: "We have been under a dictatorship, a fascist and cruel government. The Green Left Party will defeat this regime on 14 May and put an end to this persecution."

Tutku said: "We will be the voice of all peoples."

**'We trust our will'**

Ferit Şenyaşar, also a candidate of the Green Left Party in Urfa, said: "There is a general injustice in Turkey. The center of injustice is now Urfa. We have been fighting for justice against this injustice for 5 years, and for 2 years I have been holding a vigil every day together with my mother in front of the Urfa Court-house. The whole of Turkey is following this struggle. Our struggle is also on the agenda in the world press. The Minister of Justice Bekir Bozdağ, who caused this injustice, was nominated in Urfa by the order of the President. The people of Urfa will give the necessary answer on 14 May. We are strong and we trust our will."

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## HDP: Government directly interfering in the elections through the police and the judiciary

ANF | ANKARA | 25 APRIL 2023

The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Executive Committee issued a statement on the mass detentions in Turkey this morning, saying: "The AKP/MHP government is facing the biggest electoral defeat in its history and continues to attack our party, civil society organisations, social dynamics and the opposition out of panic and fear. In the attack carried out via the judiciary in the morning hours in 21 provinces centred in Diyarbakır [ku. Amed], more than 100 people were detained, including our deputy co-chair Özlem Gündüz, our Central Executive Board (MYK) member Mahfuz Güteryüz, other party members, journalists, lawyers and artists."

### A new political coup attempt

Regarding the background of the operation, the HDP executive board said: "We and society know the reason for this attack, which was carried out by the AKP government, and the judiciary led by it. The government has been trying to prolong its life with political coups, massacres, black propaganda, special war methods, threats, blackmail and all kinds of attacks since 2015. With this morning's wave of detentions, it has launched a new coup attempt ahead of the May 14 elections. The operation is directed against the will of the electorate and an open intimidation and threat to society and its political preferences."

The statement continued: "It is not a coincidence that lawyers who will protect the ballot boxes and fight against illegality, media workers who will inform the public and politicians who fight against the AKP on the ground are taken into custody at the same time. The ruling party first led the gangs and the mafia it nurtured and raised into the field and made them threaten society in ISIS style, and now it is directly interfering in the elections through the police and the judiciary. The judiciary and the police, who have not taken action against the gangs that openly threaten beheadings in the streets and pressure our voters with their children, have interfered in the election campaign of AKP and MHP."

### The government will disappear from the political stage

"The AKP/MHP government, which becomes aggressive when it loses and loses when it becomes aggressive, will not be able to escape the fate that awaits it. These attacks are the AKP's last battles. They are futile efforts that will never lead to results. Our people and all social groups whose will is threatened will give the biggest answer to these attacks at the ballot boxes. The AKP will not be able to reverse the course of history with this operation, on the contrary, it will disappear from the political stage with the will of the people and never return," said the statement.

"We call on all those who want to put an end to this order of threats and blackmail, who show the will to come to terms with the illegitimacy that has been practised for years, to take an open stand against these attacks. In the place of every person detained, we call on thousands and tens of thousands of people to take responsibility and participate in the electoral campaign, protect the ballot boxes and actively fight against the coup. We are here and we will surely win!"



## ‘Elections are a historic opportunity to shape our future’

ANF | 26 APRIL 2023

Kurdish politicians in exile spoke to ANF about the elections to be held on May 14 and called on voters to go to the polls.

### Every patriot should work with candidates

**Former Mayor of Ağrı, Hüseyin Yılmaz:** I would like to convey our love and respect to our people. In every election period, candidates may not be the most popular ones. But we are going through a difficult process. The people of Ağrı played their part in the past, and I believe they will play their part in this election as well. Candidates should never be discussed. Since it is a matter of life and death, every Kurdish person who has faith, conscience and integrity should work with the candidates during the election campaign. We should be concerned about how we can increase our votes. This is what it means to be a patriot.

### We are in a position to get rid of the fascist system

**Former Co-Mayor of Van-İpekyolu, Veysel Keser:** As you know, Turkey will start its second century with this election. It is a chance to see whether voters will support a totalitarian, anti-democratic and denialist fascist regime, or opt for a system that is democratic and respects human rights and freedoms in Turkey. This election is crucial for our people, who have been subjected to massacres, oppression and violence in every field. As you can see, there is every form of crackdown against Kurdish politicians and activists. Our municipalities have been usurped by the government; many Kurdish politicians have been arrested. All the achievements of the Kurdish people have been attacked. Prosecutors demand life sentences for many Kurdish politicians in the Kobanê trial. There is an attempt to eliminate the achievements of the Kurdish people, and the government wants to pursue the same policies in 2023. The elections on May 14 are very important because the Kurds can promote their honour, will and direction in the second century of the republic. The Kurds play a key role in the development of democracy and fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey. In a sense, the Green Left Party will save the republic. The Kurds can save the country from the current fascist system. We urge our people to support our party and its election campaign.”

### Elections will affect our lives fundamentally

**Former Mayor of Batman, Nejdet Atalay:** Turkey will either head towards darkness and backsliding, or towards democracy and freedom. It will be a matter to life and death. Political parties have already revealed their policies and positions. Either darkness or light. Either freedom or non-freedom. Either backsliding or progress. Either democracy or a monist, authoritarian regime. This is important for all peoples. It is important for the Kurds, Turks, Bosnians, Armenians, other minority groups and beliefs. In this respect, we are all at a crossroads. The elections will affect our lives fundamentally. For these reasons, we can say that turnout at elections will be a record high in the history of the republic. I hope that everyone will vote for enlightenment, democracy and progress. The Kurdish people want to destroy fascism. This is the most

dominant feeling in Batman and Diyarbakır. They want to get rid of this darkness. They want to reflect their choice at the ballot box at the maximum rate. I call on all Kurdish voters, democrats, the Turks and the Arabs to vote in favour of the Green Left Party."

### **Kurds hold the key to Turkey's new century**

**CDK-F Co-Chair Abdullah Ülmez:** There will be a historic election in Turkey. Maybe it will be an election that will shape the next century. It will show that the Kurds are a key political actor in Turkey. In this respect, it is a very important election. The centenary of the republic is also the centenary of the Kurdish denial and the Kurdish genocide policy. The Kurds are determined to change this history. In this sense, it is of great importance to the Kurds. We have no doubt that the people of Amed, my hometown, will do their part in the elections. The election campaign there and the enthusiasm of the people give us hope. In this respect, the Green Left Party will win all 12 seats in Amed.

### **We must defeat this fascist government**

**Former Co-Mayor of Hınıs, Hasan Basri Fırat:** On May 14, there will be a very important election for us, the Kurds. The Kurds living in Turkey and in Europe must go to the polls and vote for the Green Left Party. If the Erdogan-Bahçeli mentality comes to power again, they will eliminate all Kurdish achievements. The Kurds should not forget this. This government has imprisoned politicians that represent our political will. It appointed trustees to our municipalities. It has promised to destroy all our achievements. It has deceived the Kurds in the name of Islam. This government is hostile to the Kurds. Everyone should consider this. This election is very important for the Kurds. May 14 is an opportunity for us. We must defeat this fascist government for our rights, justice and freedom. Let's not just vote, let's also encourage others to vote.

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## **Green Left Party Kocaeli candidate arrested**

ANF - 27 APRIL 2023

Ayten Dönmez, the Kocaeli candidate of the Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party), was taken into custody on Wednesday morning.

On Wednesday night, the party candidate was sent to prison.

This detention coincided with the political genocide operations targeting Kurds in 21 cities, including Amed, carried out on 25 April.

At least 126 people, mostly journalists, artists, lawyers, politicians, trade unionists and members of civil society, were detained.

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## Overseas voting for Turkey's presidential and parliamentary elections begins

ANF | BERLIN | 27 APRIL 2023

Overseas voting has begun today and will continue until May 9 at representations in foreign countries. Voters may also cast their votes at customs stations until May 14.

### About 3 million 500 thousand registered voters

According to the Supreme Election Board, 4,671 ballot boxes have been set up at customs stations for overseas voters.

3,416,98 people are expected to cast their votes abroad, including 277,646 first-time voters.

Voting at foreign representative offices will be possible between 09.00 and 21.00 local time on weekdays and weekends, and between 09.00 and 18.00 in cities where there are consulate generals.

### Most voters are in Germany

According to Supreme Election Board data, the highest number of voters is in Germany with 1,501,152 voters. Germany is followed by France with 397,086 voters and the Netherlands with 286,753 voters.

### Voting begins in Berlin

Voters gathered in the early hours of the morning in front of the Turkish Consulate in Berlin and began to cast their votes.

According to the Labour and Freedom Alliance Berlin Coordination, voters will be taken to the polls between April 27 and May 9 by 46 vehicles from the election offices of the alliance in Wedding, Kreuzberg and Neukölln.

In Berlin, votes will be cast at 10 ballot boxes on weekdays and 12 ballot boxes on weekends. Those from the surrounding cities will be transported to the polls in Berlin. 220 observers will take care of election safety in Berlin on behalf of the Green Left Party.

## Labour and Freedom Alliance backs Kılıçdaroğlu in presidential elections

ANF | 28 APRIL 2023

The Labour and Freedom Alliance issued a written statement concerning the parliamentary and presidential elections on May 14.

Below is the full statement published on Friday:

"Turkey is going to the polls for the most important election in its history amid multiple crises. The tradition of the peoples of Turkey and the oppressed has always organized the resistance and victory against authoritarian and fascist administrations.

As is known, as the revolutionary, democrat and oppressed peoples of Turkey, we have formed the Labour and Democracy Alliance. We decided not to field a candidate in the presidential elections and to contest the parliamentary elections under the umbrella of an alliance.

As we have come to a turning point in Turkish politics, we have agreed to fulfil our historical duty to be worthy of our tradition and future generations. In this context, we would like to announce to the public that we will vote for Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu in the presidential elections to be held on May 14, 2023.

However, it should be known that the only way to achieve victory against fascism in the most important election in Turkey's political history is not just to win the presidential election. On the contrary, one of the most important ways to defeat fascism is to secure a parliamentary majority in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. In order to do so, we call on all the peoples of Turkey to vote for the Labour and Freedom Alliance in the 14 May parliamentary election. The only way to represent all the oppressed, ignored, abused and exploited in the parliament is to vote on behalf of the Labour and Freedom Alliance and thus become a voice, power and decision maker in the parliament.

In these key elections, we call on the peoples of Turkey to vote for the Labour and Freedom Alliance in the parliamentary elections and vote for CHP head Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu in the presidential elections.

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## Huge turnout on the first day of voting abroad

ANF | BERLIN | 28 APRIL 2023

Overseas voting at foreign representations and customs stations began on April 27. Long queues were observed outside the polling stations in many countries.

It is reported that voter turnout was higher on the first day than in the previous elections.

According to the data of the Supreme Election Board (YSK), there are 3 million 416 thousand 98 voters abroad.

In total, 5 thousand 40 ballot boxes were set up in representation offices in 73 countries and 156 polling stations. The number of voters who would cast their votes abroad for the first time is said to be 277 thousand 646.

The highest number of voters resides in Germany with 1 million 501 thousand 152 people. Germany is followed by France and the Netherlands.

In the 2018 elections, the turnout in Germany was approximately 45.8 percent, excluding polling stations at customs. Overall turnout abroad remained at 50 percent.

In the 2018 elections, the AKP received 51.02 percent of the overseas votes, the CHP 17.62 percent and the HDP 17.34 percent.

### **Voters turnout soared on first day**

It is reported that the turnout remained high on the first day, especially in Germany and France.

According to data, the turnout stood at 54.50 percent in Germany, 53.62 percent in France, and 40.52 percent in Austria. It is reported that 44 thousand 59 votes were cast on April 27 at the representative offices, apart from polling stations at customs.

### **AKP people harassed voters in Berlin**

In the meantime, AKP supporters harassed voters at the consulate in Berlin with banners that read AKP. Observers from the Green Left Party intervened to prevent AKP members who arrived in front of the consulate with banners that read AKP in their hands from entering the voting booths. Green Left Party members said that they would not allow AKP members to make propaganda at the polling station, and demanded that AKP members be taken outside the station.

### **More than 2,600 votes cast in Berlin on the first day**

According to the information obtained from the Green Left Party Berlin Coordination, 2,657 votes were cast on the first day of the election in Berlin.

## Long queues in Britain as voting begins

DIREN DICLE ERDEN | LONDON | 30 APRIL 2023

In the British cities of London, Manchester, Leicester and Scotland's Edinburgh, tens of thousands of voters from Kurdistan and Turkey went to the polls to cast their vote.

Ballot boxes were set up at London 1 Old Billingsgate Walk. A large crowd waited in a queue to vote since 9 am on Saturday morning.

Voting is possible in 14 places in London.

The turnout in the 2018 elections in Britain was very low, as was the case in the rest of Europe. Only 42.6 percent of the total eligible voters participated in the elections. Within this participation rate, HDP succeeded to emerge as the first party in Britain with 49.2 percent in 2018. In the same elections, the CHP received 24.5 percent and the AKP 18.5 percent.

Thanks to the intensive work of the British Election Coordination and new voter registration, the number of Kurdistan and Turkish voters in the country reached 127,281.

### **The Green Left Party will win with over 50 percent of the votes'**

"This year we want the Green Left Party to win with over 50 percent of the vote," said the British Election Coordination. More than 300 people will take part in the British elections as observers and hall attendants. At the same time, 10 people will be sent from Britain to Ankara on behalf of the Labor and Freedom Alliance as observers.

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## First day of voting in Switzerland

ANF | ZURICH | 30 APRIL 2023

Voting abroad for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey continues. In Switzerland it has been possible to vote since Saturday morning. There are 105,821 registered voters. In the polling stations set up in Geneva, Zurich and Bern, 6,232 people voted on the first day. With the exception of minor incidents, voting went smoothly.

### **Low turnout on the first day**

69,141 voters are registered in Zurich. The voting started twenty minutes late because initially the observers of the participating parties were not admitted. The representatives of the Green Left Party objected to this. Meanwhile, a long queue was waiting at the entrance. In the afternoon, it got quieter.

The Alevi association in Basel transported eligible voters to Zurich in rented buses all day long. In Switzerland, turnout on the first day was lower than expected. The representatives of the Green Left Party assume that it will go better today.

## **One vote for the Green Left Party, one for Kılıçdaroğlu**

Yüksel Koç, co-chair of the Kurdish European Association KCDK-E, was in Switzerland on Saturday and visited all three polling stations.

Koç spoke to ANF about the strategic importance of the elections and called on everyone to cast their vote. "In order to end the massacre and genocide-based policies implemented by the AKP-MHP fascism under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, we call for voting for Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu in the presidential elections and for the Green Left Party in the parliamentary elections. The foreign votes have a great influence in the elections in Turkey and are therefore of strategic importance."

Koç added that MPs in Hakkari, Ankara and Batman were lost in the 2018 elections, because there were too few votes from Europe. In Muş and Kocaeli, on the other hand, one seat in parliament was won thanks to foreign votes. "That's why every single vote is important. A single vote can see Erdoğan voted out. If you want change, you have to vote."

## **"We will strongly be represented in Parliament"**

Among those entitled to vote in Switzerland are many people who live in exile in Turkey due to political persecution. Fatma Şık was co-mayor of the old town district of Sur in Amed and monitored the election process in Geneva.

"Voting is possible for nine days. These elections are very important to us. No one should postpone voting until the last day. We have to vote for the Green Left Party in order to increase the number of our deputies and to have a strong representation in parliament."

## **Provocation by AKP supporters**

In Zurich on Saturday afternoon, AKP supporters provoked voters by making the fascist Gray Wolves symbol with their hands. They were sitting in a car in front of the polling station and shouted "Until death, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan". Since the police intervened immediately, there was no further provocation.

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## **HDP: We will not submit to the electoral coup**

ANF | 30 APRIL 2023

The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) reacted to the mass arrests in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections in Turkey and called for joint resistance against the repression of the Erdogan regime.



The statement of the HDP's Central Executive Council said: "The AKP/MHP government has lost its popular support and social legitimacy and accelerated its political operations just days before the elections."

In the course of the first operation on Tuesday against the Kurdish opposition and civil society, 144 of 216 wanted persons nationwide were detained, and so far 48 arrest warrants have been issued for lawyers, journalists, politicians, activists and artists. On Saturday, in an investigation led by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, the co-chair of the Dicle-Firat Journalists' Association (DFG), Dicle Müftüoğlu, as well as journalist Sedat Yılmaz, correspondent of the MA news agency, and many other people were detained in Amed and other cities. An operation launched today in Istanbul targeted the socialist opposition. Among those detained are the ESP president Şahin Tümüklü, ETHA editor Nadiye Gürbüz and candidates of the Green Left Party (Yeşil Sol Parti) and members of the Federation of Socialist Youth Associations (SGDF) and the Socialist Women's Councils (SKM).

The HDP said: "We have said it before, let us say it again. These waves of arrests are a political coup against the will of the electorate in Turkey." The mass arrests are part of the government's preparations for organised electoral fraud, also affecting opposition journalists who could expose such attempts. The government has involved the police and the judiciary in the election campaign and the security of the elections is seriously endangered.

The judiciary and the law enforcement agencies are committing a crime when they interfere in the elections. Our party and the forces fighting for democracy in Turkey will oppose this coup to the end. We did not submit to the trustee coup, nor will we submit to today's electoral coup. We have the strength and determination to stop these immoral operations of the government and the Minister of Criminal Affairs [Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu]. The government will not be able to escape the looming historic defeat through a coup at the ballot box."

Appealing to all political parties, the opposition and the democratic public, HDP said: "Stand up to this electoral conspiracy! It is about all of us. As long as there is silence against the intimidation attempts, this fascist spiral will expand and hit all sectors. After the local elections of 31 March 2019, the electoral coup will not stay where it started, just as the trustee coup was not confined to our municipalities but became a method and a form of governance. That is why we call on everyone to stand together against this regime of oppression and repression."

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## Turkish fascists provoke voters in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 30 APRIL 2023

The city of Strasbourg is one of the places where people can exercise their right to vote for the General Elections for the Presidential and general elections to be held on 14 May in Turkey. Turkish fascists provoked the people who went to vote by making the "grey wolf" sign and attacking them physically.

While the Strasbourg police did not stop the Turkish racists provoking people in front of the Turkish Consulate, three Kurdish voters who were attacked were detained.

The names of those detained are: Rojhat Öncel, Erhan Aktay, Selim Eroğlu.

DKTM co-chair Fikret Çelik stated that they will not allow fascism to pass and called on all patriots to exercise their right to vote.



## Kurdish teen subjected to racist attack by AKP members at polling station in London

DIREN DICLE ERDEN/EREM KANSOY | LONDON | 1 MAY 2023

AKP members subjected a Kurdish teen to a racist attack because of his Kurdish national dress in London, where Kurds supporting the Green Left Party are heading to the polls with great enthusiasm. Şerwan Tan wore the blue national dress of the Hakkari region and accompanied his father to the polling station at 1 Old Billingsgate Walk.

15-year-old Şerwan Tan's father is from Mardin and his mother is British. The Kurdish teen attracted attention with his national dress. Before entering the polling station, Şerwan Tan spoke to ANF and said: "Vote for the Green Left Party for democracy and freedom in Turkey and all over the world. Women in Turkey are not granted their rights. We need equality for men, women and everyone. More rights for the people in Turkey."

Şerwan Tan was subjected to racist harassment by AKP people after he entered the polling station with his father. Disturbed by Şerwan's national dress, AKP observers asked Şerwan to leave the polling station. Tensions escalated when the AKP group claimed that Şerwan's dress was a guerrilla uniform and called security guards to take him out. Some voters reacted by saying, "This is fascism. You are a fascist." While the Labor and Freedom Alliance officials said that the racist attack was a provocation against election safety, security guards took Şerwan out of the polling station.

### 'They don't tolerate Kurdish clothes'

Şerwan Tan said: "They threw me out because of my clothes. Those who did this are fascist people, who claimed that my dress was a 'uniform'. My dress is not a 'uniform', it is just Kurdish national dress, and my culture. My family and people from Kurdistan wear it. We didn't cause any trouble here. My father came here to vote, so I wanted to come wearing my national clothes, but they kicked me out. These are fascist people. They are not good people for Turkey. That's why we vote for the Green Left Party."

## Lawyer Özçelik: A racist and fascist attack

Sibel Özçelik, a member of the British Election Coordination of the Green Left Party, reacted to the racist attack at the polling station. She emphasized that there was no dress code in the area, adding: "What Şerwan was subjected to is racism and fascism. Unfortunately, discrimination in Turkey has come here. This is fascism and a crime."

The lawyer said that Şerwan's outfit was national dress. She said: "Symbols that represent different beliefs and views are seen at the polling station and we respect that. This is a requirement of democracy. However, AKP members said that Şerwan's outfit was a 'guerrilla uniform' and asked him to leave the polling station. This is an illegal request because he was discriminated against because of his dress. This is complete discrimination. The person we are talking about is a 15-year-old teenager. This is pure fascism."

The lawyer concluded: "It is time to unite against fascism. Don't say that a single vote does nothing. It is exactly your vote that will allow Şerwan to come here freely. Let's fight together more for Şerwan's free future."



## Political genocide operation against HDK, HDP and Green Left Party in Istanbul

ANF | 2 MAY 2023

Police raids took place in many districts of Istanbul, mainly in Başakşehir, Esenyurt, Arnavutköy and Küçükçekmece, as part of an investigation launched by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

At least 17 people, including members and administrators of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party) Youth Assembly were detained during the police raids on Tuesday morning.

A 24-hour ban on access to lawyers has been imposed on the detainees who were taken to the Istanbul Police Department on Vatan Street. Since there is a confidentiality order on the file, the reason for the detentions could not be learned.

### Hundreds of detentions a week before elections

The police raids took place less than two weeks before the May 14 elections.

Hundreds of people were detained last week. On April 30, 23 people including ESP Co-Chair Şahin Tümüklü, ETHA news agency editor Nadiye Gürbüz, members of the Socialist Youth Associations Feder-

ation (SGDF), Green Left Party MP candidate Burcu Ayyıldız, Müslüm Koyun and Meryem Yıldırım were detained in Istanbul and Eskişehir based police operations in 8 provinces as part of two separate files.

As part of an investigation launched by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office that targeted 49 people, police raids took place in 15 provinces on April 29. In these police raids, Dicle Müftüoğlu, co-chair of the Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG), Sedat Yılmaz, an editor of the Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) and his wife Selma Yılmaz, and Sedat Yılmaz's sister Filiz Yılmaz were detained in Amed and Istanbul and taken to Ankara.

The detentions came after the Amed-based simultaneous operations that took place in 21 provinces on April 25. Detention warrants had been issued for more than 200 people, and 128 of them were detained. Numerous people, including journalists and lawyers, were then imprisoned.

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## Erdogan's election campaign photo protected by the police in Van

ANF | VAN | 2 MAY 2023

Security measures have been tightened in the province of Van before the rally to be held by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the city on May 5. All public institutions are preparing for Erdogan's rally.

As part of the preparations for the rally, AKP Van Provincial Party Administration, Van Governorate and trustee municipality took action to hang a giant banner with a photo of Erdoğan and AKP's campaign slogan "Right time, Right man" on the Maraş Street, which is the busiest street in the city and will be used by Erdoğan on the day of the rally. After failing to find a suitable place, the officials eventually found an empty wall to hang a giant poster of Erdoğan, facing objections from the owner of the building, the residents and the shopkeepers.

The AKP and the Governor's Office deployed police officers in front of the building in question, and the banner was forcibly hanged. Shopkeepers and building residents were threatened by the police, saying, "You will be prosecuted for insulting the President". The citizens filed a complaint, which was rejected by the Prosecutor's Office, arguing that "It is legal to hang this banner before the arrival of the President."

The banner was hung about 3 days ago and remains under police protection for 24 hours a day.

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## 'The defeat of the AKP will offer the opportunity for a solution to the Kurdish question'

ANF | 2 MAY 2023

There are less than two weeks to go until Turkey's presidential and parliamentary elections on 14 May. The main party of the democratic opposition is the Green Left Party. The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) is threatened with a ban and therefore supports the Green Left Party in the parliamentary elections. Every vote is crucial in the upcoming elections. Publisher, journalist, author, HDP Honorary Chair and Honorary Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, spoke to ANF about the upcoming elections.

Kürkçü underlined the strategic importance of the elections, which, he said, are crucial "because either we will stop the attempt to establish a fascist dictatorship, or it will continue in that direction." He stated: "We must not allow a defeat. We must win this struggle because after 2015-2016, i.e. after the great success of the HDP, we not only stopped the systematic crackdown on the Kurdish people, democracy and democratic forces in Turkey, but also reversed it. This election represents for us the decisive opportunity to oust Tayyip Erdoğan and his accomplices, the alliance of AKP, MHP and Ergenekon."

### "A new time for a solution to the Kurdish question"

The politician stressed that the defeat of the AKP will offer the opportunity for a solution to the Kurdish question and continued: "At the moment, the balance has shifted in favour of the opposition and against the government. We are in the run-up to the election. I would like to point out that there will not be social and economic changes in Turkey immediately after the election. But the one-man regime will lose its legitimacy. This will give the Kurdish people, the democratic forces, the poor, the labourers and all social groups fighting for their rights the opportunity to raise their voices more freely, in a more organised way and in solidarity. The regime has its limits. The most important thing we expect from this election is the opening of a new era of struggle. It is about finding new interlocutors for a solution to the Kurdish question, starting a new process, having a stronger voice in parliament and being a decisive actor in the legislative process and in new constitutional initiatives. We are fighting for new and more favourable conditions for the struggle. Liberation depends on the results of this struggle. Now we have to make the turning point."

### "The attempts to disrupt the election process will fail"

The HDP Honorary Chair warned that the AKP wants to disrupt the election campaign and process. "However, these attempts will fail in the face of the people's will. When it comes to tyranny, it may seem more advantageous in the short term to rely on the state, the army, the police, the secret services, the gendarmerie, the paramilitaries, the night-watchmen and the street gangs. Ultimately, however, the regime will be concerned with disrupting the electoral process through such circles. The people expect and fear this. Our biggest advantage is that the determination for a change of hegemony is on our side. But it is also not easy for the weakened regime, which is in the process of disintegration, to muster the will to direct its fragmented structure towards destructive activities. If our people show that they are not afraid, if

they show a strong attitude, if they protect the ballot boxes, if they stand boldly in the polling stations, if they do not remain silent, if they do not bend, then the regime's dreams of silencing the people through violence will be shattered. The regime is in disintegration, its courage is broken, its strength is not enough to stand against the tide of the people. We saw the same story in Brazil a few months ago. In Brazil, the word was that Bolsonaro would not relinquish power even in the face of the strengthening of Lula's Workers' Party, that he would do something on the last day, that the army would seize power. But the people remained steadfast.

### **"The people will defend their dignity against the tyrant"**

I think that Tayyip Erdoğan's silence in the face of the situation is not due to his strength or because he has the power to do such a thing, but on the contrary, he is silent in order to prevent the opposition forces from standing close together and being strong and united, and to reduce the force of the struggle. Because if the tempo increases, it is inevitable that the opposition will unite, and the determination of the people will increase. If we look at the current situation, we can see that even the opening of polling stations is a much stronger expression of will than the rallies organised by the government with all its resources in big cities. From this point of view, I think we should have a ten-point lead in the elections. No force can stand against a ten-point lead. That is why pressure continues to be built. It is enough if we participate in the elections on 14 May with great strength, monitor the polling stations, do not let the polling stations out of our sight for a moment and thus protect the votes. Any intervention beyond this would not only be a matter of the Green Left Party or the Labour and Freedom Alliance, but a matter of Turkey. The people of Turkey will defend their dignity against the tyrant. I trust that our people will protect their pride, their dignity and their voices. The voice of the people has the greatest importance in Turkey. The people will not entrust it to anyone."

### **"Fascism will be overthrown"**

Appealing to eligible voters in Europe, Kürkçü said: "Every vote for the Green Left Party in Europe will bring the overthrow of fascism and the opening of Turkey's gates. The HDP won two more parliamentary seats thanks to the votes from Europe. There are almost three million eligible voters in Europe. Most of them do not support the ruling party. But the complacency or indifference of the opposition to the individual vote mobilises the power of the people abroad for the dictatorship. We must reverse this. With every vote we lay another stone on the road to the overthrow of fascism. How can an anti-fascist, a democrat, a Kurd refrain from continuing to build this path? Our peoples must go to the polls with the determination to stand up for freedom. I would like to give an example: all our voters in Europe are as many as those in the third constituency of Istanbul. We had six MPs from there before, now we are aiming for seven or eight. With the support of Europe, we can double that number. A strong parliament, a strong Green Left Party group in parliament means we will have the power to make laws. It means opening the doors between Europe and Turkey. It will be our contribution to Turkey's freedom. With love, respect and esteem, I call on everyone to cast their vote to put an end to the dictatorship."

# May Day

## KCK celebrates May Day : We call on everyone to destroy the AKP-MHP alliance

ANF | 29 APRIL 2023

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement calling on everyone to welcome May Day strongly with feelings of unity and solidarity, to support the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' and the Green Left Party in the elections and to thus destroy the fascist AKP-MHP alliance.

The KCK statement released on Saturday includes the following:

“We would like to congratulate everybody on May Day, the day of labor, solidarity and struggle of all peoples, especially the working class, women and the oppressed. May 1 is a historical day. It is celebrated as the result of great sacrifices and struggles. In this sense, May Day is both a day of celebration for the working class, laborers and the oppressed, as well as a day of resistance and struggle. On this occasion, we would like to commemorate once again all the martyrs of revolution and democracy in the person of the May Day martyrs and reiterate our promise of resistance, struggle and success to the martyrs.

The struggle of the working class and laborers against the capitalist system of exploitation has an important place in human history. Their struggle for equality, freedom and democracy has developed as a continuation of the historical struggle of humanity and has left a great legacy for humanity. The struggle of the working class, which developed based on the ideal of a socialist life, has made important contributions to the whole of humanity in terms of raising the consciousness of society against inequality and exploitation, enlightening it and giving it a combative character. In this respect, the struggle of the working class has taken its place in history among the struggles for equality and freedom, which have achieved a universal character and brought about developments accordingly.

The ideals put forward by May Day, which express the quest for equality and freedom of the working class, laborers, women and oppressed peoples, have not lost any of their meaning today. Today, the intensification of exploitation due to capitalist modernity, the deepening of inequality, the plunder and destruction of nature, and the further development of the order of poverty, war and massacre have made the ideal of an equal and free world without exploitation represented by May Day and the struggle for these ideals even more important. Therefore, it is very important to celebrate May Day in a strong way, to embrace these values and to increase the struggle to make them livable. Today, this is needed more than ever.

The Kurdistan revolution and the struggle of the Kurdish people, from its beginnings to the present day, stand for the practical realization of the aspirations of the working class, laborers, women and oppressed

peoples for equality and freedom. Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] has made great efforts for the development of the struggle for socialism. He has demonstrated this by creating the PKK movement and thus launching the struggle against colonialism.

The most important feature of May Day is the development of unity and solidarity. Only through unity and solidarity can the oppressed succeed in their struggle against exploitation. Strengthening the unity and solidarity of those struggling against the exploitative order is crucial for the success of the struggle for equality and freedom. For this reason, the historical leaders of the working class have always emphasized the importance of unity and solidarity and have made strong efforts to promote them. Today, unity and solidarity are needed more than ever against the increasing exploitation of capitalist modernity. The leaders of the socialist movement in Turkey have demonstrated this with their attitudes. Leader Apo has also made great efforts to ensure the solidarity and common struggle of the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey by continuing the attitude of solidarity put forward by Deniz, Mahir and Ibrahim. Our movement attaches great importance to and strives for the solidarity of the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom with the struggle of the peoples of Turkey and the working class, as well as to the coming together of the peoples of the Middle East based on a consciousness of common struggle.

The 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' formed by the Kurdish people and the revolutionary and democratic forces of Turkey is a very important step towards unity and solidarity. At a time when Turkey is going through crucial elections, it is an important achievement that the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey have united as the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' against the fascist AKP-MHP government, which is the representative of the exploitation order. Therefore, everyone who is in favor of democracy, freedom, equality and justice should make an effort for the Labor and Freedom Alliance and the Green Left Party to come out strong in the elections. It is important to protect the legacy of revolutionaries like Deniz, Ibrahim, Mahir and the struggle for socialism, especially the memory of those who were martyred on May Day 1977. To act based on these feelings and thoughts means also to fulfill the demands of Leader Apo.

With feelings of unity and solidarity, we would like to once again congratulate all working people, especially the working class, oppressed peoples and women, on May Day. We call on everyone to welcome May Day strongly with feelings of unity and solidarity, to support the 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' and the Green Left Party in the elections and to thus destroy the fascist AKP-MHP alliance."

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## Tens of thousands celebrate May Day in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 1 MAY 2023

The May Day rally in Istanbul this year is organized by the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DİSK), the Confederation of Public Workers' Unions (KESK), the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), the Dentists' Association (TDB) and the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) under the motto "Labour is our future". The May Day rally is taking place on the eve of the 14 May elections.



From the early hours of the morning, masses gathered in many parts of the city to march towards Maltepe Square, where a rally is being held.

Numerous political parties and non-governmental organizations also support the rally.

Before the march, 10 Partizan magazine readers were detained on the grounds that they were carrying Ibrahim Kaypakkaya banners.

People often chanted the slogans "Biji berxwedana zindana" [Long live the prison resistance) and "Repression cannot intimidate us".

The Peace Mothers are attending the rally in their colourful traditional clothes.

The Labour and Freedom Alliance is attending the rally with the banner "We will change together".

The Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), the Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party) Istanbul Youth Assembly, the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), the United Forces of Struggle (BMG), the Socialist Assemblies Federation (SMF), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Pervin Buldan are also attending the rally.

The Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), whose members were detained and jailed in police raids on April 25, is attending the rally with banners reading "Release our arrested friends" and "The defence cannot be silenced, the ÖHD cannot be silenced".

The Student Activity marched with the photos of murdered activists, such as Deniz Poyraz, Kemal Kurkut and Tahir Elçi.

Masses entered the rally area after the police search. Hundreds of journalists were also checked at checkpoints.

The 'Yeni Yaşam' and 'Oksijen' newspapers were confiscated by the police without justification.

Victims of the earthquakes that devastated 11 cities on February 6, were commemorated. Slogans were chanted frequently, saying that the government would be held accountable for the heavy consequences of the disaster.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Pervin Buldan and members of the Peace Mothers Assembly entered the square chanting the slogan "Jin, Jiyan, Azadi" (Woman, Life, Freedom).

Slogans were chanted and banners were displayed in the rally area protesting the aggravated isolation of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) attended the rally under the slogan "Break the isolation inside and outside" to protest the isolation practice in Turkey's prisons.

Many young people chanted slogans in favour of Öcalan.

The invasion attacks of the Turkish state against South Kurdistan were also protested in the rally area.

Hundreds of thousands of people flocked to the area, chanting the slogan "No to war, peace right now".

The rally started with a moment of silence for those who lost their lives in the struggle for democracy and freedom. The rally will continue with various events.

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## PKK calls for enhanced struggle on May Day and May 14 to overthrow the AKP-MHP fascism

ANF | BEHDINAN | 1 MAY 2023

The Executive Committee of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) released a statement marking the international working-class' struggle day and recommending voting for the Alliance for Labour and Freedom. The PKK pointed out that it is of great importance to vote for the forces of democracy on 14 May in order to give a final defeat to the fascist dictatorship of the AKP/MHP regime.

The PKK statement on May Day includes the following:

"At a critical juncture in history, we welcome a new May Day. On our day of unity, solidarity and struggle, we fill the squares and raise our resistance for freedom and democracy. With respect and gratitude, we remember the victims of the 1977 Taksim Massacre, our comrades Mehmet Karasungur and Ramazan Kaplan, both of whom were members of our Central Committee, and all the other martyrs of May Day. We salute the historic resistance in İmralı and Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan), our people and our companions and friends who are fighting in the jails, on the streets and in the mountains. We believe that this May Day will mark a new beginning in the struggle for a free Kurdistan and a democratic Turkey.

It is obvious that this May Day has significant differences from the previous ones. It seems like a rehearsal for the collapse of AKP/MHP fascism on 14 May, which will start the process of collapse of the AKP-MHP fascism.

The fall of AKP and MHP fascism is undoubtedly of great importance for Kurdistan, Turkey, the Middle East and the rest of the world, since the fall of this fascism will pave the way for Kurdish liberation and the democratic Turkey, and will lead to the overcoming of the institutionalized, fascist, colonialist and genocidal mentality and politics of the 'Committee for Unity and Progress' [İttihat ve Terakki, a political organization in the Ottoman Empire and the driving force behind the genocide of Armenians]. The hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Turkish Republic will be marked by Kurdish freedom and Turkey's democratization. On the basis of freedom for the Kurds, women and faiths, Turkey will become a country of freedoms and democracy. A democratic Turkey will open the gateway to the democratisation of the Middle East and thus take the freedom march of humanity globally a big step forward.

In order to prevent this uprising, to help fascism to another term and more power, reactionary forces at global, regional and national level, and Kurdish traitors support the AKP/MHP regime. On this basis, the AKP/MHP fascism exploits all possibilities of Turkey and resorts to any form of repression, manipulation and schemes in order to remain in power. As if they have not been in power for 21 years, they make one false election promise after another and deceive the public. As if the country is his family property, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan accuses all who oppose his rule of being 'traitors'. He uses all kinds of methods, from buying against payment to threats and blackmail, to woo the votes of people. He abuses laws and the judiciary, art and literature and fascist gangs to maintain his power. As recent waves of arrests and detentions have shown, he has intellectuals, artists, political activists, members of the press and the legal profession imprisoned so as to prevent anyone other than himself from carrying out election propaganda. With all these measures, he wants to give the impression that he is strong and will hold on to his power, and that he will also resort to means of violence to achieve this goal.

Yet, the AKP/MHP fascism is already rotten to the core and has collapsed. Whether violence, oppression or massacres, lies and deceit, demagoguery and theft, nothing of the kind will be able to keep the AKP/MHP fascism in power. The countdown to the end of the AKP-MHP alliance has already begun, and the elections on 14 May will be a fundamental downfall in this respect. Certainly, fascism cannot be overthrown through elections alone, but the vote on 14 May will play a decisive role in the struggle to overthrow this regime. The anti-fascist struggle for freedom and democracy, which we are carrying out at different levels, will achieve an important development with the elections on 14 May. The freedom revolution will advance by overthrowing fascism. In this regard, it is necessary to attach great importance to the electoral process, to go to the polls without fail, not to let a single vote go to waste and to be in action house by house, street by street, to mark the end of AKP/MHP fascism and to ensure the victory of the forces of labour and freedom. It is indispensable to be always in readiness to resist all kinds of fascist attacks.

So, to bring down AKP/MHP fascism, to pave the way for Kurdish freedom and democratization in Turkey, to free the peoples of the region and all humanity from the grip of the fascist, colonialist and genocidal mentality and politics, to develop women's revolution against patriarchal mindset, politics and repression,

, to achieve complete freedom of belief, thought and organisation in Turkey, to smash the torture and isolation system on İmralı and to ensure the physical freedom of Leader Apo and all political prisoners, to put an end to the corrupt system of plunder in Turkey and Kurdistan, to overthrow the fascist dictatorship that despises humanity and nature and is solely responsible for the scale of the earthquake disaster and the high casualties, to ensure that Turkey no threat for outside, to enhance the march for a democratic Middle East and free humanity, to build a new free, just, democratic way of life spreading from Kurdistan and Turkey all over the world, let us take to the streets and squares on May Day, and let us go to the polls on May 14. Let us celebrate these days with the enthusiasm and spirit of resistance with which we celebrated March 8 and Newroz.

Let us make this May Day the beginning of the great victory of democracy. As workers and labourers, women and youth, patriotic people of Kurdistan and all oppressed, revolutionary and socialist forces, let us fill the squares today and start our new march for freedom and democracy. Let us build a bridge of freedom and democracy between May 1 and May 14, a bridge of historical success and victory!

Let us not leave the streets and be in constant democratic activity from May 1 to May 14, until we overthrow AKP/MHP fascism and win the victory of democracy,

Let us be ready to defeat the AKP/MHP fascism on May 14 and let all kinds of fascist attacks come to nothing.

Let us turn May 2023 into the beginning of a free Kurdistan and a democratic Turkey."

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## Kurds rally in Lavrio, Lorient and Reims on May Day

ANF | 1 MAY 2023

May Day was celebrated in Lavrio, in the capital of Athens, Greece.

Speeches were made to mark the meaning and importance of the day during the rally, which was also attended by Greek trade unions.

In the city of Lorient, French labour unions, political parties and many other non-governmental organizations organized a rally.

The Kurds took their place in the rally with their own flags.

Thousands gathered in the city centre of Lorient at 10 o'clock and marched chanting slogans.

The French government's pension reform, which raised the pension age from 62 to 64, was protested during the march.

French unions are expecting a historic workers' protest against the pension reform on May 1.

In the French city of Reims, Kurds attended the May Day rally organized by trade unions.

The Kurdish activists displayed banners of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan and chanted the slogan "Long Live May Day, Long Live the PKK".

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## Jailed journalists mark May Day: “Fascism will be defeated, long live Free Press!”

ANF | ANKARA | 1 MAY 2023

Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) reporters Deniz Nazlım and Berivan Altan and JINNEWS reporter Habibe Eren, who were arrested on October 29, 2022 as part of an Ankara-based investigation, delivered messages to mark May 1. The messages sent by the journalists from the Sincan Prison to the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DİSK) Ankara Office were shared on the union's social media account.

Below are the messages from the journalists:

### **Eren: They made a big mistake**

**Habibe Eren:** “The legacy and struggle of the peoples, workers and women who have been resisting are resonating all over the world. Even though the fascist dictatorial regimes are trying to undermine the achievements of workers and women, peoples keep raising their voices everywhere. We welcome May Day in prisons. There are daily reports of arrests of our colleagues. Like all segments of society, Free Press workers continue to suffer from the attacks of the government. Those who think that they can silence the Free Press through such pressures made a big mistake and they will lose big. We firmly believe that the legacy of those who fell victim to unsolved murders, those who were killed in the bombings, including Apê Musa (Musa Anter) and Gurbetelli Eröz, and imprisoned journalists will be embraced by their colleagues. Oppression and persecution will not last forever, free days are close.”

### **Altan: We will resist and free press will not remain silent**

**Berivan Altan:** “We welcome May Day in prisons. The AKP-MHP government, which carries out its election campaign with attacks on the Free Press, continues to detain and arrest our colleagues who remain loyal to the facts. Dozens of our colleagues were detained last week. Journalists Abdurrahman Gök, Mehmet Şah Oruç, Beritan Canözer, Mikail Barut and Remzi Akkaya were imprisoned. Unable to overcome its fear, the government further detained Free Press workers Dicle Müftüoğlu and Sedat Yılmaz. The Free Press, which could not be silenced by massacres and bombings in the 90s, will not be silenced today by detentions, arrests and torture. We believe that workers and our colleagues who flock to May Day rallies today will be our voice and that they will expand the struggle of the Free Press. The free press will not be silenced.”

### **Nazlım: We seek after truth**

**Deniz Nazlım:** “We congratulate all workers on May Day. We would have loved to take our place in the rallies to defend our rights. However, the AKP government, which wants to keep facts dark, detained dozens of our colleagues last week, and jailed 5 of them. Even though the number of jailed journalists is increasing gradually, there are still journalists who chase the truth and defend the rights of jailed journalists. That's why we feel very comfortable. We believe that the enthusiasm of the thousands joining the ral-

lies today will bring freedom and democracy. As our colleague Abdurrahman Gök once said: "Fascism will be defeated. Long live the Free Press."



## May Day celebrated in North-East Syria

ANF | 1 MAY 2023

Five central rallies were staged in North-East Syria to mark May 1, International Workers' Day.

Thousands of people took to the streets in Qamishlo, Heseke, Manbij, Shehba and Deir ez-Zor.

### Qamishlo Canton

The celebration in the Qamishlo Canton took place in the village of Mizgeft in Tirbespiye district. Demonstrators displayed banners of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, the Workers' Union, TEV-DEM (Democratic Society Movement) and non-governmental organizations.

Wishing a happy May Day to all workers and peoples, Hêvî Silêman, a member of the women's umbrella organization Kongra Star Administration, pointed to the work and labour of women in North-East Syria and called on women to unite their struggles.

Highlighting the importance of Abdullah Öcalan's philosophy of freedom, Hêvî Silêman said: "It is time for freedom. It is time to destroy the capitalist policies that exploit the labour of workers."

Cizre Region Workers' Union official Şêro Mehemed Şero stated that workers are the backbone of the revolution of North-East Syria and can make society grow further.

Şero called for enhanced effort in the joint struggle for rights and freedoms.

### Heseke canton

Hundreds of residents, as well as representatives of political parties and NGOs, attended the May Day celebration organised by TEV-DEM in the village of Çolbistanê in Dirbêsiyê.

Addressing the crowd after a minute of silence, TEV-DEM Co-Chair Xerîb Hiso defined May Day as a day of struggle and sacrifice, and the struggle of workers, who are society itself.

Heyfa El Elî, Co-Chair of the Workers' Union in Heseke, said that the working class is the resilient and self-sacrificing part of society, which is why they are subjected to repression by the capitalist system to be used for its interests. The celebration was accompanied by musical performances and dances.

## Shehba

Thousands of people attended the May Day celebration in the Serdem Camp which houses IDPs. Following a minute of silence in memory of the martyrs, evaluations by Abdullah Öcalan were listened to.

Gulê Cehfer, Co-Chair of TEV-DEM in Shehba Canton, stated that workers, who guide society, proved to be the selfless segment of society in the revolution of Rojava.

Denouncing the embargo imposed on the region, Gulê Cehfer called on humanitarian and international organizations to take action to lift the embargo.

## Manbij

The Workers' Union and municipal committees organized the May Day celebration in Manbij, which was attended by administrators and members of political parties and NGOs, as well as tribal leaders and residents.

Speaking here, Asya Elêwî, Co-Chair of the Workers' Union, highlighted the importance and role of workers in the building of the democratic nation system in the region.

Asya Elêwî pointed out the invading Turkish state's ambition to topple this system, which was founded at the cost of a heavy price. She called on international organizations to adopt a stand against the increasingly ongoing attacks by the Turkish army and allied mercenaries.

The celebration concluded with musical performances and dances.

## Deir Ez-Zor

The celebration in Deir ez-Zor was organised by the Civic Council in the city. People danced to songs as workers were awarded for their labour.



## May Day in Amed: Victory will be ours

ANF | AMED | 1 MAY 2023

A rally organised by the Labour and Democracy Platform took place in Amed to mark May 1, International Workers' Day.

The police only allowed the numerous participants to enter the Şêx Seîd Square, which was cordoned off with bars, in groups. In a statement read out in different languages by the organising committee, it was

stressed that Turkey was suffering from mega-inflation and a capitalist economy that put profit above welfare and exploited people.

Participants of the rally welcomed the plan of the Labour and Freedom Alliance to transform the economy. In its election manifesto, the alliance, which includes the HDP, Green Left Party and Labour Party (EMEP), calls for an economic system in which people work and live in a humane way and for a democracy based on the rule of the people. High cost of living, low wages, unemployment and poverty are named by the alliance as the most pressing problems at present. The improvement of the working and living conditions of the labourers and the oppressed masses of the people is the most important concern of the parties.

A statement by the Labour and Democracy Platform in Amed denounced the insecure working conditions of workers, women's unemployment and illegal working life marked by violence, harassment and mobbing, the high rate of brain drain, ever-increasing price increases, the policy of deadlock with regard to the Kurdish question, maintenance of the system of exploitation, militarist structures serving the interests of the state, establishment of a fascist alliance for elections, policies of denial and annihilation of the Kurds, misogyny, reactionism, anti-peace mindset, elimination of democracy, trustee system, dismissals, injustice, militarism, torture, inhuman practices in prisons and political genocide operations.

“Today is not the day to complain, but to change this order,” underlined the statement.

Speaking after, HDP Amed provincial co-chair Zeyyat Ceylan vowed that May 14, when presidential and parliamentary elections will be held, would be turned into a day of resistance and victory.

“We will welcome May Day without the AKP–MHP government next year. The current state's mindset is against workers and the sense of community. They attack the achievements of the HDP and put hundreds of our friends in prison. Whatever they might do, we will defeat them on May 14. They attack society unabated because they hate it. We will call the AKP–MHP government to account for peace and freedom. On May 14, we will pave the way for an honorable peace and present it to our mothers and our people under the leadership of the HDP and the Green Left Party. Victory will be ours,” Ceylan said.

— ★ —

## Interview



## ‘The AKP-MHP regime was militarily defeated in Zap and will be politically defeated in Ankara’

ANF | BEHDINAN | 1 MAY 2023

The Free Women’s Troops (YJA Star) Headquarters Command Member Zozan Çewlîg was interviewed by journalist Tekoşîn Axîn of Sterk TV concerning the 14 May elections and the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla’s decision of inaction since the North Kurdistan-centred earthquakes in February.

*The YJA Star Command Council held a meeting a short time ago. Important decisions were taken at this meeting. What roles do the guerrillas and YJA Star commanders have to play in line with the decisions taken, specifically with regard to the physical freedom of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan?*

May is an important month for our movement. We lost many of our precious martyrs this month, and I respectfully commemorate them.

As for your question, we evaluated the situation of Öcalan in the last three years and reached important decisions at our meeting. Öcalan has been resisting splendidly under the most severe conditions for 25 years. The İmralı system introduced against Öcalan is actually targeting the whole society. Our main agenda is the situation of Öcalan. In recent years, he has been subjected to the most severe and aggravated form of isolation. We have comprehensively debated over why he has been subjected to intensified isolation. As a second point, we focused on to what extent the defence forces, especially YJA Star, have fulfilled their duties and responsibilities towards Öcalan. The most important decision was this: we must understand the genocidal policy against Öcalan and destroy it.

Öcalan is crucial to us and the practices against him are directed at us, the Kurdish people and all humanity. This should be understood, and the highest level of struggle should be waged based on the principles of the Women’s Liberation Ideology, freedom, and ‘Jin, Jiyar, Azadi (Woman, Life, Freedom).

Öcalan symbolizes a free life for us. We are following his situation closely. As his disciples, we reiterate once again that the situation of Öcalan is a *casus belli* for us.

*On February 6, a major earthquake occurred in North Kurdistan and in Turkey. The KCK declared inaction to help heal the wounds of the people. Despite the decision, the invading Turkish state has continued its invasion attacks on the Medya Defence Zones and North Kurdistan, which are the resistance areas. How do you evaluate these attacks? What is the guerrilla’s position in the face of attacks?*

The decision by the KCK was important and our forces complied with it with great care. Our people agreed with it, and everyone saw that we are a movement in favour of humanity. The devastating earthquake and the suffering of our people caused us to make such a decision. It was a moral decision. However, the invading state did not respect the decision and saw it as an opportunity to attack. It expanded its operations in resistance areas, especially in the Medya Defence Zones, and resumed its military operations in North Kurdistan. This issue should be a priority for the guerrillas, and Turkey’s occupation operations

should not be allowed. Our people should be cautious and give the necessary answer to the fascist invader in the elections.

*The guerrillas have put up great resistance against the invasion attacks for the last 8 years. The YJA Star in particular has played a major role. YJA Star's fighters and commanders have left their mark on the 8-year war. One of these commanders was Gulçiya Gabar. Hejar Zozan also played a major role in this resistance. How do you evaluate the struggle of these two commanders?*

We mark the anniversary of comrade Gulçiya's martyrdom. Comrade Pelşîn was also martyred along with her. Hejar Zozan, a commander of the Serhed Province, joined the caravan of the immortal. I commemorate these companions with respect, and I offer my condolences to all patriotic families. A great experience of freedom has been revealed in the person of the fighting Kurdish women. This great experience is expressed by the landmark slogan "Jin, Jiyan, Azadi", which has become a rallying cry throughout the world.

Commander Gulçiya left a great legacy in female commandship. She commanded in the most critical days from Behdînan to Amed, from Erzurum to Kobanê. She was from the Mardin region. Her personality was shaped by deep patriotic feelings. Remaining resilient in the face of difficulties, she set an example in the building of the women's army.

Hejar Zozan was a commander of the Serhed province. She was martyred together with comrade Bager. Comrade Hejar was from Ardahan. She witnessed the persecution of the Kurdish people during her university years and got to know the reality of Öcalan. In pursuit of her quest for freedom, she took to the mountains. As a member of the Special Forces, she waged a great struggle on the line of the leader and the martyrs. Hejar was actively involved in the struggle and took part in the Şehîd Delal activities. She played a major role in developing technical infrastructure within the Special Forces. Moreover, she was on the front lines during the invasion operations of the enemy against Heftanîn and waged a great war along with Esmer, Zelal and Bager.

### **Elections will be held in Turkey on May 14. How do you approach it?**

Erdogan's fascism has inflicted great sufferings on the Kurdish people for 20 years. From the very beginning, their policy has been based on annihilation and genocide against the Kurdish people. They are a force that relies its existence on the destruction of the Kurdish people. They are pursuing such a policy during the election period as well. Erdogan is a mentality, a regime. He is a great danger, especially to pro-freedom forces, women and youth. Women and youth should realize this truth and stand against it in these elections. This is a very important election. Turkey will decide whether to live with fascism or in a democratic country. Everyone should keep this in mind and go to the polls. These elections will shape the future of women, youth and our society. We believe that these elections will bring victory to the Green Left Party with women, youth, Alevi, workers and pro-democracy forces. Fearing this, the government has detained press workers and politicians and put them in prison. There is also a possibility that these political operations may be turned into provocative conspiracy operations. Our people should be prudent about this issue as well.

They were militarily defeated in the Zap region, and they will be politically defeated in Ankara, thanks to our people. This will pave the way for Turkey's democratization and bring about the end of the bloody dictatorship. We believe this will happen.



# Opinion

## Besê Hozat: The AKP-MHP regime must be overthrown

ANF | 27 APRIL 2023

Speaking in a special program on Medya Haber TV, KCK Executive Council Co-Chair Besê Hozat pointed out that the AKP-MHP lists includes hitmen and Kurdish enemies, and added that this government must be overthrown.

Hozat said that the Nation Alliance does not have a democratic project, and added: "Turkey's future lies in the Labor and Freedom Alliance. The main force that will democratize Turkey, build a democratic republic, and provide a democratic solution to the Kurdish question, is the Labor and Freedom Alliance.

Here are the main remarks by Besê Hozat.

**“Erdoğan is conducting his entire election policy based on hostility towards the Kurdish people”**

Hozat said: "These elections are really very important. If this fascist government wins the elections, the genocidal fascist policies will be legitimized and perpetuated. In this case, this fascist regime will be institutionalized. Then, the MHP will continue and intensify this genocidal policy. Therefore, this fascist government must not win these elections. It is already doing everything to win. But it has only one thing left: a total war of genocide. Look at the AKP media: They have no agenda other than war and weapons. Their entire agenda is hostility against the Kurds. When they attack the opposition, they do so on the basis of their hostility against the Kurdish people. They conduct their entire policy on this basis.

They recently published the justification for the court case to shut down the HDP. They also revealed the reasons for the sentence they gave to Selahattin Demirtaş. In this context, they put forward the visits to Qandil during the dialogue process in 2013-2015 as a basic justification. Yet, the HDP delegation's visits to Qandil at the time were based on the permission of Erdoğan and the AKP government. It was the government itself that provided a safe passage for the HDP delegation. During the dialogue process, we sent many letters to Leader Apo. When the HDP delegation handed over those letters, they were not immediately given to Leader Apo. They were given days later, sometimes even weeks later. What was done with those letters in the meantime? They were given to Erdoğan. Erdoğan read the letters we wrote to Leader Apo. Then he would give them to Hakan Fidan. Only afterwards, the letters were sent to Leader Apo. During the same period, the AKP-affiliated Sabah newspaper came [to Qandil] and interviewed us. Erdoğan and the AKP government are the ones who developed relations with the PKK the most. Leader Apo

and our struggle have unmasked Erdoğan. This fascist government really has no reserves anymore. The fascist genocidal reality has been revealed. Now they have nothing left except war. Erdoğan is conducting his entire election policy based on hostility towards the Kurdish people. There is only one thing he promises to the Kurds and the people of Turkey: war and massacres. Look at the list of AKP-MHP candidates: there are a lot of mass murderers and hitmen on it. A list full of Kurdish enemies. This is what they promised to Turkey. From this point of view, this government really, really needs to be overthrown on May 14. This government promises the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey nothing but death, nothing but darkness, nothing but war, nothing but massacres. It is destroying Turkey's future."

### Importance of casting vote

Hozat continued: "The National Alliance does not have a democratic policy either. They recently announced their election manifesto. Many statements have been made. Everyone is talking and discussing. Yet, there is no serious policy for the democratic solution to the Kurdish question, for the democratization of Turkey, for the construction of a democratic republic. Therefore, it is very clear that the future of Turkey lies with the Labor and Freedom Alliance. The main force that will democratize Turkey, build a democratic republic and ensure a democratic solution to the Kurdish question is the Labor and Freedom Alliance. It is the success of the Green Left Party in this election. That is why the Green Left Party must emerge victorious from this election. This is very important for the democratization of Turkey, for the construction of a democratic republic and for the democratic solution of the Kurdish question. The Green Left Party needs to enter parliament in a very strong way, both quantitatively and qualitatively. This is what is expected from our people, from all environmentalists, the women's movement, the youth movement and from everybody who is in favor of peace, democracy, justice, equality and a nature-friendly approach.

This is the main force that will democratize Turkey. It is not the National Alliance. In order to overthrow the dictator Erdoğan, all our people must vote for the candidates of the Green Left Party and the Labor and Freedom Alliance. This fascist dictator must be removed and this fascist regime must collapse. In order for this to happen, the success of the Labor and Freedom Alliance and the Green Left Party on May 14 is very important. The Green Left Party candidate list is very strong. Women and young people are represented well in it. Almost every identity is represented on the list. The Green Left Party will thus carry all the colors and differences of Turkey to parliament. In this sense, it is a very democratic list. It is a list that reflects the colorful and pluralistic reality of Turkey. Therefore, our people should unite around these candidates. Everyone must vote. Everyone needs to go to the polls and vote for the Green Left Party. They must vote to overthrow the fascist Erdoğan. They must vote for the Green Left Party in the election. This is very important. Therefore, I would like to call on everyone to unite around the candidates."

Hozat added: "We have heard recently that some democratic, leftist and socialist groups are discussing a boycott of the elections. We do not consider this the right thing to do. This election is not that kind of election. Whoever takes a stance of boycotting the elections, no matter how democratic, socialist and leftist their ideology or policy is, directly and indirectly serves the fascist dictator Erdoğan. This should not be done. Because a boycott would only lead to a loss of votes. And the loss of votes serves the fascist regime. A boycott would be useless for the democratic forces. Because these elections are really important. The peoples of Kurdistan and Turkey need not to make even the smallest mistake.

Of course, not everything will be solved with the fall of this government. We are talking about a very deep-rooted mentality. The mentality of the fascist Turkish state, the nation state system, is based on de-

nial and annihilation. But when the democratic front gains strength, it will form a very strong front of struggle on the basis of the democratization of Turkey. New dynamics will then emerge in Turkey. The basis for democracy will grow stronger. For the democratization of Turkey, the construction of a democratic republic, a democratic government and a democratic system will offer a very important opportunity and a ground for struggle. In this respect, everyone needs to play their part in these elections."

### **"The victory of the Green Left Party means the victory of women"**

Hozat said: "There is terrible ecological destruction happening in Kurdistan. This is part of the genocidal war. There is also terrible environmental destruction in Turkey as a result of the plunder and profit policies. The Green Left Party has caused great excitement among ecologist organizations as well. Indeed, if the world we live in is destroyed, the struggle for democracy and freedom will have no meaning. Therefore, the Green Left Party has been met with great interest. This is very important. I believe that the Labor and Freedom Alliance and the Green Left Party will be the winners of this election. The forces for democracy and freedom will be the winners of this election. The fascist dictatorship will be thrown out of history on May 14.

There is nothing left that this fascist government has not done to women. The power and the state system itself are hostile towards women. This is an anti-woman system, an anti-society system. But during the 21 years of AKP rule and especially during the last 8 years of fascist AKP-MHP rule, violence against women has increased at least 3-4 times. Femicides have increased horribly. Violence has infected all areas of life. The sexist culture has intensified terribly. This is the main reason why violence against women has increased so much. The AKP-MHP have made men misogynists everywhere. Not only that, they closed down all women's institutions. They attacked the co-chair system of equal representation. Many co-chairs are now in prison. They abrogated the Istanbul Convention.

They have even made the law against violence a matter of negotiations with the Hüda Par and the Welfare Party again. Most probably they have made concessions with regards to this issue. They abolished all laws in favor of women within the legal system of the nation state. This is a misogynist government. It has eliminated all the gains of women. If this government remains in power, these policies of femicide will continue and intensify. Institutionalizing a slave society based on slave women and a fascist, genocidal, dictatorial system based on a slave society means the complete destruction of women. Therefore, women need to take a strong stance against this fascist government in this election.

Any woman who has a little bit of female sensitivity, who wants women's freedom and who fights for her own freedom must not cast her vote for the fascist AKP-MHP government. The Green Left Party is a women's party. So is its program, its understanding of politics and its candidate list. It stands for equal representation. In 34 places, there are women who will definitely be elected. The Green Left Party is a women's freedom party. All women should vote for the Green Left Party. The victory of the Green Left Party means the victory of women. Women's victory means the democratization of politics. Because women are the main subject of democratization in politics.

It is a similar situation when it comes to young people. The Green Left Party is a youth party. It has a strong youth representation. Its politics and understanding promise a free and democratic future for the youth. The AKP-MHP fascist government offers a dark future for the youth. The National Alliance does not offer a serious future for the youth either. In this sense, the young people need to mobilize for the

Green Left Party to win. The victory of this party will be very important for the youth. Therefore, I call on young people to participate strongly in the upcoming elections, to vote for the Green Left Party and to play a very strong role in ensuring ballot box security."

### **The question of Alevis**

Hozat said: "The AKP-MHP fascist government has heavily persecuted Alevis. Alevis are being subjected to a comprehensive destruction of their faith. Heavy assimilation is happening everywhere. This is a genocide against Alevis. Dersim is the center of the Kurdish Alevis. The fascist Turkish state committed a great genocide there. During the period of the current government, the genocide against Alevis has continued with a thousand and one methods. Alevis are being displaced and the demography is being changed. We saw this after February 6, during the earthquake centered in Kurdistan, Elbistan and Pazarcık. Genocide is being carried out and migration is increasing. There was an earthquake but no one went to the affected areas for the first 2-3 days. The state did this consciously. Alevis will ask for revenge for this in the upcoming elections. The Green Left Party and the Labor and Freedom Alliance are the ones who most strongly defend the rights of Alevis. In the Green Left Party, Alevis are represented well. This party will carry the Alevi problem to the parliament in a strong way. Therefore, I would like to call on all Alevis to vote for the Green Left Party. All Alevis definitely need go to the polls.

The Dersim genocide is still ongoing. The cultural genocide and assimilation in Dersim have continued and increased a lot during the time of this fascist regime. The cultural genocide in Dersim, as well as the religious genocide against the Alevi faith, continue to increase. All this has intensified a lot during the time of the current government. At the same time, terrible attacks on Dersim's nature are happening. The geography of Dersim is sacred to all Kurdish Alevis. But the fascist regime has destroyed this geography. Mines have been opened everywhere. Countless dams have been built there. Thus, they are trying to destroy Dersim. Against all this, I call on all the people of Dersim to stand up for Dersim. The way to do this is to overthrow the fascist, genocidal regime. I would like to therefore call on the people of Dersim to vote for the Green Left Party candidates in this election. Everyone, absolutely everyone, must go to the polls. In this sense, the people of Dersim have a very important role to play."

### **Turkey's occupation attacks in South Kurdistan**

Hozat said: "The war continues. The Turkish state continues its attacks everywhere despite our decision to halt all military attacks of the guerrilla. In North Kurdistan [East Turkey], South Kurdistan [North Iraq] and Rojava the heavy attacks continue. Against this, of course, the guerrilla resistance on the basis of legitimate defense continues in the strongest possible way. This struggle will continue. As long as these attacks and this genocide policy continue, the resistance will continue in a glorious way. Thus, our people will definitely gain their freedom. Kurdistan will be liberated and Turkey will be democratized. Today, this genocide policy has reached the point of collapse. For 100 years this genocide policy has been pursued, and for the last 8 years the fascist AKP-MHP regime has tried to bring this policy to a conclusion by using all the means available to the state. But the point it has reached today is obvious. Through war, denial and extermination, they cannot achieve any results. This has become very clear. As long as the spirit of the Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna [areas in South Kurdistan/North Iraq] resistance fighters remains, as long as this will of resistance and this sacrificial stance continue, this struggle will never be defeated. This struggle will definitely achieve victory."

## “AKP-MHP fascism is laying the ground for civil war in Turkey”

Talking about the situation of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, Hozat said: "The Constitutional Court [of Turkey] asked the [Turkish] Ministry of Justice and the Asrin Law Office [represents Abdullah Öcalan legally] for information on the situation in İmralı. On that basis, the Minister of Justice recently made some statements. This is a new development and very important. The fascist AKP-MHP regime is trying to create the impression that there is a functioning judiciary in Turkey, that there is a functioning law. The fascist Turkish state is trying to create such an impression on the world and society in Turkey. But there is no judiciary, there are no judicial institutions left, and there is no law. They have all become political instruments in the hands of the AKP-MHP regime. They have become weapons that are being used in the genocidal war against the Kurds and against society in Turkey. The judiciary has turned into a weapon, it has become a part of the war. In other words, it has turned into an institution that completely serves politics. They are doing this consciously. A game is being played as if the Constitutional Court was functioning, the judiciary was functioning and the Minister of Justice was supervising them. That's why the Constitutional Court asked for the opinion of the Ministry of Justice and the Asrin Law Office. Of course, no one gets fooled by all this. First and foremost, the Kurdish people, our Freedom Movement and the international democratic public will not be fooled. These times have passed."

Hozat continued: "An even more serious aspect is the recent statements made by the [Turkish] Minister of Justice. He said that there is no severe isolation in İmralı and spoke of normal practices. He said that these are very mild practices, that the lack of meetings on İmralı is due to factors that are not in their hands. How do we need to understand this statement? İmralı is a system of torture and isolation. Special warfare is systematically being waged there. İmralı has been turned into the center of the genocidal war against Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] and the Kurds. Lawyers have not met with Leader Apo for years. His family had not met him either. Neither can NGOs or anyone else visit Leader Apo and his imprisoned comrades there. All national law, international law and conventions have been trampled on. How many times has the CPT visited İmralı? The last visit in September [2022] was the 9th time. But the CPT has not made any statement on İmralı. Really, the CPT legitimizes AKP-MHP fascism. Similarly, the Council of Europe has become a partner in this war of genocide and the system of torture and isolation. Crimes against humanity are being committed there."

Hozat added: "The special warfare regime governs İmralı with the help of special laws. No one knows what is going on in İmralı at the moment. A lot of claims have been made about the health and safety of Leader Apo. None of us, neither our people, nor we as a movement have any information. They say that the practices in İmralı are mild practices. In other words, the Minister of Justice considers the torture, isolation and special warfare practices as normal and mild. What does this mean? What they are saying is that the current measures are light and that there could even be worse ones. What can be worse than the current practices? Physical annihilation. They don't say these kinds of things for nothing. In fact, they are trying to blackmail the movement, the Kurdish people and society in Turkey. This is a threat. And this is being done on the eve of the elections. Days before the election, these statements are being made. On the other hand, they talk about factors that are not in their hands. What are these factors? For years they said 'the coaster is broken, there is bad weather, that's why the lawyers cannot go to İmralı'. Then, for the last couple of years, lawyers were not sent to İmralı because of disciplinary penalties. And now they are saying there are factors that are not in their hands. These things are being put forward as excuses."

All this is unacceptable. The CPT needs to clarify this situation. It went to İmralı in September [2022] and submitted its report to Turkey in March [2023]. But there was not a single statement. Neither the CPT nor Turkey made a single statement on the latest CPT report. What did the CPT see in İmralı, what is the situation there? How will the CPT respond to the recent statements of the Minister of Justice? Our movement is waiting for an explanation from the CPT and the Council of Europe. The CPT acts on the basis of the dirty political interests of the European countries and the Council of Europe. It has turned into a political tool. The CPT, the Council of Europe and the European Union have become institutions that legitimize torture and strengthen AKP-MHP fascism. Europe needs to stop this hypocritical and pragmatic policy. Very recently, Germany also raided many Kurdish civilian institutions and houses. Thus, it sends a message to Erdogan and Turkey during the election process and tells them 'we are with you'.

It is a serious matter that the Constitutional Court stepped in during this phase to ask for the opinion of the Asrin Law Office and the Minister of Justice, and then made such a statement. There is terrible special warfare going on. This is a very dirty policy. This shows how deep the torture and isolation system and genocide policy have gone. It also reveals what the future of Turkey will be if the fascist AKP-MHP regime remains in power. What they are making is a call for civil war. Step by step, AKP-MHP fascism is laying the ground for civil war in Turkey. Therefore, it is necessary to fight very strongly against the İmralı torture and isolation system."

### **Putting freedom for Leader Apo on the world agenda"**

Hozat spoke about the recent conference 'We want our world back' in Hamburg [April 6 - 9, 2023] and said that it "was very exciting. Very rich discussions took place there for 4 days, which really made us all very happy. The paradigm of Leader Apo was discussed with all its dimensions. This is very important. The challenge to capitalist modernity and the solution to the structural crisis of capitalist modernity represented by the paradigm of democratic modernity developed by Leader Apo were discussed comprehensively during the conference. This shows how universal the paradigm of Leader Apo has become. It is gradually becoming the property of the whole world. Many intellectuals, academics and different circles from around the world are discussing this paradigm. Leader Apo proposes a solution to the crisis of capitalist modernity for the peoples in the form of democratic modernity and the democratic-confederal system. The paradigm of the democratic nation, this paradigm based on democracy, ecology and women's freedom, is thus emerging as a fundamental solution to all the world's problems, to all kinds of problems that society is experiencing. That is why it is being adopted in a very serious way. And the struggle inspired by it is spreading. Strong support for it is developing worldwide. This support also leads to a strong struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo. Serious support for him is developing worldwide. This is a great success. It is a very important achievement that the paradigm, the ideas of Leader Apo are spreading, that they are supported so much and that this is gradually turning into a strong struggle in many different ways."

Hozat added: "Another recent development is the demonstration in Düsseldorf [on April 15, 2023]. This was a magnificent demonstration. I would like to greet all those who participated in it. These protests are being supported by more and more parts of society. In other words, the social struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo is gaining a universal character. There is also a very serious participation in these protests from members of European society. There is a very serious participation of internationalists. There was a strong participation in the Düsseldorf march on April 15. This is important. The conclusion we need to draw is this: If we wage a multidimensional political, diplomatic, legal, social and ideological



struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo, we will definitely achieve his physical freedom. Simultaneously, we will thus realize the democratic solution to the Kurdish question. These are closely related issues. In this sense, it is necessary to continue the struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Apo in every possible way. Both the spreading of the paradigm in the world, the expansion of the social struggle and the legal struggle. The other dimensions are the diplomatic, political and ideological struggles. We need to develop a comprehensive struggle in an even stronger way. What has been done so far is very meaningful. This has led to an important level of sensitivity and support. This has put the physical freedom of Leader Apo and the democratic solution to the Kurdish question on the world agenda. We need to continue this struggle in a strong way."

### **Recent Developments in Turkish-Syrian Relations**

Hozat said: "Turkey's diplomacy completely predicates itself on hostility towards the Kurds. Its relations with the Arab states are also based on this. Turkey has recently met representatives of the Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar and Egypt. In general, all the negotiations Turkey conducts in the Middle East, in Africa and worldwide are based on its hostility towards the Kurdish people. Now, Turkey is trying to win over the Arab countries for such an anti-Kurdish position. It is doing its best to prevent a democratic solution in Syria, to make Syria fight the Kurds and to deepen the war there. Turkey's whole policy towards the Arab countries is based on this approach.

Different Arab countries have relations with Syria. Turkey is trying to use these relations in order to prevent the democratization of Syria and a democratic solution to the country's problems with the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria. With regard to this issue, Turkey's policy is very clear: It seeks to promote anti-Kurdish sentiments, to provoke conflicts between the Kurds and Syria and to support war and genocide against the Kurds there. Through its relations with the Syrian state, Turkey is pursuing this kind of policy. It is also trying to draw Russia into this, just like it is trying to draw Syria, Iran and the Arab countries as a whole into this. Lately, the Syrian regime has had various meetings with Arab countries. Most recently, the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia visited Damascus. There were various reports that Saudi Arabia invited Syria to return to the Arab League. Apart from Qatar, the other Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, want Syria to join the Arab League again. Arab states are gradually reopening their embassies in Syria. Today, Syria has relations with a variety of Arab countries, especially with the Gulf countries and Egypt. Relations with Damascus are gradually improving. This means the following: Arab countries recognize the current Assad government. There is an approach to including Syria in the Arab League again. But Qatar opposes this. Turkey and Qatar have strategic relations. Qatar is the only Arab country that differs on this issue."

Hozat continued: "The development of relations between Syria and the Arab countries is important. We attach great importance to it. Of course, we want these relations to be based on the democratization of Syria and the solution of the problems with the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria on the basis of democratic negotiations. This is in Syria's interest. It is in the interest of all Arab countries and Arab society. Contradictions between Kurds and Arabs serve only the fascist, genocidal Turkish state. They do not serve any Arab country. Contradictions do not serve the Syrian state and Syrian society at all. From this point of view, it is very important that these relations progress towards a democratic solution to the problem. The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria recently published a very important declaration. It declared that it considers the Syrian government's relations with the Arab countries to be important, that it wants to develop relations with all these countries as well, and that it is open to relations

with all political structures, civil society organizations, Arab countries and societies and all groups of society that are in favor of a solution. The Autonomous Administration declared that it is its strategy to solve the existing problems within the framework of the territorial integrity of Syria, on a democratic basis and on the basis of the democratization of Syria. This is an extremely important declaration. This declaration issued by the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria at a time when the relations between Damascus and the Arab countries are developing so intensely has complemented these developments. We are also in favor of such a solution. Of course, we are in favor of a democratic solution. We support the coming together of the Syrian state and government and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria on a democratic basis within Syrian borders to solve their problems. The real solution lies in the democratization of Syria. Syria will be democratized when the Kurds and all communities living in Syria gain their democratic rights. In this sense, we support all these efforts and find them very important."

### **Turkey is trying to turn Iraq into an enemy of the Kurds**

Hozat said: "Turkey wants to improve its relations with Iraq. It has been working hard in this direction for a long time. It wants to play an influential role in the design of Iraq. For years, it has been making comprehensive efforts to organize the Turkmens, especially in Kirkuk. Turkey has taken a military foothold there. There is a lot of information that Turkey has created serious organizational structures there. It is thus engaged in activities that are directed against Iraq. This is very clear. It has made Kirkuk the center of this policy. Turkey is trying to turn Iraq into an enemy of the Kurds. But it would not make sense for Iraq to have any problems with the Kurds. The Kurdish problem has been solved in South Kurdistan and Iraq. But Turkey is persistently trying to bring Iraq to this point. Of course, Iraq has not fallen for this for years. Iraq has no such problem. There is a status in South Kurdistan and there are relations on this basis. Iraq has recognized this in the constitution. Why should Iraq earn the enmity of the Kurds in North Kurdistan? Why should Iraq earn the enmity of the Kurds in Rojava? Why should it earn the enmity of the Kurds in its neighborhood? How would this benefit Iraq? Iraq knows this, of course. Therefore, it has approached this issue with state wisdom. It approaches this rationally."

Hozat added: "Iraq is faced with a very serious water problem. The water of the Euphrates river has been turned into a tool for blackmailing Iraq. For years the fascist AKP-MHP regime has cut off the water of the Euphrates river. This constitutes an international crime. There are laws for this in international conventions. But Turkey is violating them. In fact, Turkey is committing a crime against humanity. It violates international law. It is using this as a trump card against Iraq. It cuts off the water of the Euphrates. Now there is talk of a serious desertification in Iraq. Agriculture and animal husbandry cannot be done there anymore. This has really turned into a huge crisis. Turkey has turned this issue into a weapon. It is doing the same thing in Syria. Turkey is trying to use this as a trump card to drag Iraq into its own policy. It is trying to lure Iraq into hostility towards the Kurds. This is what Turkey is telling Iraq: 'You must destroy the free Kurds. I am carrying out a genocide and you will support me. If you don't, I will cut off your water.' Turkey has been using this against Iraq for years. Recently, there were reports that Iraqi officials went to Turkey to solve this water problem. Their main agenda may really be the water problem and the trade problem. There are many problems like these which, of course, might be on the agenda of Iraq. But this is not Turkey's agenda. Turkey's agenda is its enmity towards the Kurdish people. Turkey tries to put this on Iraq's agenda and to win Iraq's support for its genocide and occupation attacks against the Kurds. It has demanded this from Iraq. This is not a secret. The Turkish state and the fascist AKP-MHP regime have said this themselves. We are sure that Iraq will not take part in such things. Because this would be of no

benefit to the country. This would not be in Iraq's interest. It would only harm Iraq. Iraq's interest is in favor of a free future with the Kurds. It is in favor of a strategic alliance and unity."

### **Turkey tries to drag the PUK into a policy of treachery and collaboration**

Hozat said: "The Turkish state pursues the same policy in South Kurdistan. Genocidal attacks have been going on there for years. Turkey has occupied a significant part of South Kurdistan. It wants to increase these occupation attacks even more. Turkey is trying to widen its sphere of influence to all of the KDP-controlled territory. It is also trying to make Sulaymaniyah like Hewlêr. It wants to turn the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan] into the KDP. It wants to drag the PUK into a policy of treachery and collaboration like the KDP. This is the main reason for Turkey's attacks. For example, Turkey could have carried out its recent attack on Mazlum Abdi [commander of Syrian Democratic Forces] far away from the airport [in Sulaymaniyah], but it didn't. Turkey deliberately attacked close to the airport. Because it wants to establish control over Sulaymaniyah Airport. Turkey attacked close to the airport so that it could inflict serious pressure, get concessions and establish control over Sulaymaniyah Airport. Likewise, Turkey used the helicopters that crashed as a justification. But the International Coalition has been waging a joint fight [with the SDF] against ISIS for years. They have relations accordingly. The movement of these helicopters took place as part of the fight against ISIS. This was an accident but Turkey has been trying to use this as an excuse. It has been trying to do this for years. Turkey wants to increase the genocidal war on the eve of the elections. It plans to win the upcoming elections through war. If, through pressures in this direction, Turkey succeeds in drawing the PUK into a treacherous and collaborating policy, if Turkey establishes control over it like it has over the KDP, then Turkey will be able to carry out its war of genocide in any way it wants. The AKP-MHP's plan is to win the elections by intensifying this agenda in Turkey to get the votes of racist, fascist and nationalist groups. This is also going on in Rojava with all its intensity. [Turkish] Operations and attacks continue every day in the Medya Defense Zones and North Kurdistan as well. Turkey is thus waging a total war. It is also doing this in South Kurdistan by trying to include the PUK. Until now, the PUK's stance has been important. It has not moved over to the line of the KDP. It has refused to become a traitor, collaborator and partner in the Kurdish genocide. It has taken a clear stance against all this. This is extremely important. This is a patriotic stance. Of course, this needs to be strengthened. If the PUK adopts the KDP line just like Turkey wants it to, the PUK will be finished. The reason for its existence will cease to exist. The PUK's patriotic sensitivity is what makes it the PUK. Without this attitude, it would not be different from the KDP. Then, the PUK would cease to exist. It would have no credibility and would simply be finished. For the PUK, this would be suicide."

Hozat continued: "The KDP imposes spying on our patriotic people who come to South Kurdistan for political reasons. It says to them: 'You will spy for the MIT. If you become a spy, you can live here. But if you don't, we won't let you live here. Then you have to leave or I will hand you over to Turkey.' Those who refuse to comply are killed in partnership with MIT. This is why the attacks on Zeki Çelebi and Hüseyin Türeli took place. The recent statements of the KDP with regards to this issue are a disgrace. I believe that in their conscience, the Kurds really condemn the KDP. The Kurdish people have condemned it because of this mentality and dirty policy. History has condemned the KDP."



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