



INTERNATIONAL E-BULLETIN

Prepared by the Foreign Affairs Commission of
Peace and Democracy Party

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Yunus was one of the unforgettable symbols of the Van Earthquake. He couldn't live. He was 13 when he died.

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THE VAN QUAKE AND THE MEDIA'S PERCEPTION IN TURKEY

It's well known that, after the disaster in a country, politics is not center of the agenda anymore. Unfortunately, some politicians from AKP government including P.M. Mr. Erdoğan and some of Turkish Media organizations are not sensitive to the Van people's pains.



Some of famous TV speakers and program makers made racist and discriminatory rhetoric; here you are some examples from Turkish Media;

Comments by Müge ANLI (TV programmer on the ATV national channel):

“Kurds now wanted the help from police and soldiers whom they had been hunting down ‘in the mountains like birds’. Everybody have to know their place.”

Comments by Duygu CANBAŞ (anchorwoman on the Haberturk TV):

“We felt sorry for the victims of the earthquake even though it happened in the east.”

The racist comments on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. :

“God’s wrath on Van... God does what the Turkish Republic couldn’t do.”

“I hope, it happens again”

“I’m praying to god for a new quake for Diyarbakir, Hakkari and Şırnak”

“I’ll not send any money, I hope they gone worse!”

“Would be stay our martyrs’ blood on the ground?”

“I’m so happy; I hope all the traitors are died.”



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Actually, there is not any article about racism on the criminal law. That's why the thin line between the Turkish nationalism and racism becoming undetermined concepts in Turkey. Therefore, Kurdish people's sensitivities are not concerned or ignored by AKP Government and its prosecutors. The judicial system and the constitution's mentality encourage the "hate speech" in Turkey. Especially Turkish media moves the Turkish nationalism to racist mentality by the "hate speech" of the program makers.

We are sorry informing that, victims of the quake have found stones, Turkish flags and grubby clothes, blankets in some "help boxes" which came from the west part of Turkey. These racist messages are dangerous and government has to take steps for preventing the racist actions.

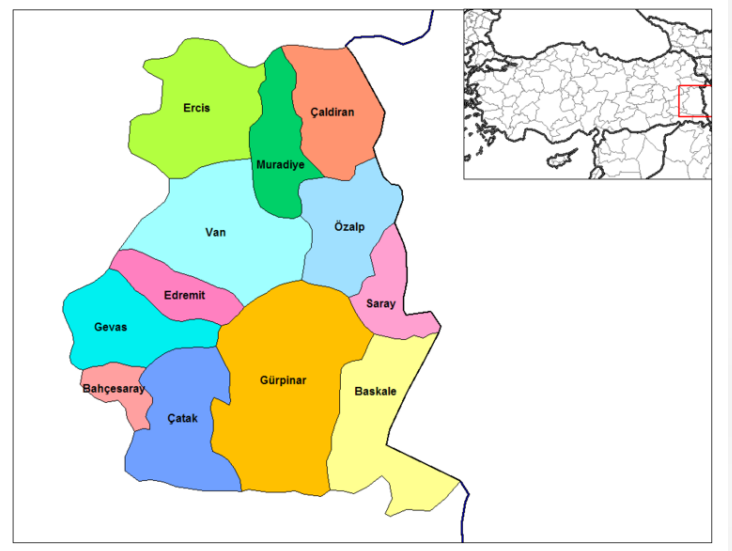
The "hate speech", discrimination, racism and disrespecting to people's identity and sensitivities are also part of the Kurdish Issue that known as the vital point and the primary problem of Turkey. Unfortunately, the same mentality is reflected to the disaster in Van.



We as BDP, to prevent the discrimination and working for collaboration with Turkish democratic institutions. Mr. Selahattin DEMİRTAŞ, Co-president of BDP made a speech in connection with the help from west part of the country. He said *"There is the scent of brotherhood, of fraternal greetings in the aid that is being dispatched from all four corners of Turkey."*

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FOR VAN AND INABILITY OF AKP GOVERNMENT

After refusing aid from other countries, Turkey has relented, even accepting an airload of prefabricated houses from Israel, its estranged former ally. In accordance with a proud and nationalist mentality, Turkey didn't want to create the impression that the country was in need of assistance from abroad, this was not in the interest of a country that is emerging as a regional player," Initially even Turkey's opposition said there should be no question of seeking help abroad.



P.M. Erdogan, now admits the government erred in its immediate response. However, the problems go far beyond the first 72 hours after the earthquake struck. The first foreign plane loads of tents have arrived. On Friday, Armenia also sent aid supplies, despite a long history of enmity with Turkey and floundering efforts to reconcile.

The European Commission is also looking at further ways to support the relief effort through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Austria, Belgium, Slovenia, France, United Kingdom and Sweden offered over 2300 winterized tents within the first three hours of Turkey's request. Several other countries which participate in the European Civil Protection Mechanism said they are ready to help. A team of European experts in civil protection is being deployed to facilitate the delivery of the emergency assistance on the ground.



In addition to the cold, the emergency is the lack of food and water, which has already caused the first cases of dysentery and respiratory diseases. The survivors of

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the earthquake, in fact, they are still desperately looking for tents, water and food, while there are fears that people may die because of the sharp drop in temperatures.

Drenched by pouring rain, more and more are falling sick, and with the first winter snows expected in November there is an urgent need to get people under cover fast. Many people were also treated for anxiety.

BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) municipalities in the region have been at the forefront in delivering aids and means to the population of Van. With all our construction equipment, health and rescue teams, rolling kitchens, they have been trying to heal the wounds of people here since the first day. BDP mayors and MPs are still there, coordinating works. Support campaigns were similarly conducted by many circles including the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) Organization and Municipalities, woman activists of the Democratic Free Women's Movement (DÖKH) and DARDER Union. Tons of aid materials were sent from the provinces of Mardin, Siirt, Hakkari, Muş, Kars and districts of Nusaybin, Kurtalan, Çukurca, Yüksekova, Şemdinli, Doğubayazıt, Diyadin, Patnos and Tatvan.



International aids are continuing to arrive in the city but the State continues to distribute aids in a discriminatory manner, without involving the local administration of Van and the local associations. At least 50 small villages have not yet been reached by aid workers, noting that not even a single piece of aid has been delivered to many of them.

The Government has tried to justify the guilty slowness in sending rescue teams and aids after the quake but people were waiting to die in the wreckage.

It is well known that after the disasters, the most vital point is the being fast. Unfortunately, AKP government had a disability on emergency action and sharing the control between the local authorities. Rigid



and negatively central aid system brought about the chaos in Van region. BDP's municipalities including the Van Municipality were not concerned by the Governor of Van. After the conversation demand by BDP deputies with related ministers of the government, preventions by the Governorship of Van was partially removed.

Contact information for national and international civil society organizations that would like to work in solidarity with Municipality of VAN.

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AKP GOVERNMENT'S "ARRESTMENT STORM" AGAINST BDP IS STILL CONTINUING.

The "arrestment storm" against Kurdish politicians is continuing since 14 April 2009. Especially after the general elections on 12 June 2011, the arrestments against BDP members are accelerated and the judicial process is decelerated. Therefore, more than 5000 Kurdish politicians, NGO members and activists are still arrested because of the



slow judicial system. Actually, BDP is defining his situation as punishment without trials. All of the arrested people are accusing as "being member of KCK". KCK (Kurdish Communities Union) is an organization that use arm. But none of these arrested politicians were part of the violence. According to the Anti Terror Law, all speeches or democratic demonstrations for demanding the "Kurdish Identity" should be regarded as "terrorist activity" by the prosecutors in Turkey.

The last "Anti-KCK Operation" in Istanbul is the most argumentative implementation of Turkish Government. BDP's Politics Academy in Istanbul was raided on 28-29 October 2011. More than 50 people were taken into custody by the police's concurred operations. 44 of them are arrested. Prof. Būşra Ersanlı, 61 year old (Member of Party Assembly and member of the constitution commission, Lecturer in Marmara University), Mr. Ragıp Zarakolu, 63 year old (Author, publisher

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and founder member of Human Rights Association), Mr. Mustafa Avcı (Member of Executive Board of BDP) are some of the arrested figures.

The detentions and arrestments of people without any concrete and serious evidence under the primitive mentality are against human rights. Up until now, about eight thousands active BDP members have been taken into custody and among them five thousand have been arrested within the scope of detention and arrest terror since the local elections in March 2009. Among those arrested are a large number of deputies, mayors, academicians, human rights defenders, journalists and intellectuals.

BDP Co-chair Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş reacted to the arrestments, asking for the immediate release of all detainees, including Prof. Ersanlı, saying the detentions continued "on the prime minister's bidding. We want universal justice to act, not the government's justice." Mr. Demirtaş added that it was "becoming impossible to discuss about the new constitution. There will not be any staff left in the BDP to appoint to the Parliament's charter commission if the detentions continue."

The new campaign, "We are all KCK", is being launched by lawyers Eren Keskin, Ayşe Batumlu, Leman Yurtsever, Hürriyet Şener and photographer Veysi Altay invited people to take part in this activity. By now, 50 people, including writer, activists and poet Roni Margulies, sociologist İsmail Beşikçi, Dr. Şebnem Korurfiñancı, ecologist Bilge Contepe, writer A.Hicri İzgören, singer Ferhat Tunç, Şanar Yurdatapan and many leaders from leftist parties and organizations, signed the petition.

Turkish Army and Illegal Weapons In Kurdish Territories

35 Kurdish guerrillas have lost their life in the operation carried out by the Turkish Armed Forces between 22-24 October. Twenty-four bodies are held at Malatya Forensic Institute's morgue. Families and IHD officials who have seen the bodies have confirmed that they were torn to pieces and had burns all over, signs which indicates the use of some chemicals. All the body has no bullet marks but an intense skin eruption. Only four of the bodies have been identified and reclaimed by their families. The bodies of other 20 HPG guerrillas are still held at the morgue in Malatya and families are unable to identify them.

“Two of the bodies were without head and some others were torn to pieces. I wasn't able to find out which of the bodies belonged to my son” said Seyithan Çelik, father of HPG member Oktay Çelik.

The families of the unidentified bodies will have to give a blood sample to enable a DNA test to be carried out. To add grief to pain, the Prosecutor refused to give the identity information of the casualties who-he claimed-weren't carrying identity cards, remarking that autopsy isn't allowed on unidentified bodies.

Expressing his sorrows for the death of the PKK members, BDP Co-Chair Selahattin Demirtaş said; “It is a great tragedy and sadness for us to see the children of this people, who try to end the war, demand peace and give this much effort for solution, lose their lives in this way.”

BDP had call on the people to shout their outrage. The call is being answered in many Kurdish cities both with the shops not opening and rallies. There will be rallies in Diyarbakır, Cizre, Hazro, Silvan, Bismil, Idil, Mardin among other places.

Mesopotamia Solidarity Association with Families of Disappeared (MEYADER) apply to prosecutor in order to make denouncement against Turkish Military and Security Forces and a delegation of IHD Hakkari Branch, BDP Provincial Organization members and families of HPG (People's Defence Forces) guerrillas went to Kazan Valley (Geliyê Tiyarê) where Turkish army used chemical weapons during the clashes on October 22-24 in Çukurca district of Hakkari.

While the delegation and families found body parts in the clash area, the villagers in the area told that HPG guerrillas had died in the caves hit by napalm bombs dropped during the clashes. Eyewitnesses talk about a terrible situation in which chemical weapons were intensely used, also remarked that after the clashes the bodies of guerrillas had been taken from the area but many bodies were torn to pieces.

Surveying rocks where 11 bodies had been found, the delegation told that the area-next to Cevizli Village- had been destroyed to as a result of the chemical weapons and napalm bombs. With the samples collected from the area the delegation would do what it is necessary to establish whether chemical weapons have been used. The aim is make a statement after researches have been completed. But first of all, the Government of Turkey has to answer to several questions: Is there a stock of chemical weapons? Were chemical weapons used in the recent operations? Why is the autopsy reports of guerillas kept secret? What is the cause of death written on these autopsy reports? ”

Unfortunately, the Turkish Army is not new to the use of chemical weapons. The IHD Diyarbakır branch had published a detailed report on the use of chemical weapons. The IHD report contains important information about the Turkish army operations in which chemical weapons have been used.

The dossier states for example that 20 PKK militants, who lost their lives in the operation near the Ballıkaya (Bilika) village in Silopi district of Şırnak on May 11, 1999, were said to have been killed with chemical weapons. A chemical gas tube, claimed to have been used in the operation and found at the scene, was sent to Germany by militants for a criminal investigation. The report issued after the investigation in the criminal laboratory in Germany concluded that the material (the tube) was of a deadly chemical gas containing chemicals.

Another sad example is represented by 8 PKK militants including two women, who lost their lives in a clash in September 2009 Cukurca district of Hakkari. Upon finding some photos and materials verifying the assertion, human rights organizations sent the materials to Germany for an investigation. The University of Hamburg issued a report and proved the use of chemical weapons by the TSK (Turkish Armed Forces).

A leading foreign-affairs politician and MP from Chancellor Angela Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union Party — as well members of parliament from the Green

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Party and the Left Party — have called for an international investigation into the Turkish armed forces' use of biological weapons, which is a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention;

We have to remark that the new Chief of General Staff Necdet Ozel appear in a video while conducting an operation near Ballıkaya (Bilik), where in 1999 were killed by the use of chemical weapons, 19 guerrillas of the PKK. The video was filmed by a soldier who participated in the operation.

With these images it was possible to reconstruct the tragic events of 11 May 1999, but also clearly delineate the profile of the Turkish Chief of Staff. Recall that Ozel, during his inaugural address he stated explicitly that it will work in enforcing the protection of rights. Unfortunately the video broadcast by Roj TV reality shows distinctly different but that is unfortunately overshadowed by the Turkish press and ignored by the public reaction to the first international.

Also the German MPs Ulla Jelpke, Andrei Hunk, Ingrid Remmers, Heidrun Dittrich, Harald Weinberg, made the following declaration addressed to the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan: "A general who is guilty of these war crimes, cannot solve the Kurdish question. With this attitude, Ozel closes all forms of peaceful means such as to resolve the Kurdish question. When he covered the role of senior commander of the gendarmerie, has not made solely responsible for the killing and torture of many individuals, but the May 11, 1999 authorized the use of chemical weapons against Kurdish guerrillas. "In 2010 Member of the Ulla Jelpke has tabled a parliamentary question was denounced the use of chemical weapons by the Turkish army during the year.

Video Link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDR_6YcUC_E&NR=1

In 1977, during a debate in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, Turkey supported a complete ban on chemical weapons.

At the First Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997, Turkey emphasized the importance of the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention and stated its commitment and its determination to contribute actively to the realization of the Convention's aims.

In Turkey, human rights advocates, BDP members NGO's have long demanded an investigation about the use of chemical weapons by Turkey against the Kurdish population. The Army and the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip

Erdogan has been stubbornly silent or tried to portray the accusations of war crimes as "PKK propaganda."

It is well known that the Prime Minister is not interested in human rights violations or democratic solution to the Kurdish Issue. The only thing that matters to Mr. Erdogan is that the army eradicates the "PKK problem once and for all by any means necessary".

The Turkish Foreign Ministry continues to reject the accusations. Turkey is a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and its armed forces do not possess any biological or chemical weapons, the Ministry reportedly said.

In summary, a radical change of the Turkish government towards transparency and improved confidence building measures is urgently needed to counter suspicions about the nature, extent and objective of its activities related to chemical agents.

Turkish Army used prohibited Weapon against Kurdish people and freedom fighter in its recent offensive and this is a Crime against Humanity. The International community UN, EU, USA and the rest of international institutions have to implement justice all over the world and condemn what the Turkish Army has done. This country has lost thousands of youths in this dirty war. Once again we call on all human rights organizations, democratic institutions and establishments to demand investigation into the usage of chemical weapon.