



INTERNATIONAL E-BULLETIN

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Peace and Democracy Party

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PEACE AND DEMOCRACY PARTY



(Arrested elected mayors and politicians are handcuffed)

THE “KCK OPERATIONS” ARE ANTI-KURD OPERATIONS!

THE LIST OF THE ARRESTED ELECTED KURDISH POLITICIANS

6 members of parliament, 12 mayors, 18 members of the municipal assemblies and 6 members of city council from BDP are still in prison;

Hatip Dicle: Former Co-Chairperson of the Democratic Society Congress, he was previously arrested while a Member of Parliament and imprisoned for ten years. He re-elected in 12 June 2011 but his deputyship is removed by the High Election Board.

Ramazan Uysal: Mayor of Sirnak

Mehmet Nuri Güneş: Mayor of Iğdir

Ruken Yetiskin: Mayor of Yuksekova

Çağlar Demirel: Mayor of Derik

Resul Sadak: Mayor of Idil

Emin Togurlu: Mayor of Silopi

Aydin Budak: Mayor of Cizre

Zulkuf Karatekin: Mayor of Kayapinar

Nejdet Atalay: Mayor of Batman

Ferhan Turk: Mayor of Kiziltepe

İhsan Guler: Mayor of Baskale

Lezgin Bingöl: Mayor of Kolludere

Abdurrezzak Yıldız: Mayor of Balveren

Leyla Guven: Mayor of Viransehir. She is also member of Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

Şeyhmuz Bayhan: President of Diyarbakir Provincial Council and member CEMR

Etem Sahin: Mayor of Suruc

Selma Irmak: Former vice-President of DTP and Elected MP for Sirnak in 12 June 2011

Kemal Aktas: MP for Van

İbrahim Ayhan: MP for Urfa

Faysal Sarıyıldız: MP for Sirnak

Gülser Yıldırım: MP for Mardin

Huseyin Kalkan: Former mayor of Batman.

Emrullah Cin: Former mayor of Viransehir.

Abdullah Akengin: Former mayor of Dicle.

Kazim Kurt: Former mayor of Hakkari.

Nadir Bingol: Former mayor of Ergani.

Ali Simsek: Deputy Mayor of Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality

CRIMINAL BASIS FOR THE ARRESTMENTS

1- Article 301-1 of Turkish Criminal Code relating to “violation of the unity of the state and country.” 11 people are standing trial on the grounds of this article with increased terms of imprisonment.

2- Article 314-1 that involves the “management of an organization by arranging its activities”. 21 people are to stand trial based upon this article.

3- Article 314-1 in relation to “management of a terror organization”. 14 people are to stand trial based upon this article.

4- “Membership of a terror organization”. A total of 14 people accused.

5- Article 314-2 that is related to “being a member of an organization while seeming to be outside of it”. 15 people will appear in court under this article.

6- Contravention of law in relation to propaganda and law no 2911.

7- Contravention of Cooperatives law no 6136.

8- “Agitation for the terror organization”.

THE REASON OF THE ARRESTMENTS

As is known, Turkish State has been launched police operations against Kurdish politicians from DTP (Democratic Society Party) and its successor BDP (Peace and Democracy Party), trade unions and NGOs such as Human Rights Association since 14 April 2009 just after the Local Elections in 29 March 2009. According to the election's result DTP gained a victory in Kurdish cities. This victory perceived as a threat by the AKP Government. Spokesperson of the Government, Mr. Cemil ÇİÇEK said "DTP reached to the Armenian Border." This mentality was a signal about the project for to weaken the Kurdish legal movement. So, the police raids started against DTP. The government is called the operations as "Anti-KCK Operations".



Up until now, more than 8500 people taken into custody and nearly 6000 of them are arrested. Because of the daily and continuing "arrestment storms", it's difficult to calculate how many people are in prison by the "Anti-Kurd Operations". Almost in every cities and every day, dozens of Kurdish politicians or supporters becoming victim of the police raids in early mornings. Besides, the prosecutors are not informing the arrested politicians' advocates. According to the Anti Terror Law, every speech about the Kurdish Identity is reason of being accusing as a member of the KCK. It is well known that Turkey is preventing the freedom of speech and try to criminalize the Kurdish People's rights by the Anti-KCK Operations. Therefore, Kurdish People call the operations as "Anti-Kurd Operations".

THE DEMOCRATIC OPENING AND ILLUSION OF ADVACNED DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY



By Muharrem Erbey, president of the Diyarbakır chapter of the Human Rights Association of Turkey, writing from Diyarbakır prison

Voltaire said, "those who have lost freedom it lost it because they didn't defend it." The American Declaration of Independence of 1776, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen of 1789, and the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights all emphasize resistance to repression as a right and personal duty. Rights and freedoms can be restricted in any society; the issue is to what extent, and that extent mustn't tip the scale of justice. Human rights defenders and people of conscience set out to fulfill their personal duties when repression in defense of power intensifies and destabilizes this scale.

Both in authentically democratic societies and those where the exercise of rights is a façade maintained through an illusion, we human rights defenders have adopted as a principle the protection of human honor without regard to race, language, ethnic identity, religion, class, or sex.

Founded in 1986, the Human Rights Association of Turkey (İHD) has struggled to help peoples' search for freedom access justice. Twenty-three of our members have been extra-judicially executed because of their human rights work, hundreds of members and managers have been imprisoned for prolonged periods, and the organization has been subjected to thousands of lawsuits.

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İHD documents the rampant violations committed in our region with data, reports and observations, and support victims both in the legal process and the wider struggle for justice. We share our data with the local, national and international community. We criticize. To those who claim that human rights abuses have ended, we say no, they're continuing. We have been and are being targeted for this reason.

The president of the İHD branch in Diyarbakır, the largest city in the Kurdish region of Turkey, was last arrested in 1995, during one of the darkest periods of the conflict here. No other branch presidents have been arrested in the last 15 years, although they've been subjected to about 300 investigations and lawsuits. I was abruptly arrested in December 2009 as part of the single investigation currently pending against me. I'm not currently facing any other lawsuits or investigations.

Human rights has become chewing gum for everybody, but we're being silenced.

When deputy prime minister Bülent Arınç and interior minister Beşir Atalay came to Diyarbakır to meet with us, we told them that we heartily supported the so-called 'democratic opening', which was begun by the government at the end of 2008. We emphasized that we wanted to help give the initiative substance, and that concrete steps were urgently needed to stop violence and put an end to deaths. Regarding the Kurdish issue, we pointed out that a solution required legalizing the use of the Kurdish language in the public realm, transfer of authority to local administrations, the creation of a civilian, egalitarian, pluralist constitution, and PKK members' entry into civilian politics through an unconditional amnesty. Our work caused discomfort.

The Kurdish issue, which is Turkey's oldest and most life-claiming, can be resolved through the participation and joint effort of a wide range of institutions, organizations, and other actors. Most human rights violations in Turkey are related to the Kurdish issue in one way or another. There have been 29 successive major Kurdish rebellions in the last 205 years, the first one occurring in Mosul in 1806. The 40 million Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria are deprived of basic rights and freedoms, perceived as second-class citizens, exposed to torture and maltreatment, prevented from freely exercising their language and culture, without status, and unable to sufficiently participate in administration.

It's significant that, although history has known the Kurds for thousands of years, neither the dominant powers in Kurdish lands nor international forces recognize the Kurds, choosing instead to ignore the posture adopted against them.

I've been in prison since 24 December 2009, for approximately 18 months, due to claims that I 'belittled' the state in speeches about human rights and the Kurdish issue I delivered at the UN building in Geneva as well as the English, Belgian, and Swedish parliaments; advised victims in their applications to the European Court of Human Rights; prepared projects on women's, children's, and human rights; participated in work on preparation of a civilian, pluralist constitution; frequently participated in press statements delivered by various NGOs, and that I did so well; gave the PKK 'morale'; wrote to public prosecutors and the Turkish parliament's human rights commission on behalf of victims (indeed, the government prosecutor later characterized these writings as if they are furthering the goals of PKK); and that I'm a member of the Turkey Assembly of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK/TM), an organization said to be an extension of the PKK.

When I went before the public prosecutor and judge responsible for my case, I admitted to all of these activities (with the exception of being a KCK member), said that I stand behind them and have no regrets, and stated that I'll do them all again when I'm out of prison.

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In May 2010, a 7,500 page indictment was released. The folder dealing with 152 suspects, 104 of whom are being held in prison pending the result of the trial, amounts to 132,000 pages when supplementary 'evidence' is included; among those facing prosecution are 15 elected mayors, 2 chairmen of general provincial councils, and scores of politicians. We've been in prison for 18, 20, 24 months each. The claims about me include evidence from a 'secret witness,' and promote false and illusionary statements. In our first trial, we declared that we'd be giving our statements in our mother language, Kurdish, as well as Turkish. The chief judge turned off our microphones, characterizing Kurdish as an "Unknown Language", and the prosecution has stalled.

Since the Turkish Republic was established in 1923, there's been an effort to homogenize all ethnic identities through such methods as repression, forced migration, assimilation, arrests and extrajudicial killings carried out by unknown perpetrators.

The Turkish system has always resisted change by adopting a conservative stance against different identities and demands for freedom. In 2002, there were 52,000 convicts and suspects in Turkish prisons; as of April 2011, there are 123,000 inmates, most of them convicted.

Does the imprisonment of opposition politicians, critical journalists, and human rights defenders signify that Turkey's regime has become totalitarian? All developments are implemented in the name of advanced democracy. The acceptance of difference is the essence of genuine equality. Attempts to suppress difference indicate inequality.

A little more tolerance, cooperation, empathy. Let's not forget that everyone has the right to comment on their own society's development and that doing so is a moral duty.

People must know how to embrace suffering and pain for freedom, to take nourishment from these difficulties. Notwithstanding those whose hearts have hardened, who feed on their own rage, who place unbearable emotional burdens on their heart, we stubbornly find nourishment and power in freedom. Everything for equality, freedom and justice...

TO INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION

In a letter to the Supreme Court of Appeals Prosecutor's Office, Istanbul Office of the Chief Public Prosecutor stated that a connection had been determined between the KCK and the BDP within the framework of the information obtained under KCK operations.

Within the framework of the document sent, it was reported that the Supreme Court of Appeals Prosecutor's Office could open a case against the BDP in the event of determining any "connection" after reviewing the Law on Political Parties.

More than 6000 people, including 18 mayors, five deputies, dozens of city councilors and thousands of party members including vice co-presidents, have been arrested since 2009 despite the fact that no one single evidence hasn't been found since the beginning. The number of arrests of the politicians related BDP is over 5000 while the number of the convicted BDP related people is already far more than 7000 with the latest waves in İstanbul, Diyarbakır and particularly in Şırnak.

All these arrests were made on the grounds that alleged connections to the Kurdistan Communities Congress (KCK).

This operations smashing the process of dialogue with an axe and insisting on deadlock.

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We call attention to the wave of violence devoted to eliminate the Kurdish politics. Most of the former and current executives of our party are in custody now. We show our concern about the Prime Minister's political attitude that intends to make things difficult and to destroy grounds of compromise rather than to strengthen constitutional discussions and seeks for negotiation. We warned that the situation may begin to resemble the 90s. The operations, implemented through special authorized prosecutors are samples of anti-democratic practices seen in authoritarian regimes.

The Prime Minister targets the BDP by ordering instructions around every day and added; PM members, mayors and party members are arrested every day under the name of KCK operations. BDP discuss whether to hold conciliatory and solution-oriented negotiation in such an environment. The hope is that Turkey will work to create an environment where its constitution can be discussed without living political crisis but the discourse and practices of the Prime Minister don't contribute to this process. The Kurdish issue is a problem with political, economic, social, cultural, historical extents and its solution must be ensured at the Parliament through peaceful and democratic means.

At this stage, to defend peace against war more powerfully, to give a parliamentary support to the people who are resisting against attacks, to strengthen the resistance front against political operations and to contribute to the struggle of ensuring freedom for Hatip Dicle and all arrested politicians, the BDP have decided to take part in the parliamentary works, to open the way to democratic politics and to re-conduct negotiations.

But detention operations have been intensified since the BDP return to the Parliament, all the detainees are BDP executives, mayors and central office directors. They have begun with party members, then they have continued to arrest party members but they also begun taking party executives and majors into custody. An unprecedented unlawfulness is applied by the police and politicized courts with special authorities under the command of the AKP government which wants to suppress the political opponents in politics under cover of fight against terror.

The Kurdish politicians have been detained on, "Suspected links with the KCK" and this accusation is repeated like a "mantra" just to justify the preventing, through incarceration, but the Turkish establishment wants to prevent any kind of political discourse which dissents with the main stream AKP discourse.

The Kurdish people and the representatives they have freely chosen in an election are the main receptor of this wave of violence because they are at the forefront of a political struggle to forward a new model for the society in Turkey. This is what scares the government: proposing a new, viable model for the society in all of its sections actually undermines the government's project in which there is no room for a new way of living together within established geographic boundaries. So the Turkish state drop its axes on the Kurdish people. The dramatic effect of this being the thousands of politicians, human right defenders and activists arrested.

We have also to remember that, Labor, Democracy and Freedom Block deputies is entered in Parliament, but five MPs remain behind bars. Not all the deputies will be there. Hatip Dicle for a start has been illegally stripped of his mandate is in prison while his seat is occupied by an AKP woman who got less votes than Dicle. The people of Diyarbakir were denied their choice and instead on their head was imposed someone they did not want. The BDP group will be also short of another 5 deputies today, as Kemal Aktaş, İbrahim Ayhan, Faysal Sarıyıldız, Gülser Yıldırım and Selma Irmak, are still in prison.

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The Turkish state repression machine is destroying everything it finds on its way and it is happening with no voice rising in protest from the democratic Europe. Would the rest of the world, stand assisting in silence to this suppression of the right to talk, propose, discuss, ultimately to make policy in a democratic way?

We make an appeal to the International Community, UN, EU, International Press and NGO's, to recognize and denounce that those detentions have no legal basis and to support us to protect Kurdish politicians and human rights defenders. With this help we wish that the political situation in Turkey will evolve into more mature, pluralist politics in which all strains of opinion can compete free from the specter of violence. This latest wave of arrests against leading Kurdish activists, politicians and community leaders can only inflame an already tense situation that will ultimately need to be resolved through dialogue and negotiation as steps towards an enduring peace settlement, which is exactly what Kurdish spokespeople have consistently demanded.