

Information File on INDEFINITE KURDISH HUNGER STRIKE



Freedom for Ocalan – Political status for Kurdistan

1 March 2012

Contents:

- Introductory Letter
- European Hunger Strikers' Press Release
- Information on Abdullah Öcalan's Condition
- Selma Irmak's Letter
- ANF's News on the Hunger Strikers in Turkish Prisons
- MP on hunger strike: "We are entering a critical stage that will determinate the future of our people"
- Selahattin Demirtaş's Letter Regarding the KCK Operations
- Information on the Roboski Massacre

For Further Information:

<http://kurdishfreedom.wordpress.com/>
<http://www.freedom-for-ocalan.com/>
<http://www.firatnews.eu>

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen's

We would like to inform you of the hunger strikes that were started by Kurdish political prisoners in Turkey's prisons which have consequently spread among the Kurdish people. With this letter we are hoping to present to you the reasons and developments that have led to such a course of action.

A hunger strike started by the 8000 Kurdish politicians imprisoned in Turkey has now turned into an indefinite-irreversible hunger strike as a result of the complete disregard of the protest by the Turkish government. The first group of indefinite hunger strikers began their strike on the 20th of January 2012 to coincide with the 13th anniversary of Abdullah Ocalan's handing over to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy. Among the 400 strikers there are two elected MPs of the BDP, Selma Irmak and Faysal Sariyildiz and as of the 28th of February BDP's Urfa MP Ibrahim Ayhan.

If in a country hundreds of people, including elected politicians, are starving themselves to raise awareness against persecution then that country requires closer inspection. The political authority by choosing to approach Turkey's most important issue with violence and elimination rather than dialogue and negotiation is pushing the whole country into a dark future. The AKP government is quashing anything in the name of peace, democracy and freedom with an all out concept of war. In only the last few months unlawfully administered cross-border military operations have resulted in the deaths of 41 civilians; chemical weapons have been deployed against the guerilla forces and deaths on both sides have risen. According to the BDP's co-chair Selahattin Demirtas' statement on the 17th of February, since 2009, in accordance with the countries anti-terror laws the operations against Kurdish politicians have seamlessly continued. Among the imprisoned are Members of Parliament, Mayors, local councilors, writers, journalists, human rights activists, representatives of non-governmental organizations, lawyers, trade unionists and students. All in all a total number of over 6000 people have been put in prison.

Negotiations that had started in 2006 between the Kurdish people's leader Mr. Abdullah Ocalan and the Turkish state did not lead to any positive steps being taken by the state and were consequently ceased in July 2011 by the AKP government. Since this date, an intensified policy of isolation has been applied to Mr. Ocalan and the 5 other inmates at the island prison of Imrali. Mr. Ocalan is a significant actor in the Kurdish question. The government's complete disregard of this fact is evident in its 7 month long isolation of Mr. Ocalan. This course of action is distancing Turkey from the road to peace and day by day is moving the country towards a dangerous time. We, the Kurdish people, are seriously concerned for Mr. Ocalan's health.

The Western powers that jump around and hassle over even the smallest developments in the Middle East play death and dumb when it comes to the Kurdish people. Even relevant international organizations turn a blind eye to developments. Although the CPT is the only organization that can visit the prison of Imrali, they have not taken any steps to appease the worries of the Kurdish people. This is why the Kurdish people, whether imprisoned or outside, are starving themselves – till death if necessary – so that awareness can be raised and action can be taken.

The Kurdish people living in Europe undertook a long march between Geneva and Strasbourg in freezing temperatures of -20 degrees under the title of 'Freedom to Ocalan – status to Kurdistan' to raise awareness of the plight of the Kurdish people. After the march a huge demonstration attended by 60.000 people was carried out in Strasbourg. Due to the urgency and significance of the problem in hand an indefinite-irreversible hunger strike will be carried out in Strasbourg, the location of the European Council.

The European institutions and public must not remain indifferent to these developments. Our expectations of the European and democratic public domain is that they no longer be bystanders to the plight of the Kurdish people and help in finding a fair and just solution to the Kurdish question.

The Kurds are screaming: We want justice. We want the freedom of our Leader Ocalan and all political prisoners. We want a just solution to the Kurdish question using democratic means and practices. We want to live freely in our country just like all other peoples. PLEASE HEAR OUR CALL AND OUR VOICES.

Please lend an ear to the calls of the people who are putting their lives on the line for peace and resolution.

KON-KURD

TO THE PUBLIC

Those who closely know Turkey can, with reason, clarify that the most fundamental issue of Turkey is the Kurdish Issue. If an issue is not correctly identified, then any developed 'solution' will accomplish nothing further than cause more damage. The Kurdish Issue is not a terror issue as it has been persistently tried to be portrayed.

Kurds have been living a life of war for the past 40 years. Kurds, as one of the oldest nations in history, have been living a life that is divided by Persian, Arab and Turkish states, and still deprived of freedom. It is a nation, whose rights for using their language, culture and traditions have been taken away in the 'democracy and freedom age' that we currently live in. Speaking or writing in Kurdish is still now allowed in Syria, Iran and Turkey. The Kurds that live within the borders of these countries still do not hold a political status as a nation.

Within these countries, Turkish state implements a special and a more systematic repression. The Turkish state persistently tries to portray an issue regarding approximately 40 million Kurds as an issue of terror, oppressing anything that stands for peace, democracy and freedoms to try and declare a whole nation as terrorists. It is due to this approach that the highest amount of people placed in prisons due to terror allegations is in Turkey. Especially within the last three years approximately 9 thousand people, amongst whom were 6 members of parliament, 31 mayors, 96 journalists, 36 lawyers, 183 party managers, unionists, civil rights activists, women and students, have been imprisoned. More than 2000 children, known by the public as 'stone throwing kids', are in prisons.

In addition to these political operations, in the operations carried out within the last few months and against international laws, 41 civilians have been killed, chemical weapons have been used against the guerrilla forces and number of losses on both sides has increased.

The European Union and United States of America are responsible for the implementation of these state terrors towards the Kurdish people by the Turkish government. This responsibility is not just an inspection and control responsibility. Because, USA and EU provide military, political, economic and diplomatic support in this war the Turkish state wages against the Kurdish people.

USA provides Turkey with its unmanned aerial vehicles (Heron) and its most sophisticated technic equipment for intelligence. With foremost being France and Germany, the European nations are supporting the terror of the Turkish state by being silent in the face of obvious massacres. Whilst Europe does not voice the bombing and massacre of 34 Kurdish villagers by Turkish combat aircraft on 28th December 2011, USA made a statement saying 'we stand where the Turkish state stands'.

The aim of the aggression concept that the Turkish state has been trying to put in practice for the last five-six months is to neutralise the freedom struggle and the legitimate resistance right of the Kurdish people. Within this frame, the foremost is the implementation of heavy isolation against Kurdish peoples' leader Abdullah Ocalan. Ocalan is recognised as the political representative by a large margin of the Kurdish people. Due to this, Kurds observe their fate as if it is connected to the fate of Ocalan and treat his captivity as their captivity and his freedom as their freedom. The isolation against Ocalan continues with the support that the Turkish government obtains from the European Union and the European Commission. Ocalan has not been allowed to meet with his solicitors since 27th July 2011. 39 lawyers of Ocalan have been arrested and imprisoned for being Ocalan's lawyers. During this process meeting with their families is also obstructed.

Up until the past year, although dialogues and negotiations between Ocalan and the state had reached a specific level, the procedures deadlocked as the required steps were not taken by the

state. The interrupted negotiations left their place to war and violent policies. Mr Ocalan is not an ordinary prisoner. With foremost being the United States of America, both USA and Europe are directly responsible for both the pirate-like kidnapping of Ocalan from Kenya with his hand-over to Turkey on 15th February 1999 and the Imrali system in which he is currently imprisoned. It is well known that Imrali is directly under the control of the European Council.

European Council and its affiliates, although interlocutors of the fears of the Kurdish people stemming due to the state terror implemented in Kurdistan and the 7 month long heavy isolation against Ocalan, have shown by not carrying out their responsibilities even at a minimum level that they have a biased attitude.

Against all these deprecating and unjust practices, the Kurds insist on living with a free, fair and equal status. The foremost and essential condition for this is the immediate cessation of the unlawful and discretionary isolation of Mr Ocalan, on behalf of the Kurdish people, holds a key role in finding a solution for the Kurdish issue and who leads negotiations on these bases with the Turkish state. Kurdish people have serious concerns about the health and safety of Ocalan. For this reason, political prisoners in 400 prisons have initiated an indefinite hunger strike, with tens of thousands of Kurds supporting this from the outside.

As a group of Kurds who have taken Democracy and Freedom to heart, we have, as of 1st March 2012 Thursday at 12.00pm, to stop the military policies against the Kurdish people and the political genocide policies and to end the ongoing destruction and assimilation policies, with our demand being 'Freedom to Mr Abdullah Ocalan – Status to Kurdistan', started our INDEFINITE HUNGER STRIKE.

DEMANDS:

1 – Elimination of existing fears about Ocalan's health and safety issue, which has escalated to a severe extent, as quickly as possible by the European Council and its affiliates.

2 – Elimination of the strict isolation of Ocalan, which causes extreme discomfort to the Kurdish people and which may also become the reason and cause for a great war and countless deaths, and the urgent creation of an environment in which Ocalan can meet with his lawyers.

3 – Attempts towards freedom for Ocalan and a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue by foremost the European Council and international institutions.

4 – Monitoring of the Turkish state by the European Council, regarding the ongoing oppressive and violent policies against the Kurdish people, and the freezing of Turkey's membership if no action towards a policy change occurs.

5 – The European Union and European states to abandon the attitudes which up till now and still supports Turkey's violence and denial policies and to utilise their influence for a fair and peaceful resolution to the Kurdish Issue. As a first and initial step for this, the removal of the Kurdish Freedom Movement from the Terror Lists in which it has been unjustly placed.

6 – The solution of the Kurdish Issue via democratic and political channels and the urgent creation of an environment for Mr Ocalan to conduct politics, and the involvement of international agencies and institutes to achieve this aim.

7 – Active cooperation and support of democratic international public and agencies for Kurdish peoples' democracy, freedom and peace struggle.

Abdullah Öcalan between isolation and negotiations

The arbitrary regime on Imrali Island, the European Guantanamo

In 1999 Abdullah Öcalan was abducted from Kenya and brought to Turkey. Ever since, he has been kept in an isolation prison on Imrali Island. For almost eleven years he was the only prisoner, guarded by more than 1000 soldiers. He has been sentenced to death in a trial that was deemed "unfair" by the European Court of Human Rights. The sentence was later commuted to "aggravated life sentence" without the possibility of parole.

The inhumane isolation conditions on Imrali Island have sparked wide criticism by international human rights institutions. Council of Europe's anti-torture watchdog CPT has produced an unprecedented number of reports on Imrali Island Prison, more than on any other detention facility ever. CPT criticises heavily the isolation conditions that Abdullah Öcalan and the five other prisoners are kept in.

After more than two years of negotiations between Öcalan and the Turkish government about a political solution to the Kurdish question, the total isolation has been renewed. Since July 2011 there has been no contact with the prisoners on Imrali Island.

Imprisonment conditions

The island

Imrali Island is located in the Sea of Marmara between the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, on the border between Europe and Asia. Imrali has been used as a prison island for a long time. In 1961, the first freely elected prime minister of Turkey, Adnan Menderes, was executed on the island after a military coup. The famous film director Yılmaz Güney was also once imprisoned here. The whole island has been declared a prohibited area. The passage by boat is long and exhausting for visitors.

The prison

The prison that Abdullah Öcalan and five other prisoners are currently held in was built in 2009. All cells are solitary confinement cells. Every prisoner has a separate yard for yard exercise. The walls around these small yards are extremely high, giving the prisoner the impression of being at the ground of a well.

Isolation and arbitrariness

Long term isolation and solitary confinement are designed to break prisoners psychologically and physically. It is therefore regarded as "white torture".

During eleven years as the only prisoner on Imrali Island, Öcalan was not allowed to touch anyone. Even handshakes were forbidden. He still cannot receive letters from the outside world. He is the only prisoner in Turkey without access to television and telephone at all.

Öcalan can only receive visits from his siblings for 30 minutes per month and consult his lawyers for at most an hour per week. However these consultations are often blocked by the state and sometimes do not take place for months, resulting in a total isolation of Imrali Island. This fact especially has been criticised heavily by the CPT.

The prison regime of Imrali Island is guided by arbitrariness in many ways. Consultation between lawyer and client are overheard and recorded regularly without a legal basis.

Implementations like these have earned Imrali Island Prison the title "European Guantanamo".

The current situation

Isolation – a continued human rights violation

Right now, in March 2012, it has been more than seven months that the prisoners on Imrali Island have been completely isolated from the outside world. More than seven months have passed without a visit, without a letter, without a phonecall. This is the longest period of total isolation during the 13 years that Imrali Island has served as a "maximum security prison".

At the same time it became known that for the past five years there had been intensive contacts between the Turkish government and Öcalan. A series of talks had been conducted. These negotiations had even lead up to a written draft agreement which the government then refused to implement. Instead the Erdoğan government changed its strategy and started an all-out attack on the Kurdish opposition.

Deprivation of the right to defence

Defending Öcalan has always been a difficult task. His lawyers have been harassed and threatened for a long time. They faced numerous law suits and many were banned from the case according to a new law. Numerous applications to the European Court of Human Rights are pending because of the imprisonment conditions.

In November 2011 several law offices were raided by the police. The files of the ongoing ECHR cases were confiscated. 36 lawyers that represented Öcalan were arrested in an attempt to deprive him of the right to legal defence, a crucial right for a state under the rule of law. The lawyers are still in prison awaiting trial.

The political dimension

The ongoing isolation of Abdullah Öcalan is a serious human rights violation. But it is more than "just" a human rights issue. It has some serious political implications.

Öcalan is the most high-profile Kurdish politician in Turkey. More than 3,5 Millions Kurds have signed a declaration recognising him as a political representative. In Kurdistan and Turkey, everybody knows that a political solution to the Kurdish issue has to be negotiated with him. Since 1999, every government of Turkey has recognised this fact and led talks with Abdullah Öcalan on Imrali Island—although no government admitted this until 2010. The latest talks between the Erdoğan government and Öcalan started in 2009 and lasted for two and a half years.

To close the doors of dialogue means to open up the gates of violence. When the government broke off the talks in mid-2011, prime minister Erdoğan hoped to crush the Kurdish opposition with new mass arrests of politicians and with military operations. This has already lead to massacres like the killing of 35 civilians in Roboski/Sirnak by Turkish aerial bombardment. A new spiral of violence and counterviolence may be imminent.

The government strategy of violence and tension is leading nowhere. It almost certainly brings more fighting and bloodshed. The only alternative to violence is dialogue. Öcalan has proven that he is ready and able to lead such a dialogue.



International Initiative

Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan — Peace in Kurdistan

P.O. Box 100511, D-50445 Cologne

info@freedom-for-ocalan.com, www.freedom-for-ocalan.com



Foto: Selma Irmak

My Very Precious Co-Presidents,

My Dear Friends,

I greet you with love and longing. I embrace you with hope.

We will soon finish the third year of our separation. We have lived and watched this breathtaking process from the prison; our hearts pounding against iron fences. We experienced a lot. History will become witness to our experience. Just like you, we are struggling to come out clean from this test, which historical circumstances has subjected us to, for the sake of our people. We appreciate and support the work you carry out wholeheartedly and zealously. We derive our strength from watching you; sometimes with a smile on our face and other times with our hearts twisted. There is no doubt that these are difficult times. All of us are obliged to work hard and do our best. Certain moments in history necessitate quick action. Otherwise opportunities to turn defeat into victory, loss into gain will be missed. We are going through exactly such a moment when every event and development must be measured and evaluated with the sensitivity of an alchemist; so that the next movement can be planned carefully and executed successfully .

The stage we are in is one where the distance to reach our goal of democracy and peace has become smallest and as such any deviation from the right path makes an uttermost impact. We must handle everything with the subtlety of an artist. Unfortunately however, the government and the state – which is no longer different from the former in meaning and intention – is acting as irresponsible and destructive as an elephant in a glass cave. The attitude we are witnessing today on the part of the government is the kind performed by those who have power without having sovereignty. Hence, there is little doubt that the current recklessness of the government is caused by powers on whom it relies and by whom its back is caressed, thereby leading it to the pit of death.

We, as those who feel the hand of history on their shoulders, must bring this attitude to an end. A positivist outlook which feeds of from stereotypical judgments and which would provide stereotypical solutions will not do. Those who think that small fish will be eaten by the big fish are those who do not recognize the power of resistance. As you already expressed, submitting oneself to the actions of the powerful will only make us loose. Unfortunately, we have long been lingered by those in power. We don't have any time to loose. We must slowly, systematically and modestly build our democratic autonomy without bringing what we do in conflict with what we say.

My Dear Friends,

I strongly wish I were with you in these times. To watch all that's happening with hands tied or rather handcuffed is the worst that such times can do to a human being. That's what captivity means.

Otherwise, to those who have free minds and hearts; the fences of the prison or, spatial limitation means nothing. On the other hand, those who serve freedom and democracy with their lives and ideas always land one time or another in prison. In other words, democracy is reached through the prison.

The Kurdish question has reached a point where only a democratic process based on dialogue and negotiation can bring peace and solution. We are aware that this will be a long and delicate process. Our people has been demanding a democratic solution for the last thirty years. To fulfill their demand is both easy and difficult. A democratic solution can only be reached through a dialogue with Honorable Mr. Öcalan. Every peace process needs its actors. The person who assumed the leadership of our people is Honorable Mr. Öcalan; therefore he is the only person who can talk in the name of our people and must be the main actor. As elected officials and politicians of our people we are ready to fulfill our role in this process, take any risks and put our lives at stake. I am as concerned as you are because of the interruption of the peace process and of negotiations with Mr.Öcalan accompanied by his unprecedented forced isolation, which keeps him outside of the political realm. I am deeply worried that -what we call- the concept of political genocide towards the Kurds implemented through mass arrests, assassinations, massacres, verbal and material violence will lead to more hostility against them and will cause our two people to fight against each other.

Repression, fear, violation of rights and prevention of freedom of expression, reckless insults and irresponsible speeches on the part of government and the state are planting seeds of anger among the Kurdish youth as well. There are so many examples for such unacceptable attitude such as the congratulating speech of the prime minister following the Roboski massacre or, that of the interior minister declaring he can find no Kurdish problem or, that of the Chief of Military commenting on the Kurdish mother tongue. All our municipalities have been attacked; our NGO workers, politicians, municipal workers, mayors, students and children are being arrested. No human being can have a good sleep under such conditions.

My Precious Co-Presidents,

As a person who was elected by the honorable and willful people of Şırnak and, as a woman moved by what is happening all around, I can no longer remain a passive bystander in this process. Since I have been robbed from all instruments and means of expression, I am obliged to use my body as a site for communication. I wish I were able to discuss and contemplate with all of you before taking this decision. However, circumstances don't allow this. I want you to know that my heart is always with you. The history of this prison in Diyarbakır imposes on us to play a leadership role in resistance. I must confess that I am very excited and happy at this moment knowing that I am able to fulfill at least to some extent my obligation to my people.

I take this opportunity to declare that on the 15th of February, we are starting a hunger strike without interruption and rotation together with Hacıre Özdemir, Fadik Bayram, Ayşe Irmak, Leyla Deniz, Pınar Işık and Dirayet Taşdemir. We are inspired by how before us this prison succeeded in resisting and overcoming the darkness of the 1980 military junta. We –as the women of the Diyarbakır dungeon –wish to tear apart the darkness of February 15, which symbolizes Honorable Mr Öcalan's forced isolation and his exclusion from the political realm. We want to add our voice to the voice of our people. We want to meet you on your path to democratic resistance.

We hope we will succeed. With all our hearts Love and Greetings to all of you from all of us
With Hopes to meet you in days to come filled with peace and freedom.

Selma Irmak

February 15, 2012

Diyarbakır Prison

400 Kurdish Political Prisoners on Hunger Strike

On 15 February 2012 political prisoners went on an indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike in prisons of Turkey and Kurdistan. Among the 169 prisoners starting the hunger strike in Diyarbakır D and E-Type Prisons, Mardin E-Type Prison, Elbistan E-Type Prison and Bitlis E-Type Prison are also Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) Şırnak MPs Selma Irmak and Faysal Sarıyıldız. They demand freedom for Kurdish people's leader Öcalan, assurance of education in mother language and an end to political and military operations against the Kurdish people.

Diyarbakır D Tipi Prison (62 prisoners on hunger strike):

Lütfi Dağ, Özgür Yıldırım, Sinan Kaplan, Nadir Yıldırım, Nihat Varlı, Mirhan Göktaş, Mahsum Akbaş, Murat Yıldeniz, Mustafa Türkan, Umut Özer, Sıddık Çete, Serdar Ziriğ, Ahmet Çelen, Ali Ekinci, Aykut Eroğlu, Recep Güler, Ercan Sezgin, Tuncay Ok, Enver Özkartal, Mehmet Ermiş, Mahir Birgül, İlyas Efe, Yücel Çelik, Ramazan Malçok, Saffet Durmaz, Serhat Keskin, Necmetin Kaçar, A. Kemal Türk, Mikail Çağrıç, Savaş Aslan, Hekim Denli, Talat Uçar, İsmail Öndeş, Erdal Işık, Ömer Atlı, Mustafa Kaplan, Diyar Kaydu, Emrah Ubiç, Ulaş Telsaç, Murat Kozat, Ali Kurt, Ömer Sipek, Mehmet Aksu, Maşallah Özmen, Şafi Kayhan, Aslan Demir, Çetin Atlan, Mazlum Timuçin, Ufuk Fidan, Mehmet Taş, Bülent Buluç, Müslüm Tıkız, İrfan Bozencir, Osman Kılıç, Ozan Alpkaya, Selami Kızıl, Hüseyin Barsak, Cengiz Ünal, Murat Canşat, Salih İlem, Şerif Aslan, Yakup Borukanlı

Diyarbakır E Tipi Prison (9):

BDP Şırnak MP Selma Irmak, Fadile Bayram, Hacire Özdemir, Leyla Deniz, Ayşe Irmak, Pınar Işık, Dirayet Taşdemir, Hanım Çeşme and Emine Yılmaz.

Mardin E Tipi Prison (22):

BDP Şırnak MP Faysal Sarıyıldız, Ramazan Aktaş, Musa Aslan, Gürhan Koyuncu, Mahmut Balkaş, Toncay Gündoğan, Mesut Gökhan, Behruz Akgül, Bekir Kılıçaslan, Aziz Bulut, Mesut Kar, Ömer Kabul, Hayretin Alkan, Cahit Sevim, Zerdest Oduncu, Burhan Gök, Mehmet



Foto: Faysal Sarıyıldız

Ali Güray, Ruşen Erdem, Bahar Cirasun, Asiye Atılğan, Fatma Uyar, Cemile Duman.

Batman M Tipi Kapalı Prison (15):

only the names of Mahsum Bilen, Şehmus Bülbül, İlhan Rengin, Resul Saçaklıdır and Ahmet Çelik are known. They went on an indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike on 25 January 2012.



Foto: İbrahim Ayhan

Siirt E Tipi Kapalı Prison (15):

10 male and 5 female PKK and PAJK prisoners went on hunger strike. While the names of the female prisoners are unknown, the names of the male prisoners are İbrahim Akın, Ali Temelkuran, Nusret Yıldırım, Mehmet Şakar, İskan Yiğit, Muhammed Demir, Uğur Eren, Şefik Uçkan, Kasım Çelik and Abdurrahman Demir.

Bingöl M Tipi Kapalı Prison (14):

Bülent Buluç, Müslüm Tıkız, İrfan Bazencir, Osman Kılıç, Ozan Alpkaya, Selami Kızıl, Hüseyin Barsak, Cengiz Ünal, Murat Cansal, Salih İlem, Mehmet Şerif Aslan, Yakup Borukanlı, Hanım Çeşme, Emin Yılmaz.

Malatya Prison (8):

only 4 names of prisoners on hunger strike are known: Nevzat İçen, Suat Daştan, Ramazan Demir, Çetin İnsel.

Muş:

8 prisoners went on hunger strike, their names are not known. Tokat F Tipi Kapalı Prison (6): In a letter sent from prison Süleyman Yıldırım, Hüseyin Misto, Erdal Daş, Abdullah Cin, Hafzullah Kaçmaz and Havil Acar declared that they went on an indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike.

**Elbistan E Tipi Prison (5):**

Bedrettin Uzunboy, Salih Şimşek, Hüseyin Çığ, Emin Mutlu and Hüseyin Torunoğlu.

Bitlis E Tipi Prison (5):

Pelin Yılmaz, Ediba Ekmen, Ruken Çelik, Ülkem Özkan and Şeyman Kantarcı. Osmaniye F Tipi Kapalı Prison (5): Emrah Özdemir, Mehmet Akar, Mazlum Kapan, Ekrem Coşkun, Feridun Kayacan.

Rize Kalkandere L Tipi Prison (5):

Ramazan Özelçi, Haşim İzol, Mahsun Karaman, Abdulmenaf Aslan and Kamuran Aytaç. Kandıra 2 Nolu F Tipi Prison (5): Yakup Taş, Hakan Yalçınkaya, Maşallah Yağan, Necat Saçı and Alattin Semir Zuğurlu.

Erzurum Oltu Prison (4):

The prisoners Mesut Yabalak, İzet Eren, Kaçak Demirci and Metin Serhat went on an indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike on 20 January 2012. Their health situation is deteriorating.

Antalya L Tipi Kapalı Prison (2):

Halit İnan and Mehmet Aslan Tekirdağ Prison (1): Adnan Titiz

Further political prisoners of the prisons in Gebze, Urfa, Adıyaman and Midyat declared through communication with their relatives that they went on an indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike.

(Source: ANF/Ceni)



MP on hunger strike: “We are entering a critical stage that will determinate the future of our people”

24 February 2012

The current process is a warning to the government, said deputies.

Deputies of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) and Labor, Democracy and Freedom Block who have gone on a two-day hunger strike on 20 February to support those of jailed MPs Selma Irmak and Faysal Sarıyıldız remarked that they were staging the act to let down the AKP government’s ‘concept of war and elimination’. Speaking to DIHA about the act, deputies of the BDP and the Block stated that the current process was a warning to the government. Here are the statements of some deputies who support the hunger strike act of political prisoners; BDP İstanbul MP Sebahat Tuncel: “The war strategy of the AKP government has blocked the process of a peaceful solution to the Kurdish people. The AKP government inherited the policy of destruction and assimilation but there is a need for a new concept on the basis of equal and free citizenship of all peoples in Turkey. Our act is at the same time a call to Turkey’s opinion as we call on the people to not to remain insensitive to the process for building a true freedom.” BDP Muş MP Demir Çelik: “The political operations against the BDP and Kurdish institutions started as a result of the mentality of the AKP government which has brought nothing but cruelty, pressure and violence on Turkey’s peoples who face fascism practices equal to those at Nazi period in Germany.”

BDP Ağrı MP Halil Aksoy: “It is not possible to remain insensitive to the developments in the recent process which witnesses a great government insensitivity while military and political operations have blocked all ways to democracy. The government needs to address this process very well because people leave their bodies to death when there is nothing else left to do. This process is a warning to the government who should start a process of dialogue and negotiation with Abdullah Öcalan as the current conflict could deepen in the coming period.” BDP Bingöl MP İdris Baluken: The process of a total elimination has reached the point of slaughter of civilians, as we witnessed in Roboski massacre. Indefinite and non-alternate hunger strike acts are staged in prisons in the face of all these events and we are staging this act to support our comrades in prisons.” Hakkari MP Adil Kurt: “Kurds have experienced all kinds of cruelty in the last 30 years but the current process is the most critical one as there is a potentially dangerous process ahead of Turkey. We are staging this act because we want the coming spring to lead to democracy and freedom.”

ANF/Amed

THE MASSACRE OF VILLAGERS IN THE ORTASU (ROBOSKI)

VILLAGE OF SIRNAK, ULUDERE (QILEBAN)

On 28th December 2011 between 21:30-22:30, 35 civilians, 17 of them children, were killed while returning from over the Iraq border of Sirnak's Uludere province, Gulyazi (BUJEH) and Ortasu (ROBOSKI) villages, by the bombardment of Turkish Armed Force's war planes. 1 person was injured and two escaped unharmed in the attack.

The incident was broadcast by the Kurdish media on the same day. However the Turkish media reported it only a day after and even then projected the incident as being an attack against Kurdish guerrillas. State officials were silent in the face of the event for a long time and only called it a 'operational mistake' following angry reaction by public opinion. According to official statements the people crossing the border were identified as being guerrillas by Heron's (unmanned air-craft) and this information was passed on to the Chief of Staff. However the source that passed on this information has not been revealed, even after two months. The Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan thanked the Turkish Army in his first statement regarding the incident. There has been no official apology to the Kurdish people for this massacre and those responsible have not been revealed and brought to justice. A sub-commission has been formed in the Parliament's Human Rights Commission, the (4 hour) video of the incident has been viewed but an official statement has not yet been made. The Peace and Democracy Party has carried the incident to the International Criminal Court, The Hague and the UN.



Lastly the state has attempted to cover-up the incident by paying the families 'blood money.' The families of the victims have refused this and asked for justice, both in the statements they have given to the press but also in the protests they have conducted.

The Human Rights Association (IHD) of Turkey has sent a committee to the scene

of the incident and conducted an investigation. The results of this investigation were revealed to public opinion on January 3rd 2012. The report contains important information.

The attack has violated the right to life of 35 people. The list of the victims determined after autopsies and the information gathered by the committee are below.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Özcan UYSAL | 30/12/1993 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 2. Seyithan ENÇ | 30/12/1993 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 3. Cemal ENCU | 1994 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 4. Vedat ENCU | 1994 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 5. Selim ENCU | 1973 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 6. Selahattin ENCU | 1995 Şırnak/Uludere |
| 7. Nadir ALMA | 1986 Şırnak/Uludere |

8. Celal ENCU	1986 Şırnak/Uludere
9. Bilal ENCU	
10. Şirvan ENCU	1992 Şırnak/Uludere
11. Nevzat ENCU	1992 Şırnak/Uludere
12. Salih ENCU	1993 Şırnak/Uludere
13. Osman KAPLAN	1980 Şırnak/Uludere
14. Mahsun ENCU	1994 Şırnak/Uludere
15. Muhammet ENCU	1998 Şırnak/Uludere
16. Hüsnü ENCU	1981 Şırnak/Uludere
17. Savaş ENCU	1997 Şırnak/Uludere
18. Erkan ENCU	1998 Şırnak/Uludere
19. Cihan ENCU	1992 Şırnak/Uludere
20. Fadıl ENCU	1991 Şırnak/Uludere
21. Şerafettin ENCU	1994 Şırnak/Uludere
22. Hamza ENCU	1990 Şırnak/Uludere
23. Aslan ENCU	1994 Şırnak/Uludere
24. M.Ali TOSUN	1987 Şırnak/Uludere
25. Şerafettin ENCU	1994 Şırnak/Uludere (same info as victim no.21)
26. Orhan ENCU	1992 Şırnak/Uludere
27. Salih ÜREK	1995 Şırnak/Uludere
28. Yüksel ÜREK	1995 Şırnak/Uludere
29. Adem ANT	1992 Şırnak/Uludere
30. Hüseyin ENCU	1991 Şırnak/Uludere
31. Bedran ENCU	1996 Şırnak/Uludere
32. Serhat ENCU	1995 Şırnak/Uludere
33. Şivan ENCU	
34. Abdulselam ENCU	Şırnak/Uludere
35. An arm and leg which could not be identified to a person.	

It has been determined that:

- The civilians were well known by the security forces in the region, and that the security forces were aware of the smuggling and forays to and from the border,
- From our own experiences and the statements made by witnesses and villagers that the route used for smuggling was constantly in use and that this was known by everyone including security forces, and that this route was not a footpath but that there were pits on the route,
- Contrary to official statements the place of the incident was not near Sinat-Haftanin but exactly on the border of Iraq-Turkey,
- No official organisations took the initiative to collect the corpses and assist the wounded and that some of the wounded died from blood loss and cold weather, and that the villagers who went to collect the corpses encountered the soldiers that were blocking the path (of the civilians) and that the soldiers left the scene of the incident, and that the villagers brought the corpses back to the village of Gülyazı,
- The conditions of the hospital were not appropriate for conducting an autopsy, that the corpses were posited into rooms arbitrarily, that relatives of the victims wrapped the corpses in blankets, that the hospital personnel were insufficient in number, in fact there were hardly any and that the corpses were carried to the autopsy and then funeral cars by the relatives of the victims,
- The evidence which will be collected from the autopsies cannot, due to these insufficient conditions, be collected appropriately and because of this there is a high risk of tampering with evidence,
- The corpses seen by our committee at the hospital have burn marks, their organs have spilled out, most of their skulls are shattered and the bodies mutilated,
- Very strong and flammable ammunition was used in the incident,

- No detainments and arrests have been made in regards to the suspects who carried out the massacre,
- The incident took place exactly at the zero-point of the Turkey-Iraq border,
- The victims of the incident have been smuggling (oil, cigarettes, foodstuffs) and that the police station has known of this for long years, and that in the past month the police station were more lenient.

(Source: Human Rights Association (IHD) Report 3.1.2012)

As has been stated by the Human Rights Association above, the victims of this massacre were civilians.

To investigate this massacre, the Human Rights Commission of Turkey's Grand National Assembly formed a sub-commission. The four parties that are in parliament elected MPs to this commission; The Justice & Development Party (AKP) have 5 MPs, the Peoples' Republican Party (CHP) have 2 MPs, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) have 1 MP and the Peace & Democracy Party (BDP) also have 1 MP. This commission watched the recordings made by Heron and Predator aircraft and following this the CHP and BDP MPs made statements to the press, saying that it was clear in the images that the people in the recordings were civilians. However because the majority of the commission is made up of AKP MPs the commission has not to this day made any official statements regarding its findings.

Statements made by the police station commander in the region to journalists and members of the sub-commission also prove that the order to attack was received directly from the Chief of Staff in Ankara. 'If they had asked us we would have



told them that they were villagers says the commander. It is evident from the images taken by the unmanned aircraft.'

The Turkey branch of Amnesty International sent the Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin a letter about the Roboski massacre. Amnesty stated their anxiety and worries regarding the investigation into the incident and requested for an independent, impartial and in-depth investigation to be carried out. The letter also stated that a committee made up of civil society representatives had visited the scene of the incident to carry out an investigation but were prevented due to 'security' issues and asked the relevant authorities to make a statement regarding why they had been prevented. Furthermore Amnesty also requested a statement about why a decision of secrecy was placed on the investigation.

What must be comprehended now is not whether this was a premeditated massacre, which it evidently is, but why it was carried out and by whom.

This massacre was willingly and knowingly instigated as a threat to the Kurdish people. The Kurdish people have been struggling for their freedom for 33 years and are striving for a democratic, peaceful and political solution to their just cause. Unfortunately the stance of the

Turkish state is and has always been to oppress and threaten the Kurdish people with similar massacres.



The meaning of this is simple: if you do not accept the official denial and assimilation policies of the Turkish state then you will be eliminated.

We the Kurds, and the relatives of the victims do not believe that the Turkish state will uncover the perpetrators of this massacre. Therefore we are calling on International organisations to investigate and uncover the perpetrators of the Roboski massacre so they can be tried in front of court of law.

Our Appeal,

- 1- This incident, because of its nature, is an extra-judicial killing and due to the number of victims a **‘genocide.’**
- 2- This incident is a continuation of the extra-judicial killings which have never been investigated and have been on-going for years under the ‘fight against terror.’
- 3- These types of ‘dark’ actions are supported by the policies of violence implemented by the Turkish state when addressing the Kurdish question, and this is why international organisations such as the UN, EU, EC must impose pressure on the Turkish state and government to change its policies to support a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question.
- 4- This is also why national and international civil and democratic organisations must show sensitivity and investigate the incident.
- 5- The UN, EC and EU’s human rights commissions must send delegations to the region to investigate the incident.

60 days have passed since the massacre of 34 Kurdish civilians by F16 fighter jets and the visit and ensuing attack against the local governor. During this time the murderers of the 34 civilians have neither been caught nor questioned. However the provocative visit of the governor and the attack against him has made the Kurds a target once more. 5 people were detained shortly after the attack against the governor, they are still in prison. These people are the relatives of the massacred civilians. It is once again very clear that Turkish law is very rapid when Kurds are in question. The murderers of 34 civilians have not been found but the people who attacked the governor have been arrested and a list of 70 people who were involved in the incident are still being hounded. Police are going to the doors of the victim’s families every day and asking the whereabouts of those on the list. Below is the letter sent from prison by one of the victims (Serhat Encü’s) brother Faruk Encü to his family.

My Dear Family;

I am writing this letter from Sirnak Prison and I miss all of you very much. I know that you added my pain to my brothers’ pain, but don’t distress yourself. I will try to be fine, if I can. We know that to be murdered and to be imprisoned is brought as the destiny and I live the destiny which is imposed to us, like my brothers. You are all very important for me. I wish my brothers who we were playing football together every night

and who I love more than my spirit were here in prison, but not have been smashed in pieces with the bombs. But unfortunately, the people who didn't have their share of humanity deemed death proper for my brothers and imprisonment for me. Sometimes my massacred brothers and friends come in front of my eyes and when I wake up, I feel alone very much. Sometimes I want to hang myself when the lights of the prison are switched off. My brother Serhat, you promised me that we wouldn't leave each other alone and we would close our eyes together in this deceit world. Both of us couldn't keep the promise but I will keep mine. If I die, I wish my grave would be dug next to the other 34 graves. I cannot accept the massacre of my brothers in this way. Sometimes I imagine that they will enter from this Iron Gate and I expect every day, every hour that they will ask me why I am crying. When I die, maybe I will get close to them and we will play football in astro pitch. Like past, we would go to picnic and my brother Serhat would throw me in the water and my brother Hamza would help me to get out of the water, with smiling.

I want to call on you the people those have lost their humanity; you have stolen my dreams in the name of what? The murderers of the Humanity, how you found this torment proper to us and what you wanted from those youngsters and their dreams? The people those talk about right, law and democracy, it is almost 50 days passed and you couldn't find the murderers, or else are you the murderers so that the responsible people are not detected? The people those call themselves human: I ask for justice. I ask for Justice. I ask for Justice.

Faruk Encu

From Sirnak Prison



Dear Mr Hasan,

It is difficult to understand the process without knowledge of the political developments within the KCK operations which started in April 14th 2009 and have continued until today without interruption. Therefore, the political developments of the last couple of years must be briefly reminded.

1-Before the arrest of Ocalan, he had been in a quest for of a “Kurdish Nation-State”, but whilst he was in Imrali Prison, with the purpose of an “organization of democratic society” he developed his thesis and focused on “confederal” and “autonomous” society and state models.

2-Between the years of 1999-2004, PKK declared an indefinite cease fire and took its armed elements out of the Turkey. (In fact, PKK abolished itself and declared that it had finished with its armed struggle. At that time KADEK and then KONGRA-GEL were formed as the representatives of the unarmed struggle instead of the PKK). Within this time period, some meetings had taken place with Imrali and Kandil on behalf of the State but because the AKP was not dominant within the State, it was understood that these meetings had not been carried out under the control of the AKP. Eventually, the meetings did not yield any results and the PKK took the decision of re-founding and rebuilding itself and declared the “new” PKK. But as a civilian congress, KONGRA-GEL has not annulled itself and has pursued its existence until today.

3-When it came to 2005, the PKK restarted the armed struggle after declaring that the meetings had been held on the sole purpose of stalling and eliminating the PKK. However, there has not been any change of the strategic goals of the PKK. In other words, PKK adhered to the program of the previous strategic period based on the “organization of confederal society and autonomy” instead of an independent nation state solution.

4-At that time in 2005-2006, in order to carry out the organization of the model of democratic society proposed by Ocalan, the work of organization in a civilian way had started among the Kurds. Neighborhood and city assemblies were being formed under the name of **Councils of Free Citizens** in places where the grassroots were powerful. The main aim of this was to organize a society which will not get crushed under the huge power of the state (and actually all the institutional power including the municipalities). According to Ocalan this is the strongest guaranty after taking away the weapons. Only an organized society can carry out its self defense and can protect itself against all kinds of attacks.

5-In those years, DEHAP was abolished and DTP was formed. Councils of Free Citizens obtained official association status in many places and carry out its activities within the

framework of the laws. As distinct from DEHAP, There isn't any organizational instruments like neighborhood councils in the regulation of the DTP since society is now already organized as Councils of Free Citizens in all the neighborhoods. The aim of the DTP is not organizing the society in its structure, but providing the people to be organized in any way. Therefore DTP (and since the last year BDP) have not organized the people in Neighborhood councils. (The structure which is defined as KCK by the state today had originally started as the Councils of Free Citizen.)

6-On the PKK's side, to ensure the coordination of all the organizations (both four parts of Kurdistan and the organizations in different parts of the Europe) which are partly disconnected to each other and also the other Kurdish movements, a new umbrella system has been established where these organizations can protect (without scattering) their structure. Actually, KCK (Koma Civaken Kurdistan - Kurdistan Communities Unity) was established as a system where organizations, communities without an organization and individuals could take their part. But this system, namely KCK, has not realized yet, even today. Contemporarily, it acts as a supreme coordination of PKK movement. Within the framework of the KCK, I guess, there are organizations like PKK, HPG, YJA-STAR etc. Ocalan states, in some of his meeting notes that the KCK system can be performed in all areas (civil, political, cultural, economic etc.). With this, he means that all the areas can be organized autonomously, federal in local and all the way through to the top can be organized confederally. Fundamentally, this is a call for creating an organized society. Thereby, KCK is not an organization, but is a model or a system of organization.

7-At the very beginning between the years of 2005-2009, the state followed up these organizations closely but never interfered since it was undesirable (!). In fact, influenced by the moderate climate of the EU negotiation process, the state had adopted an attitude of encouragement to such kinds of civilian organizations.

8-Thereby, in 2008-2009, the organization initially known as Councils of Free Citizens have re-structured themselves as city councils and neighborhood councils, and new councils have been formed everywhere with hundreds of the people including (DTP) BDP representatives, NGO representatives, Women organizations, business organizations, journalists, lawyers and mayors etc. DTP and BDP have also supported the establishment of these councils. The aim of the Councils is establishing or laying the foundation of the people's councils in an autonomous and free way, without dependence to any political party or organization. These councilors are elected for neighborhood councils, each neighborhood council forms its own delegation to the city council and each city council elects its own delegates to the Democratic Society Congress (DTK). Undoubtedly, DTK is not only formed with the representatives of the city councils. BDP Representatives, other party or congregations, ethnic or religious groups' representatives also take their part within the DTK.

9-In 2008, the AKP **Government** started a qualitative meeting process with imrali and the PKK in Oslo. The very first effects of the meetings resulted in timely ceasefires by the PKK. And eventually, in the meetings which took place before the local election in 2009, in the name of installing bilateral confidence, PKK prolonged the ceasefire until after the 29 March 2009 election. After the election they declared on the 13th of April 2009 that they prolonged the ceasefire again. Just one day after this declaration on the 14th of April 2009, the first arrests had been carried out in the name of the KCK Operations.

10-All the city and Neighborhood councils which had been formed as above, supported DTP in the 2009 election, these councils carried out the election campaign themselves and DTP gained a great victory in the election. It had been discerned by the AKP of how effective this kind of organization model was (Particularly, During the Prime Minister's Diyarbakir, Tunceli, Hakkari, Van visits, call of People's councils on people not to go out has been very effective and Prime Minister's charisma has gone down, he was angered very much) and just after the election, the people including the higher positioned spokespersons of these councils, DTP vice presidents who were responsible for providing coordination to the councils were detained during the first operation on the 14th of April 2009, Hatip Dicle who was the president of the DTK at the time had also been detained. This is the case which is known as the main KCK case in Diyarbakir and in which defense in Kurdish is banned.

11-The KCK name is persistently given to the case because it is aimed both at the criminalization of the case and as this organization model's similarity with the KCK system. Otherwise, the name of this structure is not KCK, besides, as I explained KCK is not the name of an organization but the name of a model.

12-The government was very annoyed of this organization model because organization of society even on the streets scared it. The Government declared all the structures and activities which were legal, as illegal. The Police evaluated everything which had been procured from illegal audio surveillance and observation activities from 2007(just before the general election) in the framework of the criminal organization then submitted it to specially authorized prosecutors (who are under the control of the Government). **(By the way, the State has carried out the audio surveillance and observation as from 2007; it has not annoyed anyone actually, but whenever an unexpected result occurred and whenever an opinion regarding the Prime Minister (State)'s authority derived, the operations started. Therefore, it is purposefully called a "structure in parallel with the state".)**

13-As from that day until today, approximately 6300 people have been detained. The major part of the detainees consists of members of city or neighborhood councils which are related to BDP (sympathizer) though they are not official executive members of the BDP. Since there were many official BDP members amongst them, they have been regarded as KCK members and

detained as well. Mayors, city-district chairmanships, vice-presidents etc. are delegates of these councils.

14-This structure is a model which had been developed after the abandonment of Kurdish Nation-state (independency) ideals. The organization of the society which is not a state is approached by us as a warranty of democracy. It is an ingenuous indicator of the Kurds' ambition on living together with the state. It is the “**democratic**” part of the model which is called ‘Democratic Autonomy’. In the case of the other part, namely autonomy, is about administration and can be realized solely by way of constitutional guaranty.

15-Eventually, the KCK operations which have been started with the initiative and decision of the government are aiming at the elimination of the organized structures of the Kurdish People. There can be individuals who can commit some kind of crimes amongst these structures. The investigation of these is normal. But the declaration of an entire structure as a terrorist organization and imprisoning even elected people is an exact opportunism. The detained people are not illegal –but they have been turned into open targets by the government. The main purpose of all the operations is persuading Kurdish movement to a partial solution which is foreseen by the AKP for the Kurds and after the resolution, to dismantle any structure in existence that can resist. The attention grabbing point is; AKP government, on the one hand, was negotiating with KCK and Ocalan and on the other hand was continuing to put all of the civil segments into jail with the accusation of being KCK members.

I don't want to go into daily political analyses, however, if there are subjects you would like to discuss further we can talk on the phone.

Regards,

Selahattin Demirtaş

Totally : 6300 people

The alleged number by the Government is 1100. The difference between the two can be explained like this: the ministry of justice declares this number in regards to the Turkish Criminal Code's articles (314-220) which are about the membership and execution of an organization. But the articles about helping an organization, propaganda, demonstration etc. are also included in the number given by us, which is true. Ultimately, it is possible to see even from the extraordinary increase of people in prisons.