**Public Forum |** [**Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal on Turkey and Kurds: The Verdict**](http://tribunal-turkey-kurds.org/index.php/the-verdict-2/)

Turkey Found Guilty of ‘War Crimes’: Where do we go from here?

*"At the conclusion of the peace negotiations, an amnesty must follow for all crimes committed by both parties, both in Turkey and abroad. Only in this case Turkey could be exonerated from the obligation to ensure the punishment of those responsible for war crimes and against humanity determined by the PPT”*

Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal, Judgement, 24 May 2018

**Join Peace in Kurdistan, Kurdish People’s Assembly in Britain, Roj Women Assembly, Freedom for Ocalan Campaign, UK, Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC) -** for a special discussion **hosted by Lord Hylton** following release of the verdict dated 24 May 2018.

**Tuesday, 17 July, 6.30 - 8.30pm** at Committee Room 1, Houses of Parliament, via St Stephens Entrance: <https://www.parliament.uk/visiting/visiting-and-tours/events/>.

**The event will be chaired by**: **Dr** **Thomas Jeffrey Miley** lecturer of political sociology at the University of Cambridge

**Speakers include**: **Gianni Tognoni** Secretary General of the Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal;

**Dr Radha D’Souza** Reader in law at Westminster University; **Julie Ward MEP; Professor Bill Bowring**, Director LLM/MA Human Rights, Birkbeck, University of London; **Margaret Owen O.B.E,** barrister; **Tony Simpson**, Bertrand Russel Foundation, Editor of Spokesman; **Dr Les Levidow**, Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC); **Clare Baker,** UNITE international officer; **Steve Sweeney**, journalist.

**About the event**

*“The Turkish state [is] guilty of state crimes – including targeted assassinations, extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances – committed by different branches of the state’s security forces and secret services, in Turkey and abroad, particularly in France”*Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal, Judgement, 24 May 2018

One month before the presidential election in Turkey, the [Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal](http://tribunal-turkey-kurds.org/index.php/quest-ce-que-le-tpp/) (PPT), on 24 May 2018, [issued a stinging condemnation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6M9Dimo-Po&feature=youtu.be) of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. President Erdogan was [found guilty](https://www.thecanary.co/global/world-analysis/2018/05/24/uk-arms-partner-turkey-found-guilty-of-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity/) of committing war crimes against Kurds in Turkey by the PPT which said he had been “tormenting” the Kurdish people in Southeast Turkey, causing them “incalculable suffering”.

**A panel of experts and activists – including a Judge from the PPT itself - will be discussing where the movement for peace and justice in Kurdistan goes on from here.**

The Tribunal issued a report that called on President Erdogan to enter into immediate negotiations with the Kurds and withdraw completely from the largely-Kurdish enclave of Afrin in Syria.

The Tribunal’s report was released at the European Parliament in Brussels, where UK MEP Julie Ward said it showed Erdogan waging a war “against every aspect of Kurdish culture.” Phillip Texier, Tribunal president, honorary judge at the Court of Cassation of France, who has also served on the UNHCR, said that the “key cause” of the conflict between Turkey and the Kurds is “the denial to let the Kurdish people have their self-determination right exercised.”

In the verdict and recommendations released Thursday, May 24, the Tribunal found that the Turkish state was responsible for “denying the right to self-determination of the Kurdish people’s identity and presence, and the repression of its participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the country.”

Very significantly, it declared that the Kurdish struggle for human rights is not a “terrorist” issue as Erdogan claims, but rather a “non-international armed conflict ruled by international humanitarian law” and thus should not be subject to anti-terrorism legislation.

The [verdict](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6M9Dimo-Po&feature=youtu.be) contains a number of findings and recommendations including:

* Turkey must immediately end all military operations carried out by its army in Syria and must withdraw its troops to within its national borders.
* Turkey must investigate and punish the persons responsible for war crimes in Southeast Turkey during the period 1 June 2015 to 31 January 2017 as ascertained by the Tribunal.
* Turkey must restore the rule of law, release still-detained magistrates and journalists, restore freedom of press, end the state of emergency and fully implement the European Convention on Human Rights.
* Turkey must resume negotiations in good faith for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, which it halted in October 2014, and complete them within a reasonable time frame.
* An amnesty must be granted for the crimes committed by all parties during the conflict and all still-detained political prisoners must be released.

Margaret Owen, MBE, an international human rights lawyer, who was recently in Turkey to attend the trial of Selahattin Demirtas, the Kurdish leader imprisoned by Erdogan and now running for president from his prison cell, said that trials in Turkey were “totally unfair, purely political” and the result of “extraordinary fictions” based on indictments that are groundless. She noted that there are currently 70,000 university students, many of them Kurds, now awaiting trial in prisons that amount to “concentration camps.”

**The purpose of this event is to build on the current momentum that takes advantage of the PPT verdict, and pushes forward with the next stage of activism dedicated towards achieving peace and justice in Kurdistan.**

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