THE İMRALI POST

You Heard His Name. Learn His Story. Demand His Freedom.

Issue № 180 / 9 November 2025 ★ Contact: imralipost@freeocalan.org

Contents

Freedom for Öcalan – Peace in Kurdistan....2
Abdullah Öcalan: Fulfill your duty, organize the society....2
Bakırhan calls for concrete steps and transition laws to ensure the permanence of the process....3
Abdullah Öcalan: A strong transition process must be established....5
DEM Party calls for the withdrawal of trustees and release of imprisoned politicians....5
Austrian Communist Party's lead candidate expresses support for the peace process in Turkey....7
Hatimoğulları: Concrete steps must begin now....7
Ilham Ehmed: A democratic and decentralized system must be established in Syria....11
French parliamentarians release 'Right to Hope' and 'Rojava' declaration....12
Ömer Öcalan: The state must act more courageously....15
Fabian Molina: The PKK has shown political will, state must act....19
Öcalan: Hope is revived today with our step towards peace and a democratic society....20
Prisons....22
Chronic abuses continue in prisons: the right to life is violated....22
Military aggression and occupation....24
ISIS carried out 18 attacks in North-East Syria in October....24
ISIS cell attacks SDF after infiltrating from west of the Euphrates....26
French company Lafarge on trial for 'financing terrorism' in Syria....26
SDF's operations against ISIS continue: 79 mercenaries arrested in October....28
Turkish state continues to build colonial housing in Afrin....28
Three ISIS members arrested in Deir ez-Zor countryside....29
Yet another civilian murdered in occupied Afrin....30
Femicide....31
383 women killed in 10 months: impunity encourages men....31
JinNews: At least 25 women were murdered in Turkey in October....33
Human Rights Violations....33
DFG: We will continue writing the truth despite the sentences....33
Four more Kurdish citizens arrested amid wave of arrests in Iran....34
Report on human rights violations against Kurdish civilians in Iran in October....35
ECtHR rejects Turkey's appeal against ruling to release Demirtaş: The decision is final....37
Kurdish community protests the detention of three activists in Finland....38
ISIG: At least 169 workers died in October....38
Another Kurdish activist sentenced to prison in Iran....39
Interview....40
Kürkçü: Process now entirely in the government's court....40
Sozdar Avesta: The first thing that needs to be done is to ensure the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan…42
Opinion....46

Communism from a socialist perspective: The examples of Zapatista and Rojava.....46
Persistence in socialism.....50
Democratic integration and resolution.....58

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Freedom for Öcalan – Peace in Kurdistan

Abdullah Öcalan: Fulfill your duty, organize the society

ANF | URFA | 2 November 2025

Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is held on İmralı Island, had a family visit on October 31. In addition to Ömer Öcalan, a member of parliament of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) for the Urfa province, the meeting at the high-security prison in the Sea of Marmara was attended by Fatma Öcalan, Berfin Öcalan, and Ali Öcalan.

Ömer Öcalan attended the founding congress of the Association for Solidarity with Families of Detainees and Convicts (TUHAY-DER) in Urfa province on Sunday. The congress was held at the Tahir Elçi Conference Hall of the Urfa Bar Association.

Speaking here, Ömer Öcalan conveyed his uncle's greetings, saying, "We had a meeting with the President a short while ago. At every meeting, the president says, 'Whenever you go to a meeting, convey my greetings to our people.'"

The DEM Party deputy stated the following: "During our last meeting, the President said, 'I am working here day and night. You have many opportunities, you have institutions, you need to organize the society. You need to fulfill your duty.' In the last meeting, he put these things before us and our people. Nothing can be achieved without effort. The President's Kurdish is very strong. The majority of the meeting was in Kurdish; we reserved the last half hour for discussing some politically sensitive issues in Turkish only. The state must take concrete steps. The Kurds have paid a heavy price. We will defend our values everywhere."

MED TUHAD-FED Co-Chair Pınar Sakık Tekin stated, "We are determined to carry the struggle forward into the future in the footsteps of Kurdish leader Mr. Abdullah Öcalan."

Sakık Tekin added, "We call out to Ankara, to the commission: Peace comes through freedom and democracy. We will continue our work in Kurdistan, and our struggle will continue until the door to a democratic society is opened."

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Bakırhan calls for concrete steps and transition laws to ensure the permanence of the process

ANF | ISTANBUL | 2 November 2025

The People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) held its “Local Democracy Conference” in Istanbul, organized by the Democratic Local Administration Council.

In addition to the co-chair of the party, Tuncer Bakırhan, the conference was attended by representatives of numerous political parties, institutions, and organizations, as well as mayors, intellectuals, academics, and citizens.

'Our democracy is sick'

In his speech at the conference, Tuncer Bakırhan emphasized the importance of the Peace and Democratic Society process, stating, "Local governments in Turkey are under threat like never before. Local governments were also under pressure when the Republic was founded. But a new process began, especially after 2016. The restraint for centralization faced another pressure that usurped local will. Our democracy is sick, and local democracy is even sicker."

‘We will fight even harder as the sovereignty of the people is disregarded’

Bakırhan continued: "The cure for this disease is clear; strengthening local democracy as in countries that experience these pains. We are, however, encountering debates about how to centralize. We must resist this centralization. This centralization and pressure are present throughout the country today. Therefore, those of us who seek to strengthen local democracy will fight even harder as the sovereignty of the people is disregarded. In a city where around 60-70 percent of the population elects its local representative, the people’s will is usurped. We must stand against the appointment of trustees to municipalities. This is a matter that concerns all 86 million people. What has been done in the Kurdish region in the past is being done in the West today. We need to fight together against the trustee system. As long as we don't treat Şişli and Hakkari equally, this centralization and anti-democratic practices will continue. If political parties of all backgrounds do not stand against this, we will continue to face these practices. The country is very hopeless because of these practices."

‘We must build our democracy locally'

“Local democracy is not just local government, it is also the fundamental democracy in the country,” said Bakırhan, stating: "Democracy and trusteeship cannot coexist; nor can peace. If peace is being discussed today, it points to a problem of ‘undemocratic practices’. Not only the trustees, but also the laws that lead to the trustees must be abolished. General democratization starts locally, as democracy is felt most in our local administrations. The approach of resolving problems from the center must now be set aside. We must build our democracy locally."

‘Our local administrations must grant equal rights to all citizens’

Emphasizing that local governments represent "the right to the city and peace in the city," Bakırhan stated: "Peace in the city should be on our agenda, not only in judicial and political terms, but also in terms of its class dimensions. Turkey is experiencing a serious economic crisis. The reason is the unfair distribution of income and wealth. This is most evident in cities. In some parts of Bağcılar, it's one world, and in other parts, it's another. On one side there is poverty; on the other side there is a segment living in modest prosperity. For this reason, our local administrations must grant equal rights to all citizens. They must find a way to provide opportunities using the resources at their disposal to prevent the poor from becoming poorer and the rich from becoming richer. We also offer self-criticism on this issue. Distributing packages and showing solidarity with the poor are separate issues. We need to establish a basis that will enable participation in production and income generation. For these reasons, we will fight against guardianship in local administrations, and we will also fight for peace in the city."

'The goal of this process is democracy, and its compass is justice'

The Co-Chair of the DEM Party continued: "With the latest withdrawal (of PKK guerrillas from Turkish territory), Turkey has undergone a historic transformation. The stick that was used to secure the appointment of trustees on the pretext of the organization (PKK) has been taken back. We need to talk about this process and claim it. They will no longer be able to call Ahmet Türk an 'organization member' or 'leader'. We have fought hard for a year to advance this process. Still, we have not been able to achieve the desired outcome. Some people see it as a 'give and take' process, while others say we have made a deal with the government. We do not do what other parties say. If there is lawlessness somewhere, we take action to stop it there. We do not look at which party someone belongs to. This process involves achieving local democracy alongside peace. The goal of this process is democracy, and its compass is justice. This ground has paid a huge for peace, for law, for local democracy, and it will continue to do so."

'Peace is not a gift, but a process of construction'

Bakırhan concluded: "Concrete steps must be taken to ensure the permanence of the process. The most recent withdrawal was the biggest step. Therefore, transition laws must be enacted immediately. After that, rights and freedoms must be expanded. Those who tweet must not be imprisoned, and local governments must be strengthened. The local administration law must be fundamentally changed. Those who come through elections must leave through elections. I invite AK Party citizens to object to this as well. I believe we will present these lands with an order based on local democracy through partnerships founded on democratic unity. Peace is not a gift, but a process of construction. The greatest responsibility falls on our local administrations."

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Abdullah Öcalan: A strong transition process must be established

ANF | ISTANBUL | 4 November 2025

The DEM Party's Imrali Delegation went to see Abdullah Öcalan in Imrali on Monday. This morning, the delegation released the following statement:

"On 3 November 2025, we held an extremely positive meeting with Mr. Abdullah Öcalan in Imrali Island, which lasted about three hours. His health and morale were quite strong. In summary, he made the following assessments during the meeting:

To advance the current process, it is necessary to take history and sociology more seriously. It is important to recognize that the Turkish-Kurdish relationship has endured for a thousand years as two foundational pillars. The unity between these two pillars must be strengthened by recognizing, understanding, and repairing them.

We should not act by drawing rigid lines but by forming a broader vision that also encompasses our current issues.

Under limited circumstances, we are making a serious effort for a historical matter. We are striving to develop a positive phase, not a destructive or negative one. The Kurdish phenomenon must be included in the Republic's legality in all its dimensions, and for that, a strong transition process must be established. Entering legality as a holistic phenomenon will solidify the legal foundations of the Democratic Republic.

The opportunity for democratic integration that we currently face is both local and universal. To move into a positive phase, it is vitally important that everyone acts with sensitivity, seriousness, and a sense of responsibility during this process.

With respect."

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DEM Party calls for the withdrawal of trustees and release of imprisoned politicians

ANF | ANKARA | 4 November 2025

On the anniversary of the coup against the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) on November 4, 2016 and the usurpation of Mardin, Batman, and Halfeti municipalities in 2024, the DEM Party (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) Democratic Local Governments Council called on the Turkish government to take concrete steps toward democratization.

The DEM Party demanded, among other things, the withdrawal of the appointed trustees from Kurdish municipalities and the release of all imprisoned HDP politicians. “If the process for peace and a democratic society is to be credible, the existing undemocratic practices must be eliminated,” the statement said. The demands are related to the dialogue process initiated by Abdullah Öcalan on February 27, which the DEM Party considers a historic step toward the democratization of Turkey.

November 4

The DEM Party recalled that on November 4, 2016, twelve members of parliament from the then HDP – including party leaders Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ – were arrested. At the same time, on November 4, 2024, the municipalities of Mardin, Batman, and Halfeti were usurped and the democratically elected mayors were replaced by state-appointed trustees.

“November 4 symbolizes the systematic elimination of democratically elected Kurdish representatives. The ongoing practice of replacing elected mayors with appointed officials is an open disregard for the will of the voters and a major obstacle to the democratization process,” the party underlined.

Trust only through concrete steps

The DEM Party sees the current phase as an opportunity to stabilize the democratization process that has been initiated by the recent steps taken by the Kurdish movement. "The initiative launched by Mr. Öcalan has created hope for a new, equal Turkey. However, this hope is being weakened by the government's hesitant behavior. Securing democracy and freedom is not the sole responsibility of the Kurdish movement,” the party said and stressed that the state must also live up to its responsibilities and take decisive steps to support the process.

As key conditions for a credible process, the DEM Party called for the withdrawal of the trustees from Kurdish municipalities, the reinstatement of elected representatives, and the immediate release of all politicians who have been imprisoned, convicted, or charged because of their political activities.

A guarantee for peaceful coexistence

“The consolidation of the Peace and Democratic Society Process through mutual goodwill measures and the development of public trust will become more feasible through these steps. Taking these steps is not only a requirement for democratization, but also a guarantee for the peaceful coexistence of peoples, the DEM Party concluded.

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Austrian Communist Party's lead candidate expresses support for the peace process in Turkey

ANF | VIENNA | 4 November 2025

Barbara Urbanic, the joint first-place candidate for the 2025 Vienna municipal elections with the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) and the LINKS (The Left), has expressed her support for the peace process initiated by the Kurdish freedom movement in Turkey.

The 43-year-old politician, who advocates a solidarity-based feminist policy, stated that they consider the step taken by the Kurdish Freedom Movement towards peace "important and valuable" at a time when international conflicts are intensifying.

Barbara Urbanic said: "Here in Austria and Vienna, we are following the processes initiated by the Kurdish Freedom Movement in Turkey with great interest. As the KPÖ, we have a long tradition of peace policy. At a time when such international conflicts are intense, it is extremely valuable that the Kurdish movement has come forward and said, 'Enough is enough, let's end the wars,' and declared that it is ready to take the first step towards peace. We hope that the Turkish state will respond to this call, accept this offer, and take the necessary steps to achieve lasting peace in Turkey."

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Hatimoğulları: Concrete steps must begin now

ANF | AMED | 5 November 2025

Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) co-chair Tülay Hatimoğulları spoke to ANF regarding the process that unfolded after Abdullah Öcalan's call for peace and a democratic society, as well as the recent developments.

Hatimoğulları said: "The withdrawal of the Kurdish Freedom Movement from Turkey on 26 October, and the statement they made while withdrawing, is a historic statement and the step taken is a historic step. In fact, since this past October, very significant developments have taken place in Turkey. The Kurdish Freedom Movement has taken very fundamental and important steps. Here, starting from the call Mr. Öcalan made on 27 February, followed by the congress and dissolution decision of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), then the weapons-burning ceremony held on 11 July, and now this last development.

As was already stated there, this withdrawal has a deep historical meaning and importance; all peoples living in the Middle East are right in the middle and at the very centre of war and conflict. Today, global and regional developments unfortunately deepen wars and conflicts. With this withdrawal decision, the Kurdish Freedom Movement is, in fact, creating a protective shield against potential attacks that could arise from this environment, both for the Kurds and for the peoples of Turkey. This is not a decision the Kurds have taken solely for themselves. They have taken a decision of historical importance both for themselves

and for the peoples of Turkey, so that within such a complex Middle Eastern equation, instead of war and conflict, common life can be built through peace and dialogue. This withdrawal, in particular, has marked a very significant stage in the existing developments."

Kurdish Freedom Movement fulfilled its historical responsibility

Tülay Hatimoğulları stated that with the announced withdrawal decision, the peace process has now entered its second stage. Hatimoğulları said, "In the first stage of the process, the Kurdish Freedom Movement and the Kurdish people have truly fulfilled their historical responsibility to a great extent. Now, in concrete terms, the expectation lies with the state and the government. We are in a period in which the Turkish state and the government must take concrete steps. Because, as I mentioned earlier, the Kurdish Freedom Movement did not take this decision, only thinking of itself. They thought of the Kurdish people, and they also considered the future of all the peoples of Turkey. Therefore, on the Kurdish side, this responsibility has been shown to the whole world. Now, a similar responsibility is expected from the Turkish state and the government. Everyone expects this. All different peoples and faiths living on this land currently see the state and the government as those who must carry the stage that the Kurdish Freedom Movement and the Kurdish people have reached to the next level. Even though this process is not a give-and-take process, it is a process in which steps must be taken together politically and socially. I repeat and add this: politically, socially, and most importantly, legally and as part of the judicial framework, steps must absolutely be taken."

All necessary steps have been taken

Hatimoğulları underlined that the Kurdish Freedom Movement is undergoing a strategic transformation and said: "This withdrawal decision and the process that has been ongoing for one year does not mean abandoning or giving up the struggle. On the contrary, this means that in the freedom struggle given for the Kurdish people, in the struggle for identity, in the struggle for rights, there is now a strategic change, a transformation and an entry into a paradigm shift. This change means the following: within the borders of Turkey, instead of military methods and weapons, politics, democratic politics, democratic integration and the legal process that will make this possible must begin. This is very clear and very explicit."

Hatimoğulları added: "Now some people say: what if the government does not take steps? We receive this question a lot. They say: the Kurdish Freedom Movement has initiated a process and has fulfilled its responsibility. So, do you believe that there will be a step from the government or the state? This question is a very central question, a very fundamental question. For this process to succeed, it is not possible for it to reach a result solely through the steps taken by the Kurdish side. Positive steps must be taken in response to these steps. We have expressed this in every field."

Emphasis on legal and judicial process

Hatimoğulları stated that the state must immediately initiate the legal and judicial process and said: "What are the fundamental expectations when the Kurdish Freedom Movement has taken such crucial steps in this process? A legal and judicial process. Today, the Kurdish people want to establish their existence and common life in this geography together. This must be placed under legal guarantee.

If we are to list them in order:

-The creation of conditions in which Mr. Öcalan can live freely and work freely. A commission was formed in Turkey.

-This was the only concrete step taken by the state. We find the formation of this commission very valuable. But it is insufficient, this must continue. In particular, the commission must meet with Mr. Öcalan.

-A special law must be introduced regarding the PKK. Those who lay down arms declare that they want to carry out a democratic struggle. A legal path must be opened for this. How is this possible? Through a special law. This law must be passed urgently.

-Another expectation is the execution law. At this moment, thousands of prisoners are in prison solely because of their political views, unlawfully and unjustly. This is a major injustice and a major illegality. Therefore, the execution law must undergo a serious change. The Turkish Penal Code and the Anti-Terror Law are also issues that must be discussed again in the coming days.

-At the same time, there are certain issues for which there is no need to make a new law. Very concrete steps could be taken by the state and the government as a sign of goodwill to carry this process into a positive phase. One does not need a new law for this. What are these? For example, seriously ill prisoners. This is a bleeding wound of society. There are prisoners who cannot even take care of their daily needs. They must be released immediately. In particular, the 'execution extensions' must end. People who have served 30 years are being pushed by Monitoring Boards to 'express remorse' in order to release a report. This is unacceptable. Execution extensions must stop immediately.

-There are rulings by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). From the moment the ECtHR issues a decision, Turkey must implement it. But it does not. The fact that Figen Yüksekdağ, Selahattin Demirtaş, and all our comrades prosecuted in the Kobanê Conspiracy Case remain in prison means that Turkey is violating both its own law and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), to which it is a party.

Therefore, society expects these positive steps to be taken. The anxieties in society continue to grow because these steps are not being taken. As DEM Party, we are genuinely on the ground twenty-four hours a day to socialise this process."

Public concerns must not be dismissed

Hatimoğulları said that as DEM Party, they are working intensively to socialise the process and to move it to a more advanced stage. Hatimoğulları also said: "There are serious concerns in society. We are working to eliminate these concerns. On the one hand, the steps taken by the Kurdish Freedom Movement are extremely reassuring and guiding for this process. The main obstacles to the socialisation of this process are the fact that there has not yet been a change in the policies carried out by the current government and the state. This is a loss. These concerns coming from the public must not be dismissed. These concerns are important concerns. This is not something the DEM Party can resolve alone. There must be progress in the concrete steps I mentioned earlier in order to eliminate these concerns. The steps taken by the Kurdish Freedom Movement are historic steps. The Kurdish Movement has fulfilled its historical responsibility both towards the Kurdish people and towards the peoples of Turkey. At this moment, the same historical responsibility is expected from the other side, that is, from the government and the state. If this historical

responsibility is advanced mutually, a concrete and healthy result will be achieved. That is how we can establish lasting peace together on these lands."

Democratic integration laws must be implemented

Tülay Hatimoğulları emphasised that the progress of the process now depends on the steps to be taken by the state and the government. Hatimoğulları said: "The most crucial point is tied to the concrete steps that the state and the government must take. Today, the legal and judicial process must function. Laws must be introduced. The 'democratic integration' laws, the freedom laws expressed by Mr. Öcalan must be implemented without delay. Alongside all of this, there are negotiations conducted by the state with the organisation, and there are also contacts with Mr. Öcalan. While these meetings continue, and likewise as DEM Party Co-Chairs during all our visits, we see this: people say that something will happen, that something will be done. Now those 'something's must actually happen. What are these? It is very difficult for the process to advance solely on the basis of informal commitments or by simply saying that the steps taken by the Kurdish Freedom Movement are 'good'. With all our sincerity and good faith, we truly believe that the advancement of this process will have a positive impact for eighty-six million citizens. While the Middle East is being dragged into wars, for Turkey to secure its own internal peace, to secure and strengthen social peace, to fortify our peace, this is extremely valuable. But this cannot happen only with words, it requires essential change and essential steps. What are these essential changes and steps? First of all, regardless of which language we speak in this country, it is crucial that all of these languages be accepted as part of building a common life on this land. After all, the Kurdish people struggled for their mother tongue. The existence of the mother tongue is very important. Necessary legal arrangements must be made immediately. On this matter, duty and responsibility fall upon the state and the government. Courage must be shown. Both the state and the government must take initiative with courage. The Parliament must act with courage. The opposition must put forward stronger programmes and practices for the solution of the Kurdish question and for the process to advance successfully."

Security-based policies must be abandoned

Hatimoğulları emphasised that the government and the state must end their security-based approach to the Kurdish question and stated: "In order for the legal and judicial steps we are talking about to be taken, minds and mentalities must be cleansed of security-based policies. The state mentality must also be cleansed of this. Today, the whole world knows that the Kurdish question is not a security issue. The Kurdish question is a question of identity, a political question, a social question, an economic question, and it has a deep sociological dimension, not only in Turkey, but in all four parts of Kurdistan. The path to achieving a comprehensive solution to all these requires achieving healthy results together through the steps that are currently being taken."

Öcalan must be freed

Hatimoğulları underlined that the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan would make a major contribution to the peace process and said: "It is extremely important for Mr. Öcalan to be free in this process. It is extremely important that conditions are created in which he can live freely and work freely. To evaluate this as a 'result' of the existing process would be completely wrong. For the current process to advance in a healthy way, the ability of Mr. Öcalan to live freely has great importance. The freedom of Mr. Öcalan, in this sense, serves as a path for the success of the process. And the whole world and public opinion say that

Mr. Öcalan's special initiative has played a very significant role in the advancement of this process, in bringing it to the second stage. He has brought the process to this point, both as a main actor and as the main negotiator. Therefore, one of the most important things that must be done to overcome the difficulties of this process and to ensure that it moves forward in a healthier way is the freedom of Mr. Öcalan. We see this as one of the fundamental steps that must be taken in order to reach a solution. In this sense, we must absolutely not waste time. We must advance the process. Every time we lose, it means allowing the provocations of different forces to intervene."

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Ilham Ehmed: A democratic and decentralized system must be established in Syria

ANF | HESEKÊ | 5 November 2025

The founding conference of the Tradespeople's Union was held in the city of Hesekê in the Cizîr Canton under the slogan "We will build a democratic and free society by organizing the social market."

The conference was attended by representatives of civil and military institutions, political parties, women's organizations, religious figures, academics, writers, Co-Chair of the Department of Foreign Relations of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria Ilham Ehmed, and Mar Morîs Emsîh, Orthodox Syriac Bishop of Cizir and Euphrates.

Delivering the opening speech, Henîfe Mihemed, Co-Chair of the North and East Syria Tradespeople's Union, said that the conference was organized as a result of six years of organizational work amid continued attacks and bombardments.

Ilham Ehmed then took the floor and congratulated the founding conference, saying, "Syria and the region as a whole are going through a sensitive process. Syria plays a key role in the process of change in the Middle East. We are still at the beginning of the reconstruction process. No matter how much effort is made to change the mindset of the systems, the ruling systems are resisting just as much to preserve the central system."

Ehmed pointed out that there are conflicts between power systems in the Middle East, systems that interfere in countries' internal affairs, and democratic social forces.

Remarking that the people expect to see the differences between the Transitional Government and the previous system and expect serious changes in its policies, she said, "All the Syrian people are waiting. We have four years ahead of us for this transition period. As the Syrian people, let us ask ourselves what our expectations as components are. Our expectation is a Syria based on decentralization, democracy, and pluralism. However, serious efforts are being made to keep this system as it is. Only the names in power have changed, but the policies remain the same."

Ehmed emphasized that there is great insistence on a pluralistic and decentralized Syria, stating, “There is dialogue between the Autonomous Administration and the Syrian Transitional Government officials. Sometimes it continues, sometimes it breaks down. Mediating countries such as the US and France are involved in this. They organize and conduct meetings, and we Syrians hold talks.”

The Kurdish politician stated that international parties are not present at the table where Syrians are having talks: "As you have previously heard, there is an agreement on the inclusion of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the Ministry of Defense, but this issue is still being discussed. In the coming days, the issue of including the Internal Security Forces (Asayish) in the Ministry of Interior will be addressed in new dialogues."

Ehmed pointed out that the integration of the SDF and Internal Security Forces is within the framework of decentralization. She said there is an agreement on this matter, adding: “There is no assimilation or denial of gains.”

Ilham Ehmed continued: “In terms of governance and the constitution, the constitutional declaration is very important not only for the people of North and East Syria, but for all the people of the country. Comments on the constitutional declaration are coming from different segments of society. There is great insistence on change in terms of decentralization, women's rights, and the problems of peoples and nations.”

Ehmed emphasized the need for negotiations on the constitutional declaration and the administrative systems of the provinces, stating, “A mechanism for coexistence must be established. Governance must be shared. We must have relations with neighboring states. There is a peace process in Turkey, and this process is also important for Syria's security because the problems of the people bind the countries together. The resolution of these problems, especially the Kurdish question, is also very important."

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French parliamentarians release ‘Right to Hope’ and ‘Rojava’ declaration

ANF | 6 November 2025

Several members of the French National Assembly issued a joint declaration drawing attention to the attacks targeting the Rojava model in Northern and Eastern Syria and calling on the international community to take action. The parliamentarians stated that the democratic confederal system enables the peoples of the region to live together equally and freely and said that Turkey must recognise Abdullah Öcalan’s “right to hope” within the framework of international law.

The declaration read: “We, members of the French National Assembly, express our full and unconditional support for the peoples living in the Rojava region in northern and eastern Syria. The model in which women play a central role and which is governed according to the principles of democratic confederalism

presents a system where different ethnic, religious and cultural communities (Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, Yazidis, Christians etc.) are able to live together in harmony.

However, since 2012, this communalist model has been continuously subjected to attacks and threats. On the one hand, the new Syrian regime led by Ahmed al-Sharaa (Al-Jolani), who once gained legitimacy from "Western" powers for overthrowing the bloody dictator Bashar al-Assad, yet today turns a blind eye to the massacres of ethnic and religious minorities, including Alawites, Druze and Christians has deepened repressive policies especially targeting women: discrimination, exclusion from social life, and the imposition of compulsory dress codes.

On the other hand, until very recently, Turkey continued to bomb the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria. Despite the will to lay down arms expressed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) following Öcalan's call from Imrali Prison, no concrete democratic solution has been achieved to this day, nor has any progress been made to guarantee the democratic experience in Rojava.

For the peace process to truly advance, Turkey must comply with international legal norms and recognise Öcalan's "right to hope." The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled on 9 July 2013 that the complete elimination of the possibility of conditional release violates human dignity and breaches Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). According to this, every prisoner has the right to know the date on which their situation will be reviewed.

For the peoples of Rojava, the model of democratic confederalism is the essential way to protect their existence and collective life. The freedom of Öcalan, who is regarded as the leader of the Kurds is an indispensable precondition for the advancement of the peace negotiations initiated between Turkey and the Kurds. Öcalan, who has been in prison for twenty-six years, and all political prisoners must be treated under humane conditions in accordance with international conventions.

France, Europe, and the world owe a historical debt to the Kurdish people and especially Kurdish women, due to their decisive role in the defeat of ISIS. The People's Protection Units (YPG) and Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) paid heavy prices, saved thousands of civilians, liberated vast territories from ISIS, and assumed responsibility for the administration of these lands.

As French parliamentarians, we demand that France take the necessary steps to assume responsibility for French ISIS members and their families who are still held in camps under the control of the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria, and at the very least, ensure the return of women and children. In addition, we demand that support for the Al-Jolani regime be brought to an end, and that Turkey accept a lasting ceasefire in Rojava and fulfil its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

The struggle of the oppressed peoples in Syria, and of the Kurdish people, is our struggle as well; today and tomorrow we will continue to be part of it."

Signatories:

* Mathilde Panot, Chair of the La France Insoumise (LFI) Group

* Emmanuel Fernandes (LFI)

* Nadège Abomangoli, Vice-President of the National Assembly

* Clémence Guettê, Vice-President of the National Assembly

* Thomas Portes, Chair of the Working Group on Kurds

* Anaïs Belouassa-Cherify (LFI)

* Christophe Bex (LFI)

* Carlos Martens Bilongo (LFI)

* Pierre-Yves Cadalent (LFI)

* Gabrielle Cathala (LFI)

* Hadrien Clouet (LFI)

* Jean-François Coulomme (LFI)

* Sylvie Ferrer (LFI)

* Arnaud Le Gall (LFI)

* Muriel Lepvraud (LFI)

* René Pilato (LFI)

* Aurélien Tache (LFI)

* Paul Molac, Liberties, Independents, Overseas and Territories Group (LIOT)

* Danielle Simonnet, Economic, Social and Environmental Council (EcoS)

* Elsa Faucillon, Democratic and Republican Left Group (GDR)

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Ömer Öcalan: The state must act more courageously

ANF | 7 November 2025

Ömer Öcalan, an MP for the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) from Urfa (Riha) and also the nephew of Abdullah Öcalan, visited his uncle on Imrali together with other family members on 31 October.

Ömer Öcalan spoke to Mezopotamya Agency about the meeting and said that, for the first time in years, they had a visit in which his brother also took part. He said that during this meeting Abdullah Öcalan asked specifically about the relatives and the environment he lived with in the village during his childhood and youth, and that he spoke about memories from that period.

Ömer Öcalan stated that Abdullah Öcalan also asked his sister Fatma Öcalan to talk about childhood memories and noted that they only manage to hold family visits around five times a year, adding that Abdullah Öcalan appeared more positive and healthier compared to the first visits.

Ömer Öcalan said: "He also looked better physically. In previous meetings, the physical effects of isolation were noticeable. But in the visit on 31 October, he was healthy, positive and full of enthusiasm. We draw energy from him, we draw morale from him. He motivates us and gives us suggestions. To be honest, I can say that he was in a strong condition."

Isolation continues in certain aspects

Ömer Öcalan said the following about the visit: "Abdullah Öcalan does not make any personal assessments about himself. At this point, he does not place himself at the centre in terms of health or conditions. He makes sacrifices in many areas for this process to continue. If we were to ask, 'Is the Execution Law being applied to the Abdullah Öcalan on Imrali?' That would not be correct. This is clear and well known. We know that these meetings are taking place due to the political process. There are many prisons in Turkey and more or less whatever exists in the execution law is implemented in those prisons. Of course, there are many problems in other prisons as well, but Imrali Island Prison is perhaps the place where the most isolation has been applied in this century, where the law has been most violated, where it has been almost completely isolated. Certainly, as part of family visits, I have managed to hold five visits in one year. Legally, the requirements written in the execution law are not being fulfilled, but if we were to say that isolation is continuing completely, I am not at that point. There are some loosenings, but isolation continues in certain aspects. The number of lawyer visits, the number of delegation visits, the number of family visits exist, yet we state that they are insufficient."

Officials must be courageous

Ömer Öcalan said, "There is a leader there, one of the main interlocutors of this issue. The working conditions must be created by the government. There is a government and a state reality that claims to solve this problem. It is also known by the public that one side of this matter is the Abdullah Öcalan. In this sense, the state or the officials must be more courageous. If the relationship between the Kurdish and Turkish peoples is based on a historical depth, if we are talking about a thousand years of history, then at some

point you will have to solve this issue. A political will must emerge that is obliged to show this courage and foresight. Politicians have responsibilities on their shoulders; those who run this process also have responsibilities on their shoulders. But first of all, the conditions on Imrali must be improved. Then, through appropriate ways and methods, the possibility for the Abdullah Öcalan to work freely must be ensured, this is extremely essential for us, for our people, and for our party."

The place where we meet is the same, there is no change

Ömer Öcalan said, "I have been going there for one year. The place where we meet is the same. There is no change on Imrali Island. There is no change in Abdullah Öcalan's conditions. We do not know what will happen in the upcoming process. Certainly, if the process succeeds and gains momentum, all of these issues must be reviewed."

Door-to-door organising efforts

Ömer Öcalan conveyed Abdullah Öcalan's words as follows: "You now have the conditions to be able to organise. You must organise this process together with our people. You must organise this process together with the people. If necessary, city by city, district by district, village by village, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, door by door, you must explain this process and explain to the people the model that we are trying to build."

Societal organising

Ömer Öcalan continued: "He attaches great meaning to self-organisation and to organising society as a whole. He more or less expressed it like this: 'Yes, when we first emerged, the number of words we could use was very limited. We only had a handful of expressions. We had no means. And from that point, we have come to where we are today. Now there are possibilities in many places. You have the capacity to do politics everywhere. These opportunities have been created. You must organise this process together with the people. This is not an issue that institutions can carry alone. The people must also take part in this process. They must both organise this process and, at the same time, contribute to the social system we are trying to build. This, in general, is the approach of Abdullah Öcalan.'"

Action matters more than rhetoric

Ömer Öcalan said: "Abdullah Öcalan attaches great meaning to the wisdom of the people. He always said, 'The people are right.' He values accumulated knowledge and the wisdom of society; but there is one concrete reality, only those who have fought can make peace. Abdullah Öcalan has taken a major initiative so that this war, this conflict, does not go on forever. He is trying to pull the state towards this point. He knows this very well, and a certain segment of the state also knows it. Sometimes Abdullah Öcalan speaks of a 'non-normative' state. We must be sensitive to this. More than sensitive, we must be attentive. Action matters more than words. Practice matters more than talking. This is important for us as well."

What does democratic integration mean?

Ömer Öcalan also said: "Abdullah Öcalan sometimes speaks through memories; 'When I was a child, I used to sit by the mosque wall in Amara. There was an old man there. When we talked about the Kurdish

reality, he would tell me, "Can you bring life to this dried piece of wood? That is your struggle." Great effort, great sacrifices, great political struggle brought this point. Now even those who do politics in the name of Kurdishness must respect and protect this heritage and this labour. Let me explain democratic integration clearly; it means the state accepting you with your identity, your culture, your thinking, your geography, your country, your belief. It does not mean: leave your identity, leave your language, leave your essence, leave your belief and come join the state.'"

Ömer Öcalan continued: "If Kurds are going to be part of the Republic of Turkey, it will be on the basis of a democratic republic. The conceptual definition of this is democratic integration. The Kurdish people can become part of the state with their differences. And this is what Kurds have wanted for a hundred years. In the Ottoman system, they lived for centuries with their own essence. But there is the reality of Abdullah Öcalan, who revived Kurdishness, lifted it up, brought it to a stage and took it beyond that stage. He formulated how Kurds and Turks can live together, how Kurds and Arabs or Persians can live together; how Syrians and Kurds can live together. At the same time, Kurds themselves are a very rich nation. There are Alevi Kurds, Yazidi Kurds and Kurds belonging to the Sunni Islamic faith. This method of struggle has brought all Kurds to the same table."

Kurdish system should influence Damascus

Ömer Öcalan also added: "Officials of the Republic of Turkey must break away from their repeated habits of the past one hundred years. Kurds are not hostile to any people; they are not hostile to the state either. Kurds protect their identity and existence in their own authentic way. They represent a potential force for democracy. Kurds have never applied assimilation against any right; they have only tried to protect themselves. This is also valid for Syria. Abdullah Öcalan says the system that Kurds build there should influence Damascus. He says it should aim to influence the whole of Syria on a systemic level. If this system is built in Syria, Syria can become a livable country. Turkey can then discuss its concerns and habits with its interlocutors. I believe Abdullah Öcalan is also being spoken to extensively on this matter. I conveyed the recent developments to him during this meeting. He said that he is following Syria closely."

The Syrian question must be solved within Syria itself

Ömer Öcalan said, "The Syrian question must be solved within Syria itself. The State of Turkey must approach this more sensitively, because Syria is an independent state. It should not interfere too deeply in its internal affairs. If a relationship is to be developed, then there are Kurdish representatives, politicians and leaders there. Instead of Ahmed al-Sharaa (Al-Jolani), one could speak with Mazlum Kobani. One could also speak with Ilham Ahmed. That place is a model for everyone and the world's eyes are on it. Turkey must integrate with this and contribute to it. If it has sensitivities, it must be in contact with the authorities of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), because dialogue is important. Anyone can wage war, you can destroy things with three sentences, but building, creating and expanding something requires vision. Abdullah Öcalan had already stated his thoughts on Syria clearly, and he remains at the same point. The question is how the method will be, how the language will be and on this issue he is positive and constructive."

Turkey must make peace with Kurds in all four parts

Ömer Öcalan continued: "Abdullah Öcalan protects this as if it were the apple of his eye. Syria is part of this. I hope that in the upcoming period, the sides will come together with mutual understanding and develop a positive perspective on Syria. If you want to strengthen the country, you must make peace with the cultures in all four parts of Kurdistan. Turkey must no longer conduct discussions about internal issues, internal problems and the language and existence of Kurds. In order to look forward more seriously and more courageously, it must solve its internal issue. You cannot carry out one peace process in the North, one peace process in Turkey and a different process in Rojava."

CHP must take part in the process and must not fall into traps

Ömer Öcalan said: "Abdullah Öcalan emphasised that the Republican People's Party (CHP) must take part in the process. It must not fall into traps or provocations. This process does not belong to the Justice and Development Party (AKP) or the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP); it is a process that concerns the entire state. Abdullah Öcalan attaches great meaning and value to CHP's participation in the process. This is how it can grow. There are democratic people within CHP, there are people who think positively. Those who provoke, on the other hand, are a segment in hell. In fact, certain groups are trying to block the end of this war. Very interesting things are happening. Over the past year, both the Kurdish people and the Turkish people have followed this closely. The people of Turkey must follow this very closely. They ask, 'Why does the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) bring democratic politics to the forefront and disable weapons at a certain point?' Our people must pay attention to this as well. The PKK and Abdullah Öcalan have been struggling for thirty-two years to put weapons aside and make democratic politics active."

A culture of democracy must be built

Ömer Öcalan also said, "One of the things Abdullah Öcalan wanted most was the establishment of this commission. He wants it because he wants this to belong to society as a whole. Even though it is weakened, even though it has lost influence, the most recognised institution in Turkey is the Parliament. He attributes meaning to this place, he attributes value. He says this is the ground of legitimacy. CHP also wanted this very much. Abdullah Öcalan wants to explain the experiences of fifty-two years to the commission. And he wants this for the future as well. He wants this so that such things will not happen again. He wants this so that a culture of democracy can be built."

The state must take serious steps

Ömer Öcalan concluded his remarks by saying: "Now you will listen to everyone. At the point of listening to the real interlocutor, the most legitimate interlocutor, you must show sensitivity. These are not things that can be justified. The state must take steps in a more courageous and more serious way. It must meet with Abdullah Öcalan; it must be courageous. The state must not hesitate about anything, it must take this step. When the state wishes, it must show the courage and foresight to meet with anyone it wants. A new order, a new process, a new language… In every sense, it must put forward a renewal."

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Fabian Molina: The PKK has shown political will, state must act

SERKAN DEMIREL | ZURICH | 8 November 2025

International support continues to come for the Peace and Democratic Society process led by Abdullah Öcalan. Fabian Molina, a Federal Parliament Member of the Swiss Socialist Party and a member of the Foreign Affairs Commission, spoke to ANF about the ongoing process for a democratic solution to the Kurdish question.

PKK has shown great political will

Federal Parliament Member Molina said the announcement by the Kurdish Freedom Movement that it has begun to withdraw all its forces from within Turkey's borders should make a major contribution to the process and underlined that the side that must now take concrete steps is the Turkish state. Molina stated: "This decision to withdraw is, in my view, an important sign that Mr. Öcalan and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) are determined to carry the peace process through to the end and that they are showing genuine sincerity.

With this decision, the PKK has demonstrated great responsibility and political will; it has proven this especially by deciding to withdraw all of its fighters from Turkish territory. It is now the Turkish state's turn; it must enter a dynamic of de-escalation, building trust, and showing a certain level of credibility in this process."

Legal guarantees are essential for success

Molina said the success of this process will only be possible through the political and legal arrangements to be implemented by the Turkish state, and added:

"In my view, the purpose of this peace process is clear, and it has been clear from the beginning: to address democratic deficiencies and to guarantee Kurdish people's right to self-governance. All decisions taken and all statements made by Kurdish authorities point in this direction.

However, for this process to succeed, legal guarantees approved by the authorised organs of the Turkish state are also required. Unfortunately, we are not there yet.

A great deal has changed in the Middle East. Power balances are shifting, and the region has become even more unstable than before. This is not only about the war between Israel and Hamas and the growing occupation by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, but also about the developments in Yemen and the conditions caused by the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria. In this context, responsible forces and actors are needed who want to bring stability and give peace a chance.

For this reason, I believe that the peace proposal presented by Mr. Öcalan and the Kurdish movement to the Turkish state and to the international community must be taken seriously."

Öcalan must be released immediately

Molina also reacted to the fact that, despite the peace process, Abdullah Öcalan is still held under isolation on Imralı, and said: "The conditions in which Mr. Öcalan is being held are an open violation of human rights. The Turkish state must respect human rights. International institutions, especially the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), have issued rulings regarding Mr. Öcalan's situation. It is clear that the detention conditions of Öcalan and other political prisoners are unlawful, and Mr. Öcalan must be released immediately."

Attacks on opposition forces are unacceptable

Molina said attacks against opposition forces are unacceptable in a context where peace and democracy are being discussed and continued: "In this process, the attacks against the opposition, especially against the Republican People's Party (CHP), show that the Turkish government is following a strategy of division. They want to prevent the opposition from uniting, because they think such unity would endanger their power. For this reason, while they negotiate with Kurds today, they also attack opposition forces. Despite all these policies, it is very important that all political forces working for democracy, the rule of law, human rights and peace do not become divided."

The international community must take responsibility

Molina stated the international community carries a major responsibility regarding the democratic solution to the Kurdish question and said: "Peace and democratic stability in Turkey is in the interest of the international community and of the entire region. The responsibility of the international community is considerable, because this conflict has been ignored for many years.

All states that are members of the United Nations have the responsibility to promote peace, the rule of law, democracy, stability and security. For this reason, I believe the international community must be persistent in resolving this conflict and must play an active role. Each member state must also be insistent upon the Turkish authorities, must show that it is ready to support this process, and must clearly express its interest in the success of this process."

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Öcalan: Hope is revived today with our step towards peace and a democratic society

ANF | 8 November 2025

Abdullah Öcalan sent a message to the thousands marching in Cologne demanding freedom for the Kurdish people's leader.

The message reads as follows:

"Dear friends, comrades, and all people who believe in peace and freedom,

This Great Cologne March that you have launched by gathering people from all corners of Europe is not only for my freedom but also a vital step for the Kurdish people's struggle for a democratic solution and an honorable peace.

You are adding hope, courage, and determination to the revived Peace and Democratic Society Process.

My freedom cannot be separated from the democracy and shared freedom of the Kurdish and Turkish peoples. Freedom means freedom for peace, democracy, and equal citizenship.

Through this march, based on the will we seek to strengthen, you are making our demand for freedom, democracy, and a solution heard by the entire world.

Since 1993, despite interruptions, the peace and dialogue efforts we have tried to sustain have shown that brotherhood is possible on these lands.

Despite all our efforts, the hope that was always left unfinished is revived today with our step towards peace and a democratic society. It is gradually coming to life.

This process, in fact, marks a transition from a negative revolution to a positive revolution. The nature of this process must be understood as a historical and universal reality.

We base our struggle on moving from illegality, imposed on the Kurdish reality and its struggle, to a legal framework.

Thus, with your valuable march, the struggle for peace and a solution will further grow and flourish.

Dear comrades,

The constitutional recognition of the Kurdish people in the Republic and their continued existence as equal citizens on a democratic basis is directly linked to Turkey's democratic future.

Likewise, in Syria and throughout the Middle East, Kurds must become pioneers of a life in equality, freedom, and peace with all peoples and faiths, without compromising their freedom and existence.

I hear this voice rising from Europe in Imrali, and I know it is reaching all those who need to hear it.

For you, who have had to live away from your homeland due to anti-democratic practices, represent the moral strength of peace and resolution.

Every effort you make is a step toward brotherhood and freedom.

I believe that through your will, the Kurdish people and all the oppressed will achieve a free and democratic future.

With endless love and respect, I greet you all.

Abdullah Öcalan
Imrali Prison, November 2025"

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Prisons

Chronic abuses continue in prisons: the right to life is violated

ANF | AMED | 4 November 2025

The Human Rights Association (IHD) Diyarbakir (Amed) Branch recently visited the prisons in Diyarbakir and Elazig (Xarpêt) in order to monitor the ongoing problems directly and to prepare a report. During the visit, the lawyers spoke with the prisoners, listened to the violations they experience and heard their demands. Despite the ongoing process, the conclusion reached during these visits was that chronic problems in prisons continue in a systematic manner, and that serious rights violations are also taking place in prisons other than Elazig and Diyarbakir.

Yusuf Erdoğan, lawyer and Co-Spokesperson of the IHD Central Prisons Commission, who took part in the visit, stated that prisoners face problems in communication, in access to healthy food, hygiene, and in hospital referrals, and that even sick prisoners are not released despite medical reports. He emphasised that everyone bears responsibility for the resolution of these problems and underlined that the IHD will make the necessary applications. With the words "Sick prisoners must not become the subject of bargaining in this process," he called for the unconditional release of sick prisoners.

Erdoğan stated that the IHD has been monitoring prison conditions for a long time and said, "There are problems in Turkey's prisons that have not changed for years and have now become chronic. Observation boards, the Forensic Medicine Institute and administrative obstacles prevent prisoners from accessing even their most basic rights."

Hospital referrals are being delayed

Erdoğan said that the primary problems experienced by sick prisoners are obstacles to access to treatment and to release. He stated: "Prisoners struggle to be referred to hospital, and when they are referred, they are subjected to handcuffed examinations. Sometimes they cannot access their medication, sometimes their treatment is postponed for months. This is no longer an exception, it has become systematic."

Erdoğan also stressed that the report procedures of the Forensic Medicine Institute constitute a serious barrier to release and added: "Even if a prisoner receives a report from a fully equipped state hospital stating that they cannot remain in prison, this is not considered sufficient. A second report is requested from

the Forensic Medicine Institute. Even when the Forensic Medicine Institute issues a positive report, there are seriously ill prisoners who are still not released on the grounds of whether they 'pose a threat to public safety' under Law No. 5275. This is now a clear violation of the right to life."

There are many complaints from R-type prisons

Erdoğan pointed out that the Elazig Campus Prison is one of the specific examples in Turkey and said: "The 'R Type' prison in Elazig is defined as 'rehabilitation type.' In other words, seriously ill prisoners are supposed to be held in conditions suitable for treatment. But what we saw in our visits is that these conditions are not provided. Prisoners who use wheelchairs face serious difficulties due to inadequate elevators, unsuitable beds and lack of hygiene. There is almost no companion assistance offered by the staff. R Type prisons are not places for patients to recover, they are places for them to be forgotten. We receive a great number of complaints from these prisons."

Social isolation is being deepened

Erdoğan stated that similar problems continue in Diyarbakir Prison and said: "Since the pandemic period, we can say that collective activities in Diyarbakir and surrounding prisons are either not held at all or are seriously restricted. Activities in shared areas, such as sports, courses and cultural activities are completely banned in some locations. This deepens the social isolation of prisoners. We have also received a great number of complaints that prisoners are not given Kurdish-language newspapers, magazines and even books. This is a clear violation of freedom of expression and the right to language."

Dental treatment is not being provided

Erdoğan also stated that there are serious disruptions in dental treatment and general health services in both Elazig and Diyarbakir prisons: "Prisoners reported that dental treatment has been delayed for months, and that in some prisons the waiting period extends up to six months. This situation is exhausting both physically and psychologically."

Y type and S type prisons are contrary to human dignity

Lawyer Yusuf Erdoğan said that the S Type and Y Type high-security prisons, whose number has increased in recent years, bring with them a new system of isolation: "In these prisons, prisoners are held in single or double cells. Contact with other prisoners and even with correctional officers is reduced to the minimum. Shared spaces are almost non-existent. The courtyards are built in a 'pit-type' form, they do not see sunlight. The architectural structure itself is contrary to human dignity."

Women's demands are not being met

Erdoğan said that women prisoners have been demanding, for a long time, the removal of cameras placed in private areas, but this demand still has not been met. He stressed that women's specific needs are not provided free of charge and on a regular basis, and that in children's prisons children are deprived of education, social support and psychological services.

Prisons are implementing a policy of systematic isolation

Erdoğan stated that the state's presentation of the construction of new prisons every year as a form of "service" creates a misleading perception: "New prisons are constantly being built, yet the number of prisoners does not decrease on the contrary, capacity is constantly being exceeded. This shows that penal and criminal policy in Turkey is founded upon punishment. The state says: 'We built prisons, this is a service,' but this approach is contrary to human rights. Prisons neither rehabilitate nor reintegrate people into society. On the contrary, they push people into a process of systematic isolation and decay. As the IHD, we believe that the concept of 'rehabilitation' that is being put forward in prisons is entirely contrary to human rights."

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Military aggression and occupation

ISIS carried out 18 attacks in North-East Syria in October

ANF | 3 November 2025

Following the Syrian Transitional Government's expansion of its effective control area in Syria in December 2024, ISIS mercenaries, finding more room to maneuver, intensified their attacks on North and East Syria. ISIS carried out 18 attacks across the region between October 2 and 29, 2025. Five SDF fighters and two civilians were killed in the attacks, while ten SDF fighters, four members of the Internal Security Forces, and two civilians were wounded.

Details of the attacks carried out in the region, particularly directed against the Deir ez-Zor Canton, are as follows:

October 2: ISIS mercenaries attacked a SDF vehicle on the Miêzîliyê village road north of Raqqa. Two fighters were wounded.

October 5: A mine attack was carried out on a SDF vehicle in the village of Mihemîdiyê, west of Deir ez-Zor, and one fighter was slightly injured.

October 7: An attack targeted a vehicle of the Deir ez-Zor Military Council on the Mihemîdiye–Mamil line west of Deir ez-Zor. The driver of the vehicle was wounded.

October 11: A motorcycle attack targeted a checkpoint of the Internal Security Forces in the town of Kisra. The ensuing clash did not result in casualties.

October 13: As a result of a motorcycle attack on a SDF vehicle in Til Semin, north of Raqqa, one fighter was killed and another was injured.

October 15: Two civilians were killed in a motorcycle attack on a checkpoint of the Internal Security Forces in the town of Kerama. The attacker was killed in the ensuing clash. On the same day, further attacks were carried out against the Deir ez-Zor Military Council in Behra and a checkpoint in the town of Shifa.

October 16: An RPG attack targeted a checkpoint of the Internal Security Forces in the town of Ziban, east of Deir ez-Zor.

October 17: An attack was carried out against shopkeepers who refused to give "alms" in the town of Behra in Deir ez-Zor. On the same night, the Behra Civil Council building was set on fire, and another attack was directed against the Military Council point in Sûsê, leaving one fighter wounded.

October 19: Four members were injured in an attack on a Drug Enforcement Unit vehicle in the Mihemîda district of Deir ez-Zor.

October 20: Two SDF fighters were killed and three others wounded in a bomb attack in the village of Hisan, west of Deir ez-Zor. On the same day, two more fighters were killed and another two wounded in a mine explosion on the Mihemîdiya-Xurafî road in the canton.

October 24: A SDF vehicle was targeted by a mine on the Mihemîda road in Deir ez-Zor Canton, with no casualties. On the same day, the Pomegranate Festival tent in the town of Sûsê was set on fire.

October 29: In the town of Fal, north of Deir ez-Zor, an attack on an oil tanker left the driver injured and the tanker damaged.

ISIS cells have carried out a total of 202 attacks since the beginning of 2025, mainly in the Deir ez-Zor Canton and across North-East Syria.

Last September, the mercenaries carried out a total of 12 attacks, killing 21 SDF fighters and injuring 9 fighters and 1 civilian.

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ISIS cell attacks SDF after infiltrating from west of the Euphrates

ANF | DEIR EZ-ZOR | 3 November 2025

A military source from the Deir ez-Zor Canton in North and East Syria stated that last night's attack on a checkpoint belonging to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the town of Abu Hamam was carried out by an ISIS cell that infiltrated from the west bank of the Euphrates River.

Accordingly, the cell in question infiltrated the region from the desert countryside between Al-Mayadin, Al-Bukamal and the Sibeyxan area under the control of the Syrian Transitional Government.

Taking advantage of security weaknesses in these areas, the ISIS cell move to areas under the control of the Deir ez-Zor Military Council in order to reorganize and carry out sudden attacks.

According to reports, SDF fighters immediately responded to the attack and repelled it, forcing the attackers to retreat back to where they came from.

The military source pointed out that this was not the first such attack, emphasizing that ISIS has repeatedly attempted to infiltrate SDF areas from regions controlled by the Syrian Interim Government.

The SDF Press Center announced last night that ISIS had attacked a checkpoint in the town of Abu Hamam in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor with RPGs. SDF forces successfully repelled the attack.

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French company Lafarge on trial for 'financing terrorism' in Syria

ANF | PARIS | 3 November 2025

The Paris Criminal Court is preparing to try French construction materials giant Lafarge and its senior executives on Tuesday.

The trial of French company Lafarge and its former executives, accused of 'providing financial support to terrorist organizations' in Syria, will begin in Paris. The hearings in this landmark case will continue until December 16.

The company and its executives are accused of providing financial support to jihadist groups, including ISIS, in order to keep its cement factory in northern Syria operational.

According to AFP, in addition to Lafarge, which was acquired by the Swiss Holcim group in 2015, the following individuals will be tried in the case:

Lafarge's former CEO Bruno Lafont, five former executives involved in the company's operational and security chain, and two Syrian intermediaries, one of whom is wanted on an international arrest warrant.

The defendants face charges of "providing financial support to a terrorist organization" and "failing to comply with international financial sanctions imposed on Syria following the 2011 revolution."

In the indictment announced by French judges in October 2024, the company and eight defendants were requested to stand trial on charges of "financing terrorist organizations and violating financial sanctions."

The indictment stated that all defendants "organized, approved, facilitated, or implemented a policy involving the provision of financial support to terrorist organizations operating in the vicinity of the cement

factory in the Chalabiya region of Syria, with the aim of generating profit for the economic entity they served or, for some, directly securing personal gain."

French prosecutors suspect that the Lafarge group paid a total of approximately five million euros to groups defined as "terrorists" in 2013 and 2014 through its subsidiary Lafarge Cement Syria, including the Islamic State and the Al-Nusra Front, which is linked to Al-Qaeda.

Additionally, it is alleged that payments were made to intermediaries to protect the cement factory in Chalabiya, northern Syria, during the years of conflict that began in 2011.

The company invested €680 million in the facility, which was built in 2010. While other multinational companies left Syria in 2012, Lafarge only evacuated its foreign employees at that time and continued to employ Syrian staff until September 2014, when ISIS seized the facility.

The legal proceedings in Paris began in 2017 following news reports and two separate complaints. The first complaint was filed by the company's Syrian branch associations and 11 former employees for "financing terrorism," while the second complaint was filed by the Ministry of Economy for "violating the financial embargo imposed on Syria."

The case is seen as a unique opportunity for the French justice system to address the responsibility assumed by multinational companies when operating in conflict zones.

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SDF's operations against ISIS continue: 79 mercenaries arrested in October

ANF | 4 November 2025

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the Internal Security Forces arrested 79 mercenaries in October during six targeted operations against suspected cells of the terrorist organization "Islamic State" (ISIS). According to the SDF statement on Tuesday, the detainees include two high-ranking cell leaders.

The operations took place in several regions of North-East Syria, including Deir ez-Zor, Raqqa, and eastern Aleppo. During the operations, the forces and their partners from the international anti-ISIS coalition also seized weapons and incriminating material, including plans for attacks on civilian facilities.

According to the SDF, a total of 76 anti-ISIS operations have been carried out since January. Seven ISIS members were killed, including two ringleaders, and 175 mercenaries were arrested, including five leading members of the jihadist militia.

The SDF emphasized that the operations are part of an ongoing security campaign to prevent the return or reorganization of ISIS in northeastern Syria. Despite the group's territorial defeat, the threat posed by sleeper cells and organized structures remains high, the statement said.

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Turkish state continues to build colonial housing in Afrin

ANF | AFRIN | 6 November 2025

The occupying Turkish state has been pursuing policies of demographic change and preventing the return of the local population by building colonial structures in the Afrin region occupied since 2018.

Despite public and legal calls for the return of IDPs, the occupiers have recently begun rebuilding colonial buildings.

After the colonial site called "Yed El Ewn," construction of new residences called "Toros Housing Site" began on October 5 in the district of Jindires in the Afrin Canton.

Afrin occupied since 2018

Afrin Canton was the westernmost canton of Rojava and North and East Syria, home to 200,000 ethnic Kurds. Though the population was overwhelmingly Kurdish, it was home to diverse religious groups, including Yazidis, Alawites and Christians, alongside Sunni Muslims.

On 20 January 2018, Turkey launched air strikes on 100 locations in Afrin, as the onset of an invasion they dubbed 'Operation Olive Branch.'

The Turkish Air Force indiscriminately shelled civilians as well as YPG/YPJ positions, while a ground assault was carried out by factions and militias organised under the umbrella of the Turkish-backed National Army.

By 15 March, Turkish-backed militias had encircled Afrin city and placed it under artillery bombardment. A Turkish airstrike struck the city's only functioning hospital, killing 16 civilians.

Civilians fled and the SDF retreated, and by 18 March Turkey was in de facto occupation of Afrin. Between 400 and 500 civilians died in the invasion, overwhelmingly as a result of Turkish bombing. Other civilians were summarily executed in the field.

Prior to the Turkish invasion, Afrin had been one of the most peaceful and secure parts of Syria, virtually never seeing combat during the civil war but occasional skirmishes between YPG/YPJ and jihadist forces on its borders. As a result, Afrin offered peaceful sanctuary to over 300,000 internally displaced people from elsewhere in Syria.

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Three ISIS members arrested in Deir ez-Zor countryside

ANF | 7 November 2025

The Internal Security Forces of the North and East Syria Region issued a statement announcing the details of an operation directed against an ISIS cell in the northern countryside of Deir ez-Zor on the morning of November 6.

Accordingly, the operation was carried out by the Anti-Terror Forces (HAT) and the General Security Center, with the support of the Internal Security Forces.

"The operation was carried out within the framework of ongoing efforts to identify organizational targets in the region and neutralize terrorist elements. Our forces carefully monitored the movements of the terrorist cell before raiding the target areas. The mercenaries' cell area was brought under control without any of our personnel being harmed," said the statement on Friday.

The statement reported that three ISIS cell members were captured during the operation and weapons, documents, and communication equipment were seized.

Security forces announced that investigations were being conducted on the arrested mercenaries who would subsequently be referred to judicial authorities.

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Yet another civilian murdered in occupied Afrin

ANF | 7 November 2025

The Human Rights Organization Afrin-Syria announced that a citizen named Mihemed Ehmed Derwîş (55) was killed by two masked and armed men in the village of Burc Ebdalo, near the district of Sherawa.

The organization stated that the incident took place yesterday evening: "Mihemed and his wife were eating dinner in a tent in their garden when two masked and armed assailants raided the tent and shot Mihemed before fleeing the scene."

According to the information available, Mihemed Derwîş was taken to a hospital in Aleppo with injuries, but succumbed to his injuries.

On Wednesday, November 5, a man named Shukri Ahmed Oso (65) from the village of Keferzita was also killed by armed forces.

Afrin occupied since 2018

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Femicide

383 women killed in 10 months: impunity encourages men

ANF | AMED | 3 November 2025

Since 1 January 2025, 383 women have been murdered by men across Kurdistan and Turkey. According to data from the Equality for Women Platform (ESIK), an average of three women are murdered by men every day in the country. In the past week alone, four women, who were subjected to violence, were in the process of divorce, or wanted to separate, were deprived of their right to life by the men they were trying to leave, despite being under protection orders. In a country where restraining or protection orders are not implemented and women are therefore left without protection, women who do not trust law enforcement and the judiciary are increasingly distancing themselves from reporting mechanisms. Such cases continue to rise day by day, and Derya Yıldırım, a Board Member of the Diyarbakır (Amed) Bar Association, said that femicides would decrease if existing laws were implemented, and pointed out that the legal decisions remain only on paper.

Yıldırım said, "This situation is not the result of individual mistakes, but a demonstration of the state's structural responsibility. The fact that a woman cannot be protected despite submitting complaint petitions multiple times cannot be explained by a single act of negligence; this is the outcome of a policy." Yıldırım listed the effective steps that must be taken both in the judiciary and within law enforcement and underscored that the increase in femicides is the result of a system that fails to protect women's right to life. She stressed that women are murdered at the moment they believe they have obtained protection orders because the gaps within the system leave them unprotected.

Derya Yıldırım stressed that women have been demanding the implementation of protection orders for years, yet these orders are often not enforced. Yıldırım said: "When protection orders are not implemented, femicides are committed more easily. Because there is no system that protects women. Deficiencies in the electronic ankle bracelet system cost women their lives. At one point, there was talk about electronic bracelets, but today, because there are not enough bracelets, the decisions cannot be implemented. In fact, there are perpetrators who can comfortably leave their homes even though they are wearing a bracelet. Unfortunately, there are also women who have been murdered under these circumstances."

Yıldırım underlined that the state is not fulfilling its structural responsibility and drew attention to the severe consequences caused by withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention and said: "The termination of the Istanbul Convention is not only giving up on a text, but giving up on a guarantee that protects women's right to life. This decision created the perception among perpetrators that 'even the state no longer protects women.' If the state abandons the laws that protect women, then the perpetrator sees himself as free to do whatever he wants."

Protection orders are not effectively implemented

Derya Yıldırım said that the unjust provocation and good behaviour sentence reductions in femicide cases must be abolished. Yıldırım said: "The laws look very good on paper, but they are not implemented. Protection orders are also not effectively implemented. Failures in implementation leave women unprotected. A fifteen-day restraining order is issued, but it is not clear how this will be enforced. The woman is told, 'If he approaches, call us.' If I am going to call, then why is a restraining order issued? This situation emboldens men while damaging women's trust in justice."

Women are losing trust in the justice system

Yıldırım said that women do not receive adequate support from the security forces and stated: "When a woman who is subjected to violence goes to the police, she is met with the response, 'this is a family matter, go back home.' In this situation, the woman loses all her trust. Going to the courthouse becomes meaningless. The protection orders that are issued are also not implemented effectively. Women are not called, there are no law enforcement officers around them, risk analysis is not conducted."

Written responses do not protect women

Yıldırım said that women therefore prefer to remain silent and added: "All the responses they receive from every institution they ask for help from are written. Women cannot be protected with written responses. There is no practical implementation, and the police officer, judge or prosecutor who does not implement the protection order must be held accountable for why they did not enforce it. If accountability becomes

obligatory, implementation becomes more effective. There must absolutely be no sentence reductions in femicide cases. The state must not turn its impunity policy into a habit."

Effective results can be achieved when laws are implemented

Yıldırım said that instead of new legislation, the solution lies in the effective implementation of the existing laws. She said: "When the existing laws are implemented, effective results can be achieved. The statute of limitations in femicide cases must be removed, and criminal sanctions must be imposed on officials who fail to implement the law. The Istanbul Convention must be reinstated. This would demonstrate that the state is taking a serious step towards protecting women."

Gender equality education is essential

Yıldırım also stated that femicides should be considered within the scope of crimes against humanity and suggested that gender equality training should be made compulsory for judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officers. She said: "If members of the judiciary receive gender equality education, they will better understand whose lives they are costing. As the bar association, we have even introduced mandatory training on domestic violence during internship programmes. Society must now also take a step forward on this issue."

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JinNews: At least 25 women were murdered in Turkey in October

ANF | 6 November 2025

According to the October report on violence against women compiled by JinNews, 25 women and one child were murdered in Turkey, while eight women and three children died under suspicious circumstances.

The majority of women were victims of men closest to them; one was killed by her child, three by men with whom they were in the process of divorce, eight by men they were married, three by men they had broken up with, five by men they had divorced, two by men they knew. The relationship of three slain women to the perpetrator is unknown.

The femicides during October were perpetrated in at least 16 cities, with İzmir leading the list with 5 murders and Istanbul with 4 murders.

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Human Rights Violations

DFG: We will continue writing the truth despite the sentences

ANF | AMED | 2 November 2025

The Ankara Regional Court of Appeal finalized the case in which eleven journalists were on trial. The six-year-three-month prison sentences handed down against Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reporters Diren Yurtsever, Selman Güzelyüz, Emrullah Acar, Zemo Ağgöz, JINNEWS News Director Öznur Değer, and journalists Deniz Nazlım and Hakan Yalçın were upheld by the Court of Cassation.

The Dicle Firat Journalists Association (DFG) protested the decision on its social media account on X. The DFG wrote that the approval of the sentences is another link in the recent chain of attacks on press freedom and stated the following: "The Ankara 4th High Criminal Court unlawfully sentenced our colleagues without any evidence, solely because of their journalistic activities. The 22nd Penal Chamber then approved these sentences and contributed to this unlawfulness. The approval of the sentences is both an attack on press freedom and a blow to the climate of democratisation currently on the agenda in Turkey. This decision, which runs counter to the spirit of the process, must be explained by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. Our colleagues whose sentences have been upheld continue to write despite all repression. And this has become the biggest problem for the mentality that issued these sentences. We do not accept these unlawful sentences and we will continue our struggle by taking the legal fight of our colleagues to the next court. We will continue writing the truth despite the sentences."

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Four more Kurdish citizens arrested amid wave of arrests in Iran

ANF | 2 November 2025

In the early hours of 29 October, Iranian Ministry of Intelligence agents raided the home of Sirwan Shawleh in Mahabad, and arrested her without a warrant.

Shawleh had previously been summoned for interrogation at the Ministry's office in Mahabad on 5 February, where she was threatened.

Her husband, Jalal Sadafi, has been held in Mahabad Prison in a state of uncertainty since his arrest by the same agency on 15 December 2024.

The following day, in the early hours of 30 October, Ministry of Intelligence forces carried out coordinated raids in Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province, arresting Raouf Farrokhi, Vahab Mohammadpour, and Rahim Rahmani.

The three men were then taken to the Ministry's detention facility in Orumiyeh, West Azerbaijan Province.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) has reported that dozens of agents raided the three-storey home of Mohammad-Amin Farrokhi, a citizen from Piranshahr, breaking doors and windows and arresting his son Raouf along with Mohammadpour.

Simultaneously, agents raided the village of Zangabad in Piranshahr, where they arrested Rahmani without a warrant.

Several drones belonging to the Ministry of Intelligence offices in Piranshahr and Orumiyeh reportedly flew over the homes during the operations, while agents insulted family members and seized personal belongings.

Sources said that security forces later told the Farrokhi family that Avareh Farrokhi, a family member who was not at home during the raid, must report to the Ministry's office in Piranshahr.

Mohammadpour had previously been arrested during the Jin, Jiyan, Azadi (Women, Life, Freedom) protests in December 2022 in Piranshahr, and was released from Naqadeh Prison on bail after three months.

According to figures collected by the KHRN, at least 10 Kurdish citizens and activists have been arrested by Ministry of Intelligence forces in Bukan, Piranshahr, Mahabad, and Kamyaran over the past three days.

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Report on human rights violations against Kurdish civilians in Iran in October

ANF | NEWS DESK | 2 November 2025

In its monthly reports, the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) highlights cases of human rights violations in Kurdistan and violations of the rights of Kurdish citizens in different regions and cities across Iran.

The latest report includes all cases recorded and reported by KHRN from across Iran through its own sources and verification mechanisms from 1 October to 31 October.

KHRN noted that the restrictive environment for independent human rights organisations in Iran, coupled with the pressures faced by individuals subjected to human rights violations and their families, make

it difficult to publish accurate and comprehensive reports. Therefore, the statistics and information presented in the report do not cover all cases of human rights violations.

Executions

In October, Iranian authorities executed at least 16 prisoners across various prisons in the country.

Out of the total, eight individuals were executed on charges of "premeditated murder", four individuals on drug-related charges, three for "enmity against God" (moharebeh) through armed robbery, and one on charges of "enmity against God" (moharebeh), membership in terrorist and takfiri (Sunni extremist) groups as well as armed operations.

Executions were concentrated in a few facilities. Five executions took place in Ghezel Hesar Prison in Karaj, four in Kermanshah Central Prison, two in Sanandaj Central Prison, two in Karaj Central Penitentiary, two in Esfarayen Prison and one in Qom Central Prison.

Femicide

On 26 October, Leila Alirmaei, a 42-year-old mother of two, was shot dead by her neighbour in Marivan, Kurdistan Province, after refusing his repeated demands to divorce her husband and marry him.

Kolbars

At least three kolbars were shot and killed and two others were wounded as a result of direct fire by Iranian border forces last month in the border areas of Baneh, Kurdistan Province.

Detentions and arrests

In October, at least 28 individuals were arrested across West Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Kermanshah and Tehran provinces. Those arrested included political activists, civil rights defenders, and labour activists, while in many cases their specific activities remain unknown.

Of the total number of arrests, 17 were made in West Azerbaijan Province, nine in Kurdistan Province, one in Kermanshah Province and one in Tehran Province.

Iranian security forces also arrested at least two children aged 17 in West Azerbaijan Province in the past month, who were later released.

Of those detained in October, at least one was released on bail, while two were sent to prison to serve their sentences.

The fate of many others remains unknown, as their place of detention and legal status have not been disclosed.

Sentences

In October, Iranian courts handed down sentences to at least 25 Kurdish individuals ranging from a few months' imprisonment to the death penalty.

Additionally, Branch 39 of the Supreme Court overturned the death sentences issued for five individuals and ordered a retrial after reviewing appeals submitted by their lawyers.

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ECtHR rejects Turkey's appeal against ruling to release Demirtaş: The decision is final

ANF | 4 November 2025

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has rejected Turkey's appeal against the ruling to release Selahattin Demirtaş. This means that the decision of July 8 is now final. At that time, the Strasbourg court had found that Demirtaş was imprisoned for political reasons and demanded his release. The Turkish government had requested that the ruling be reviewed by the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR. The court has now rejected this request.

Politically motivated imprisonment

In its judgment in July, the ECtHR ruled that the continued pre-trial detention in the so-called Kobane trial was politically motivated and violated the European Convention on Human Rights. The court accordingly demanded that the former co-chair of the HDP be released immediately.

Demirtaş was imprisoned in connection with the Kobane protests in October 2014. Dozens of people were killed in the nationwide unrest that broke out at the time against the Turkish government's support for the terrorist militia "Islamic State" (ISIS). In a subsequent trial, Demirtaş was sentenced to a total of 42 years in prison. He has been held in the high-security prison in Edirne since 2016.

Repeated criticism by the ECtHR

In earlier proceedings, the ECtHR had classified Demirtaş's imprisonment as a human rights violation – first in November 2018 and again in December 2020. With the complaint now rejected, the latest ruling from July 2025 is final and binding on Turkey under international law.

Reactions from politicians and Demirtaş himself

After the decision was announced, the DEM Party, the successor of the HDP, demanded the immediate release of Demirtaş and other imprisoned party members, including Figen Yüksekdağ. In a statement, the party executive said: "Taking into account all previous ECtHR rulings and, in particular, the now final decision, our friends must be released without further delay."

Selahattin Demirtaş himself commented in a message posted on his X account. He described the ruling as "important and legally binding," but emphasized that its real significance went beyond that: "What is crucial is our shared understanding of brotherhood; living together in equality, freedom, justice, and peace." At the same time, he called for political and social conflicts to be resolved not with revenge or confrontation, but with reason and a view to a shared future.

Demirtaş concluded: "In the hope of free days, I send my greetings and love."

Lawyers file appeal for Demirtaş's immediate release

Following the ECtHR decision, lawyers announced on Tuesday that they had filed a legal appeal for Demirtaş's immediate release.

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Kurdish community protests the detention of three activists in Finland

ANF | HELSINKI | 6 November 2025

On 3 November2025, in southeastern Finland, Naim Acar, Ramazan Koyun, and Metin Çelik were detained as part of a "terrorism financing" investigation conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (Keskusrikospoliisi–KRP). Following the detentions, searches were carried out at their homes and at the Kurdish Community Center in Helsinki.

Members of the Kurdish community in Finland noted the timing of the detentions, coinciding with the visit of Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, and expressed concern that the process may be politically motivated.

In a statement, the Kurdish People's Assembly emphasized that Kurds living in Finland are law-abiding and well-integrated members of society, asserting that defending their institutions and values is their most natural right. The statement added, "The right of Kurds to organize and defend their political and cultural values is a universal right."

Families of the detainees have reportedly not yet received sufficient or clear information about their situation, and they called for the process to be conducted lawfully, transparently, and fairly.

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ISIG: At least 169 workers died in October

ANF | ISTANBUL | 7 November 2025

The Occupational Health and Safety Observatory (ISIG) published its "Workplace Murders Report" for October. According to the report, at least 169 workers lost their lives in workplace-related incidents in October. The total number of worker deaths in the first ten months of the year reached 1,737.

The distribution of deaths by sector was as follows:
Agriculture and forestry: 27%
Construction and road: 25%
Transportation: 15%
Metal: 6%
Trade/education: 5%

Main causes of death:
Crushing and collapse: 23%
Traffic and commuting accidents: 20%
Falls from height: 17%

Among those who lost their lives, 12 were women and 157 were men. In addition, 8 children, including one under the age of 14, and 7 refugee/migrant workers also died.

Age distribution of workers:
15–17 years: 7 workers
18–29 years: 32 workers
30–49 years: 61 workers
50–64 years: 46 workers
Over 65 years: 14 workers

The provinces with the highest number of workplace deaths were Istanbul (19), Mersin (10), Ankara (9), and Bursa (7).

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Another Kurdish activist sentenced to prison in Iran

ANF | NEWS DESK | 7 November 2025

Branch 102 of the Criminal Court Two in Dehgolan, Kurdistan Province, has sentenced Kurdish civil rights activist Mohammad Rezaei to one year in prison on the charge of "propaganda against the state".

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) has reported that Rezaei, who is a member of the Nozhin Socio-Cultural Association in Dehgolan, was tried some time ago and was recently formally notified of the ruling.

According to the Nozhin Socio-Cultural Association, Rezaei, who is from Sanandaj in Kurdistan Province, was arrested without a warrant in Dehgolan on 12 July 2025, and was provisionally released on bail of eight billion rials (almost 8,000 USD) after spending 55 days in detention.

The association, which focuses on teaching the Kurdish language voluntarily in various cities across Kurdistan, has been repeatedly targeted by security forces in recent years, with several of its members being summoned, detained and sentenced to prison terms.

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Interview

Kürkçü: Process now entirely in the government's court

ANF | 2 November 2025

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) honorary chair Ertuğrul Kürkçü spoke to ANF and assessed the new political balance that emerged after the withdrawal of guerrilla groups from Turkey in the second phase of the "Democratic Society and Peace" process that Abdullah Öcalan initiated with the statement he issued on 27 February.

Kürkçü said that the process has extended over a longer time period than initially expected and noted that this delay has created disappointment among people. He added that the process has now been entirely thrown onto the government's field and underlined the urgency of taking concrete steps regarding mother-tongue education and the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.

Ertuğrul Kürkçü referred to the 27 February call by Öcalan and said that everyone now has a clearer idea about the authenticity of the process and added that before this declaration there was already a perception that a period of dialogue had taken place. He said: "For my part, until I read this declaration, I felt the need to observe, but I did not only come to understand that there was a process. This is a prior period of agreement. In other words, before it was made public, before Abdullah Öcalan's contact was established with the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), or the delegation, or others, or his lawyers, it appears that there was a period of talks. I understand that certain matters were reviewed, and certain main decisions were taken. We need to understand the process in this way."

Kürkçü said that two main points stand out when evaluating the course of the process and noted that the first of these is that developments have extended far longer than originally anticipated. Kürkçü added: "Af-

ter the period between 2013 and 2015, and then a decade of pressure and persecution that followed, there was an expectation in the public of a faster improvement.

The delay in the process has created disappointment among the people, and most of the burden has fallen on the shoulders of the Kurdish Freedom Movement. As the delay began, hopelessness or disappointment also began. Therefore, the responsibility and obligation to overcome this disappointment also fell again on the Kurdish movement. In other words, it appears that the entire burden of this process has essentially been shouldered by the Kurdish people and its revolutionaries."

Kürkçü said that reactions following this step have been positive but remained weak, and added: "Unless there are developments that will convince all of Turkey, with its values and resources, that we are taking a step towards a better future, these developments will remain weak. Therefore, this broader democratisation agenda will remain the central issue."

Kürkçü said that the inclusion of the Republican People's Party (CHP) in the commission, as well as the participation of parties other than the Good (IYI) Party, is "a favourable situation, because it brings a more multi-stakeholder solution process onto the agenda." However, he underlined that real control still rests with the People's Alliance and continued: "The role of the commission is limited. The majority of the commission is already formed by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). The lion's share lies with these two parties. Therefore, it is difficult to think that anything which has not been considered, prepared, or pre-shaped by the AKP and MHP cadres will pass through the commission by itself. That is why the main initiative lies with the government. We want to see their practical steps."

Kürkçü noted that there is dialogue between the People's Alliance and the Freedom Movement, and added that for other parties to become part of this, they must also benefit from positive developments. Kürkçü said that the main opposition, the CHP, is currently under unjust attack and continued: "As has been said again, the government is in fact pursuing a course that goes entirely against the solution process. Because the government or the palace, approaches the axes of freedom with security-oriented outcomes. It does not approach from a pluralistic and inclusive point, but from a singular and narrow one. This prevents the process from becoming a freedom initiative, and it distances and cools people from it."

Mother tongue education is indispensable

Kürkçü said that there is not even the slightest indication of practical preparation on how Kurdish demands will be addressed. Kürkçü highlighted the vital importance of mother-tongue education among these demands and continued: "Education in one's mother tongue is, in fact, indispensable for the Kurds, even if every other demand were met. Because without mother-tongue education, without securing the mother tongue, it is impossible to protect and sustain one's identity and existence; therefore, nothing else would be of any benefit. For example, it is essential that Kurdish classes be opened in all schools, and that, from primary school to the final year of high school, public, free and unconditional education in the Kurdish language be guaranteed for everyone."

Kürkçü pointed out that obstacles to broadcasting in Kurdish must be removed, and that Kurdish-language services in local administrations must be made possible. He recalled that the rights gained before the 2016 period had been taken back under the State of Emergency and said that they expect a will of restitu-

tion from the government. He also said that the DEM Party must pave the way for a mobilisation for mother-tongue education in order to bring these issues onto the social agenda.

Kürkçü continued: "Demanding freedom for Öcalan is as natural for the Kurdish people. If a turning point has been reached, then those who paid the highest price must be given restitution, meaning their freedom must be returned. Humanity expects this from us. In a situation where nothing is seen in practice, nothing that opens the way for Öcalan's contact with society, his contact with the world, his contact with people who have social representation, as if nothing has changed, there is nothing more understandable than the people taking to the streets with a demand for freedom."

Kürkçü said that ending armed conflict is the most significant development and that the political leader who made this possible must be recognised, and added: "Öcalan is, in this process, the most significant political leader after those who govern the state in Turkey. Therefore, the Parliamentary Commission will not need to negotiate whether to meet with Öcalan or not. On the contrary, it must contribute to Öcalan's efforts and his legitimacy."

The importance of the Cologne march

Kürkçü called on people to join the march and rally to be held in Cologne on 8 November within the framework of the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question" initiative, and continued: "In the end, the task once again falls on our shoulders. Unless the oppressed save themselves, no one will save them. But deciding along which path they would do this was their right. The Kurdish people will use their legitimate right in line with society's demands to hold meetings and demonstrations through peaceful contact, dialogue, and measures in the direction of democratic society, and they will express this."

Kürkçü highlighted the necessity of bringing the demands that will be expressed in Cologne onto Europe's two key political platforms, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, and said: "We cannot see any action regarding seriously ill prisoners. We cannot see any action even regarding the executions that have been burned out. Where, then, does Öcalan's freedom stand? That is why it is both the right and the duty of the people to take the initiative on this issue. No one else but them can ensure this."

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Sozdar Avesta: The first thing that needs to be done is to ensure the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | 8 November 2025

Sozdar Avesta, member of the Presidential Council of the KCK, gave an assessment of the guerrilla press conference held on 26 October in the mountains of Kurdistan. She talks about the steps taken so far by the Kurdistan Freedom Movement and Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan and their position in the ongoing process, as well as the rapprochement of the Turkish state.

We publish the first part of her remarks.

Sozdar Avesta began by commemorating "our comrades that have fallen martyrs in the month of July, as well as Dilzar Rêber Andok, who was martyred in an accident that occurred on 31 October. By commemorating, we remember all the heroes who gave their lives in the freedom struggle. It is thanks to their sacrifice that this struggle has reached where it is today, and our people honor their martyrs with pride."

Avesta then spoke about the press conference held by guerrillas on 26 October and said: "The Kurdistan Freedom Movement took a historic step in response to Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's call at the press conference on 26 October in the Qendîl Mountains. A statement was read by members of the KCK Executive Council and of the YJA Star and HPG command of Northern Kurdistan. It was an important statement, declaring a meaningful and valuable step.

Twenty-five precious guerrilla fighters of the HPG and YJA Star announced their return from Northern Kurdistan. There are circles that can be referred to as 'deep state' within Turkey. They do not want this process to progress. The withdrew now was from areas where there was a possibility of conflict, thus thwarting the sabotage intentions of these circles. We have encountered such provocations in the past. In the course of previous ceasefire periods, many provocations were carried out by these forces. During the Oslo process, for example, mines were planted by these saboteurs in the Peyanis region of Colemêrg (tr. Hakkari), which caused the death of dozens of civilians. Similarly, in 2013 in Paris, Sakine Cansız, one of the founders of the Kurdistan Freedom Movement and the PKK, along with Fidan Doğan and Leyla Şaylemez, was assassinated by these very forces that thereby tried to prevent the process from progressing. So far, every effort towards a successful process was always confronted with many provocations and attempts at sabotage, but still Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan and the Freedom Movement are determined to reach their goal and achieve success. Therefore, this new step has now been taken with Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's approval."

Avesta added: "We comprehensively evaluated the process at the 12th Congress of the PKK. As the Freedom Movement, we discussed and agreed on the tasks that fall upon us, how we can strengthen Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's hand, and what we need to do to prevent the process from falling victim to any provocations. As a result, we decided to withdraw our guerrillas from those areas that could be a potential breeding ground for such provocations. This was an important step. As stated in the announcement, there are further such regions along the borderlines that have the same risk potential, but there as well necessary measures are being taken. In other words, this step is a continuation of the step taken on July 11 under the leadership of the co-chair of the KCK Executive Council. That step, taken under the leadership of comrade Besê Hozat and a group consisting of 30 guerrilla fighters, also had a major impact. It resonated widely in the region as well as in the world.

But one has to also look at what happened after it. Steps needed to be taken by the Turkish side within the framework of this process, but that did not happen. Contradictions are arising, and one has to question this. Some questioned why we decided to withdraw our forces after we had already symbolically burned our weapons, while the Turkish state didn't make any step. Some even said that the process was heading towards a deadlock, that there was laxity, and that it was developing negatively. Questions, criticisms, and expectations are being raised in this way in public opinion. Our international friends and our people are also asking similar questions. This is a crucial issue. Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan clearly stated in his call on February 27 that this process is not a bargaining process, that it should not be evaluated

within this framework, but that it is a process of a strategic change. Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan had also mentioned this in his previous video statement. However, those on the other side should not see it as bargaining. The state and the government must also take steps. Freedom laws and democratic integration laws should have already been enacted after July 11. However, these steps have not been taken. This is why the process has been prolonged and the risk of provocation has increased."

Avesta continued: "There is the commission within the parliament that was established on August 5. This commission is still continuing its work and is thereby playing on time. It has been harshly criticized by our movement, intellectuals, and many circles of experts on this issue. We were and are always absolutely clear about our position in this process. The commission started working in the wrong way. The commission's first agenda item should have been the enactment of these laws, and according to these laws, direct talks with Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan should have been held in the first phase. Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's opinion should have been sought. If this had been done, then our comrades would not have had to walk for months to reach Qendîl from Northern Kurdistan. They could have participated directly in the process. However, because no steps were taken, the process was prolonged, and the risk of provocation arose. There was a risk that the process would be wasted. For this reason, the Freedom Movement demonstrated its stance with great sacrifice, determination, wisdom, historical responsibility, and loyalty to Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan.

In this regard, I want to underline again, as the Freedom Movement, we are advancing this process under the ideological and practical leadership of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan. However, this process cannot advance solely through our unilateral steps. Now, after October 26, these issues are being discussed. Steps must be taken. If they are not taken, it will no longer have any meaning.

From here on, there are two possibilities: Either the process moves forward, or it loses all meaning. As again declared in the statement, we are serious in our consideration of the healthy progress of the process and act accordingly. As the Freedom Movement, we support and embrace the steps taken under the leadership of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan in his careful, responsible, conscious, and determined manner. Our people, our movement, and the Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, have shown great resistance for this process to move forward. For this reason, on behalf of the leadership of our Presidential Council, I greet each one of those comrades who marched from Northern Kurdistan and made great sacrifices to prevent the process from being endangered. I also congratulate the HPG and YJA Star command for successfully carrying out this historic step, and I send my greetings to all of them."

At this point, Avesta emphasized that "the main goal of the Freedom Movement and the people of Kurdistan is the physical freedom of people's leader Abdullah Öcalan. The current process has been ongoing for a year. It came to the forefront with the statements of MHP chair Devlet Bahçeli. It was Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's response to these statements, saying, "If you clear the way and provide opportunities, I will shift this process from a terrain of war, conflict, and violence to a political and legal terrain," that initiated all of this. The opportunities offered to Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan are completely limited. Better conditions must be ensured for him in order for him to be able to make his contribution. This is not a political demand that can be negotiated but simply the legal right to which he is entitled anyway. Meetings with his lawyers, for example, had been banned for years. His lawyers have to get the allowance to go to Imrali whenever they want. Meeting with his family is his legal and lawful right, and it has to be provided. Sure, a delegation from the DEM Party is included in the process, but this only offers insufficient, limited opportunities. The process must be based on solid ground. Kurdish people's

leader Abdullah Öcalan also stated this in his last meeting. As a movement, we always emphasize that these conditions are necessary for peace, a democratic society, brotherhood among peoples, the democratization of the republic, and the general advancement of democracy. Devlet Bahçeli himself pointed out that the process should be discussed within the parliament and that Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan should come and speak there. Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan fulfilled his duties. He lifted the obstacles in front of the process and created strong public support for the process. What are they still waiting for? The delay in the implementation of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's so-called 'Right to Hope' is raising questions."

Avesta pointed out that "some steps that had already been taken in the past, in 1999 and 2013, were rendered useless due to petty interest. The current lack of the required discussions within the commission and the failure to take the necessary steps into consideration is also a matter of authority. The dialogue and negotiation based on Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's model of 'Peace and Democratic Society' is crucial. The state must take concrete steps in this regard. The reason that the Kurdish issue remains unresolved is due to flawed approaches. No trust can be created when they still insist on their labeling of terrorism. Major steps must be taken. The situation is serious. And the very first thing that needs to be done is to ensure the physical freedom of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan. They need to implement the 'Right to Hope' as is envisaged by the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Legal regulations must be made for this to happen, and there should be no delay. We consider this as decisive."

Avesta said: "

I also want to call on everyone to participate in the upcoming march under the slogan 'Freedom for Rêber Apo, Solution to the Kurdish Question,' that is to be held in Cologne, Germany. This march could send a strong message to the international community for the physical freedom of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan and the solution to the Kurdish question. No process can move forward without Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom. Our people must expand the campaign for his freedom and the solution to the Kurdish question. The process moves forward through struggle. Even if democratic integration laws are passed and negotiations progress, this does not mean that the struggle will end. We must never forget that we need to intensify the struggle in every field for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's freedom. This process has indeed brought us very close to the opportunity for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom. With the support of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, the martyrs, and our people, we are now very close to it. No one will serve us democracy, peace, and Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's freedom on a platter; this can only be achieved through struggle. It will be won through struggle, through resistance.

We are following in the press that preparations have been underway for days for the march to be held on November 8. Democratic organizations, international friends of the Kurdish people, democratic and leftist circles, and everyone who wants peace in the region know that the freedom of the Kurdish people is linked to the freedom of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan. This march goes far beyond the marches and rallies of previous years. It is truly very important. Hundreds of thousands of people should participate and their message must reach everywhere. Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan must not be isolated even for one more hour. The Council of Europe must monitor this process for the implementation of the 'Right to Hope' and take swift action. This march will have an impact. Our people's preparations for the march are almost complete. We must secure Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom

against the conspiracies. We must act with this awareness and conviction. On this basis, I call on everyone, especially our people in Germany, the Netherlands, and the surrounding countries, together with all organizations and international friends, to participate in the November 8 march. I greet and congratulate everyone who will participate in the march in advance."

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Opinion

Communism from a socialist perspective: The examples of Zapatista and Rojava

ANF | 3 November 2025

Socialism is a movement and ideology of socialization. Even though its basic forms are as old as humanity itself, it has often been portrayed as a retroactive ideological movement by those who hold the authority to interpret history. As a result, it has been staged—especially through the experiences of real socialism—as a successor system to capitalism, replacing it in the context of a linear development. This is also stated in the classic writings of Marxism: capitalism will be followed by socialism and ultimately communism.

However, reality refutes this linear conception. Practice has shown that such a system of thought is not only flawed but also sectarian. Abdullah Öcalan has therefore long rejected the assumption that history began with class struggle in his ideological work. Rather, classes are a later phenomenon; human history began with communal forms of life—a finding that is supported by new historical insights.

Öcalan does not accept the common definition of a commune. In his understanding, a commune is not simply the communal life of a particular group or class, but the result of the joint organization of all people living in a particular geographical area. For him, the commune is not an administrative model imposed from above or controlled by appointed officials.

Socialist movements that viewed the commune merely as an instrument of state organization and not as an independent, democratic way of life ultimately failed. The reason: socialism did not think through the idea of the commune consistently enough and did not recognize its transformative power as the basis of its theory.

Collective farms in Soviet socialism – from basic structure to instrument of power

The best-known communal forms of organization in the context of real socialism were the collective farms of the Soviet Union – cooperative agricultural structures that were initially conceived as an expression of people's power and socialist self-organization. Lenin saw them as the basis of a council-based, communal

society. But over time, these structures came under the control of the Soviet bureaucracy. A democratic experiment became an instrument for enforcing centralist decisions - against the interests of the population.

Although Lenin originally envisioned a "republic of communes," the increasing bureaucratization of the Soviet Union undermined this approach. The state became an end in itself, and the kolkhozes degenerated into a caricature of communal self-government—dominated by bureaucratically appointed functionaries.

A similar fate befell the people's communes in the People's Republic of China. Although they emerged during and after the revolution as the smallest organizational units with education and participation-oriented objectives, they too were gradually integrated into the centralist power structure of the Chinese Communist Party. What originally began as a project of literacy, collective learning, and local self-government became a mere instrument for implementing party directives. Today, they exist only on paper—as a formal shell of a practice that has long since been emptied of meaning. China's self-description as a "socialist state" thus stands in stark contrast to social reality.

State fixation as a contradiction to the communalist idea

In Cuba, too, it is evident that communal structures, which originally served as the basis for revolutionary organization, have degenerated into largely empty, purely formal institutions in the course of the establishment of the socialist state. The communes founded before the victory of the Cuban Revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba have, over the years, turned into meaningless routines—an expression of their alienation from their original function. They have fallen victim to the state-centered thinking of real or "scientific" socialism.

This development points to a fundamental dilemma: a movement such as socialism, originally understood as a popular ideology, turns into its opposite as soon as it becomes institutionalized at the supranational level and abandons central principles such as self-government and direct participation. Such "socialism that has become state-run" ultimately becomes a poor copy of capitalism—bureaucratic, alienated, and hierarchical.

The refusal to break away from the concept of the state, as maintained by many real socialist and Marxist-Leninist movements, not only watered down the radical nature of their programs, but also undermined the organic foundations of social organization. Originally conceived as a means of direct participation by the people—for example, in the form of collective farms, people's communes, or people's councils—these structures increasingly became instruments of control. Instead of emancipatory participation: administration. Instead of participation: command and obedience.

The result: a growing loss of trust in socialist models among the population. Where leadership elites exist and the people do not determine their own representatives, every communal structure loses its emancipatory content. Even if the beginning was idealistic and participatory, without a consistently horizontal organization, alienation becomes the norm and disintegration the consequence.

A look at the present therefore shows that successful community movements are those that do not create a new ruling class, but rather allow people to manage their own affairs. Two outstanding examples of such attempts that do not follow the familiar pattern of statehood and bureaucracy are the Zapatista Autono-

mous Communities in Mexico and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria - known as Rojava. They exemplify a new, anti-hierarchical form of socialism based on communal self-organization.

The Zapatistas: Autonomous communities in resistance

The movement that went down in history as the Zapatista Rebellion began as an uprising in the Mexican state of Chiapas. Led by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), it demanded the right of self-determination for the indigenous population. Today, this resistance continues in the form of the Zapatista Autonomous Communities. These communities are fighting within the Mexican nation-state for a free, self-determined life based on cultural independence, communal organization, and decentralized autonomy.

The Zapatistas do not seek to establish their own state—their goal is not national sovereignty in the traditional sense. Rather, they seek the right to live freely on their ancestral lands: in their own language, with their own beliefs, cultural practices, and social rules. To achieve this form of self-determination, communal structures have been established that enable political participation and self-government. In the absence of a state and without clearly defined national borders, the Zapatistas are often described as societies in motion—fluid, dynamic, collectively organized.

The Zapatistas are waging both political and military resistance against the colonial and repressive structures of the Mexican state. However, they emphasize that their weapons are used exclusively for self-defense—not to exercise power. They have taken control of their territories and developed a model of social organization based on egalitarian participation and horizontal decision-making—a living example of a new, alternative form of socialism.

The Zapatista model of self-government deserves special attention because it embodies the central principles of the new socialism outlined by Abdullah Öcalan in his concept of deliberative democracy. After the uprising, the Zapatistas institutionalized their self-government through autonomous councils and took control of their affairs at the local level—a process that relies heavily on collective decision-making and decentralized organization.

Subcomandante Marcos, one of the movement's leading thinkers, explained the democratic development of communal structures as follows in the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle (2005):

“The political-military structure of the EZLN was not democratic because it was an army. And we realized that it is not good to have the military at the top and democracy at the bottom. (...) Everything should be on the same level. It would be better not to have soldiers. So we became soldiers so that eventually there would be no more soldiers. Gradually, we began to separate the military structure from the autonomous and democratic structures in the communities. The decisions that used to be made by the EZLN were gradually handed over to the democratically elected authorities in the villages."

According to the Zapatista constitution, the military has no political power whatsoever. No commander or member of the EZLN may hold political office or intervene in administrative functions. The autonomous communities are administered by councils whose main task is to solve social problems, organize everyday life, and preserve cultural and linguistic diversity.

One particularly innovative aspect is inclusive participation: from the age of twelve, anyone can attend council meetings and participate in decision-making. The basic principle is consensus building—all decisions are based on joint discussion, exchange, and the pursuit of agreement. This principle is consistently implemented: every opinion counts, everyone has the right to express themselves and be heard. Democratic negotiation is not an idealistic goal, but a lived practice.

Rojava: Autonomous administration as communalism in practice

The autonomous administration of northern and eastern Syria, known as Rojava, is today considered one of the most important real-world examples of communalist social organization in the 21st century. What began in the wake of the Syrian civil war and in response to attacks by Islamist militias—in particular the so-called Islamic State (ISIS)—has developed into a profound social transformation based on grassroots democracy, gender equality, and ecological sustainability.

The establishment of this new social structure began with the creation of communes to organize the self-defense of Kurdish-inhabited areas. The project now looks back on a history spanning more than ten years—a decade marked by threats, attacks, and attempts at international isolation, but at the same time providing impressive evidence of the feasibility of Öcalan's theoretical paradigm: negotiated democracy, horizontal organization, and collective self-administration.

For the first time in the recent history of the Middle East, a profound, emancipatory alternative to authoritarian rule emerged in Rojava. Despite constant attempts to crush it, self-government was able to assert itself—not least thanks to its firm roots in the population and their active participation in all decision-making processes.

Today, the autonomous administration is seen as a beacon of hope for peaceful coexistence between Syria's various ethnic groups, religions, and social groups. The model is attracting attention not only within Syria, but throughout the Middle East. At its core is a consistently horizontally organized system: there is no privileged class of officials—instead, the people elect their representatives directly and regularly. Decisions are made collectively and responsibility is shared.

This model, which aims at the radical democratization of all areas of life, has enabled Rojava to become visible as a political actor not only locally but also internationally. For example, the Autonomous Administration is participating in talks on the political future of Syria—including with groups such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which controls large parts of northern Syria. The existence and recognition of the Rojava structures is thus not only a regional phenomenon, but part of a global debate on alternative models of society.

The communes in Rojava demonstrate that a participatory, grassroots democratic, and state-independent organization of social life is possible—even under conditions of war, isolation, and economic uncertainty. They thus impressively demonstrate that Abdullah Öcalan's communalist theory—with its focus on direct democracy, self-administration, and rejection of any hierarchy—is not only theoretically viable but also practically feasible.

Current communal movements worldwide

In addition to Rojava and the Zapatistas, there are also examples of communal self-organization in other parts of the world. These movements, as diverse as they may be in cultural or geographical context, are united by their attempt to counter the state-capitalist model with a grassroots democratic, solidarity-based, and non-hierarchical alternative.

Some examples of these communes are:

Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (Rojava) – Syria

Federation of Neighborhood Councils-El Alto – Bolivia

Marinaleda – Spain

Ricardo Flores Magón Indigenous People's Council of Oaxaca – Mexico

Zapatista Autonomous Communities (Asamblea Zapatista) – Mexico

Squatters movement in Barcelona – Spain

Dignity Village – USA

Barbacha – Kabylia, Northern Algeria

Villa de Zaachila – Mexico

Zone à Défendre (ZAD) – France

Cherán – Mexico

These examples represent a global movement that, despite differing starting points, is based on common principles: radical democracy, self-government, social justice, ecological sustainability, and cultural autonomy. They all demonstrate that the communalist approach is not merely a theoretical construct, but can be lived and organized in concrete terms under a wide variety of conditions.

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Persistence in socialism

CEMAL ŞERIK | 5 November 2025

Socialist movements around the world, as well as individuals or circles concerned with this question, experienced the most intense diversity of views and debates on socialism in the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century is marked as the century in which the main theoretical framework of socialism began to be constructed.

Those who study socialism generally converge on one common point: they take the "Enlightenment Period," when the concept of socialism began to develop theoretically, as their reference. At that time, the viewpoints that prioritized social problems were accepted as the main starting point. In this regard, the views of Jacques Rousseau hold an important place. It is also necessary to mention that Pierre Leroux, assumed to be the first to use the concept of socialism at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as well as Marie Roch Louis and Robert Owen, were among the followers of Henri de Saint Simon (1760–1825).

The Industrial Revolution and the rise of capitalist modernity intensified contradictions and conflicts, while thinkers of the time systematized their views on socialism and engaged in heated debates among themselves. As a result, a turning point emerged in the development of socialist thought, a new era, so to speak. Saint Simon, Robert Owen, and Charles Fourier began to be considered "Utopians" in this phase and were defined as "Utopian Socialists." François-Noel Babeuf (1760–1797), who took a revolutionary stance against the Directory period during the 1789 French Revolution, was also included among those in this line. This did not stop there: those who developed views on socialism sought to systematize and conceptualize their ideas. Within this scope, those who embraced or sympathized with these views began to be referred to as followers. Intensifying social problems, class contradictions, and conflicts further expanded and spread these ideas. The fact that numerous ideas were defended in the name of socialism in the nineteenth century is itself evidence of this.

Proudhonian, Bakuninian, Blanquist, Lassallean, Bernsteinian, and Marxist interpretations and evaluations of socialism emerged and developed within such a historical process. By its nature, intense and relentless ideological struggle also occurred among these theoreticians and those who defended them. Arguments were developed and employed to refute one another's ideas. Countless articles, brochures, and books were published on this subject. Many materials documenting the debates between Marx, Bakunin, and Proudhon have survived to the present day and still serve as the most important reference sources in ongoing debates. This can also be clearly seen in evaluations related to Lassalle and Bernstein.

Efforts of Marx and Engels

In the circumstances of the nineteenth century, those who claimed to defend socialism also possessed the means to reach broad segments of society. In France, the Proudhonians, in Germany, the Lassalleans, and in England, the Fabian Associations experienced a more extensive quantitative development. Marxists, in comparison, advanced more slowly, yet followed a qualitatively deeper path. The impact of the 1848 Revolution, the organisational efforts that foresaw the unity of the working class internationally, their openness to developments, their political flexibility, and their ability to renew themselves intellectually, placed Marxist Socialists at a more advantageous position than others. In this sense, it is necessary to see the importance of the search Marx and Engels entered into while they developed the theory of socialism, and their openness to what was new.

Marx's views on socialism must also be considered within this framework. When evaluating "Primitive Communist" communities, Marx stated: "If these communities had been able to endure long enough, they could have transitioned to communism. Because the means of production were used in common, and the fundamental principle 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs' was being realised…" Likewise, in the period in which he exchanged letters with the Russian Marxist Vera Zasulič, he expressed similar views as a result of the research he carried out: "…in theoretical terms, the Russian rural commune, by developing the communal ownership of land on which it is based and at the same time

eliminating the principle of private property which it implies, can preserve itself; it can become a direct starting point for the economic system toward which modern society tends; rather than beginning by committing suicide, it can open a new page; it can become the possessor of the fruits that capitalist production has brought to humanity, without passing through the capitalist regime. (…) If the revolution comes at the opportune moment, if the rural commune gathers and concentrates all its forces to enable it to attain its full scope, the rural commune will very soon develop as an element of renewal within Russian society and as an element of superiority vis-à-vis the countries enslaved by the capitalist system."

Naming it as scientific socialism

When looking at the dates of Marx's correspondence with Vera Zasulič, it is necessary to see its direct connection with the findings and data that emerged under the conditions of that period. And not only in this respect: when Marx encountered the knowledge and data regarding Native Americans in Lewis Henry Morgan's book Ancient Society, what he saw there not only resonated with his own views, but also enriched the interpretations and evaluations he made about history and society. This can also be seen in the book written by Engels, whose influence from Marx is unquestionable, titled The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Marx's naming of his conceptualised views as "Scientific Socialism" must be considered a crucial subject that requires careful attention.

Marx did not adopt a one-dimensional approach when forming his system of thought. He demonstrated an approach grounded in the unity of history, society, economy, and philosophy. In developing Scientific Socialism, he established its connection with English Political Economy, the French Revolution, and German Philosophy. He accepted Political Economy, Scientific Socialism, Dialectical and Historical Materialism as the foundational pillars of this doctrine. Furthermore, he identified the role played by the theory of evolution, the living cell, and the discovery of energy, found their historical significance, and shaped his theory through these developments. For this reason, Scientific Socialism gained broader acceptance than other interpretations of socialism and embarked upon a process of being put into practice.

As can be seen in the prefaces written for each new edition of the Communist Manifesto, Scientific Socialism consistently embraced renewal and carried a characteristic of enriching itself intellectually and practically. As is also understood from Engels' works Dialectics of Nature and Anti-Dühring, a struggle was carried out against false ideas and tendencies. Thus, Marx and Engels never remained static or stagnant but were always in a process of renewal. In doing so, they did not create clichés or rigid formulas. Leninism, accepted as the Marxism of the twentieth century, became, in its own time, the name of the search for solutions to the problems of putting socialism into practice under changing world conditions, and it waged this struggle accordingly.

Socialism continues to play its role today

We are living in the years in which the first quarter of the twenty-first century has been completed. At the end of the twentieth century, when Real Socialism dissolved, the system of capitalist modernity sought to "reorganise" the world, and even outer space, in line with its own interests. The Third World War, which began in the last quarter of the twentieth century and still continues today, is being used as the fundamental instrument of this global reorganisation.

Marx and Lenin played their roles and paid heavy prices for the victory of the search and struggle for socialism in their own time. The theoretical, ideological, political, organisational, and practical developments they pioneered and developed were the result of this. They did not view the templates of the past as insurmountable, nor did they adopt a religious or dogmatic approach. For this reason, Marxism, which in the nineteenth century was accepted as Scientific Socialism was, in the twentieth century, accepted as Leninism, and they both came to be recognised as the pioneers of the historical development of socialism.

Under today's conditions as well, socialism continues to exist on the basis of its historicity, and the struggle waged for it continues to play its role in its entirety. Today, the task of socialists is also defined as rebuilding themselves according to changing world conditions and playing the role of leadership. Just as Marx and Engels fulfilled their historical duty and responsibility in the nineteenth century, and Lenin did so in the twentieth century, it is necessary to struggle for socialism in the twenty-first century as well and this struggle carries historical meaning and importance.

The legacy of the struggle for socialism

Under today's conditions, it is no longer possible to speak of Real Socialism, the term used during the Brezhnev era for "achieved socialism" in the Eastern Bloc and in the Soviet Union. In those places, state-based "socialism" experiments collapsed. Beyond those bankrupt experiments, those in various geographies of the world who carried out revolutions in an effort to build state-based socialism also became part of the capitalist system. Likewise, movements, organisations, and parties that waged state-based struggles for independence, democracy, and socialism were dragged into the capitalist system and could not prevent their own dissolution. Within this framework, it is necessary to regard both the socialist experiments of the past, and the revolutionary and socialist struggles being waged today, as major experiences from which conclusions must be drawn. Taken together, all of these are legacies of the struggle for socialism. The task before us is to provide correct answers to the question of how this legacy should be handled, and how it should be placed at the service of ongoing socialist struggles. The answers to be given on this basis are no different from the answers of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. And, as Öcalan stated, the slogan that stands out here is: "Persistence in socialism is persistence in being human."

There are aspects of achieved socialist experiments, national liberation struggles, and class struggles that have become part of history and have contributed to history and these cannot be denied. We also cannot ignore the aspects in which they failed. If there has been dissolution and failure, the reasons for this must also be seen. Correct conclusions must be drawn from them. In order to reach the right conclusions from lived practice, one must correctly examine the reasons and the results of that practice, and put them through the filter of correct criticism and self-criticism. The path to success passes through this. One of the fundamental tasks before us in the struggle for socialism is precisely this.

Marx and Engels criticised the Utopian Socialists, yet they did not deny their existence or their contributions. They accepted Babeuf as a pioneer for themselves. Likewise, they stated that they were influenced by Hegel and Feuerbach, yet they did not refrain from surpassing them. They debated with Proudhon and Bakunin, yet when necessary, they sought to walk together. However, they maintained their insistence on the ideas they believed to be true.

For these reasons, they also played the role of vanguard in the realisation of revolutions in the twentieth century. They prioritised dynamism over stagnation in thought, organisation, and action; they prioritised

richness in method. They acted and struggled according to the "concrete analysis of concrete conditions." As can be understood from their evaluations and criticisms, they insisted on the correct and revolutionary stance, even in the moments when they were most challenged.

Persistence in socialism against capitalism

The historical significance of the moment we are going through lies in one shared point embraced by everyone who claims socialism and wages this struggle: persistence in socialism. Even discussing this is unnecessary. Yet there are "achieved socialism" experiments that dissolved and failed. The world is in a state of chaos. The capitalist-imperialist system sees these conditions as an opportunity for itself and seeks to reorganise its system of exploitation and plunder upon them. What needs to be done in response, and the attitude that must be taken, is very clear. It is persistence in socialism. What is fundamental is how its requirements will be fulfilled.

It is not possible to fulfil what is necessary through the experiments and practices of "achieved socialism." If insistence on "achieved socialism" continues and the same path is followed, the outcome will not change, it will again be nothing but disappointment. For this reason, a repetition of what has already happened will not go beyond being a repeat of the past. What is necessary is not repetition, it is to become a force of solution by drawing upon the experience gained from them and by conducting a concrete analysis of concrete conditions. This requires analysing the process we are in, redefining the fundamental tasks and responsibilities of today, and putting new strategies, tactics, and instruments into practice accordingly. In doing so, it is necessary to adopt a broader perspective not limiting the "achieved socialism" experience only to individuals, or to the mistakes made, or to what was not done. The approach that comes to the fore here concerns the parameters that are prioritised in arriving at solutions. All failures to date, all evaluations, criticisms, and practices regarding "achieved socialism," have been questioned on this basis, and in the end, not even as much as a barley grain of progress has been made. This was not all: time was wasted; energy and strength were lost; conditions could not be utilised. And this turned into a major possibility, an opportunity, for the capitalist modernity system.

Today, it is known that revolutionary and socialist movements in the world are in a state of search and struggle to solve fundamental problems. One can say that this search and struggle did not begin today, but earlier. Beginning from the second half of the 1960s, the emergence of the Revolutionary Youth movements that swept almost the entire world, and the question "what kind of socialism" that surfaced, was an expression of this. Despite the fact that revolutionary struggles in various countries of the world and state-based socialism experiments have become extensions of the capitalist modernity system, these searches continue. They are becoming a source of hope, strength, and morale for humanity and the future. When these realities are not taken into account, it is not possible to give a sufficient and correct meaning to Öcalan's Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society.

The theoretical openings and perspectives of Öcalan

Abdullah Öcalan's Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society must be addressed and evaluated within historical and social reality. This is also a requirement of socialism. If this is not done, neither history nor society can be understood. The views put forward cannot be accurate; they remain fragmented, limited to retelling what happened in the past, and cannot produce solutions. In such a case, the meaning they carry is taken outside its essence. The Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society must be addressed with such

an approach. This approach will bring us together with a correct understanding and struggle of socialism. Any other approach cannot be accepted. Socialism is as historical as it is social, it is the present. As it gains meaning in the Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society; it is the unity of these. It describes "the longest duration," that is, both yesterday and today. The first sociality that began with communes, and the current struggle waged against the destruction of society, express this meaning. Therefore, when the meaning and definition of socialism, as expressed by Öcalan is not correctly understood, it becomes impossible to understand the struggle waged in the name of sociality, and the role and position of those who lead it. Likewise, the fundamental reason why Marx and Engels named their views "Scientific Socialism" cannot be understood.

Every historical period and every transitional phase produces currents of thought that express the fundamental characteristics of that period, and they feel the need to show the difference between themselves and what lies outside them. The words used and the meanings attributed to these words in accordance with the mission undertaken, express such meaning. If this were not so, the difference between them and what precedes them, as well as the reason for their existence, could not be understood. Even if it were seen in some way, it would be perceived merely as an addition or reflection of what is essential. The fact that Marx and Engels did not call their teachings simply "socialism" or "utopian socialism" but named them "Scientific Socialism" finds its place within such a reality.

Criticisms towards real socialism

When the official representatives of the Second International crossed over to the ranks of their own imperialist bourgeoisie, communists, in order to make their difference clear, placed the word "Communist" at the beginning of their party names, and this expressed precisely such a reality. Likewise, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), in its fourth congress in 1990, adopted a similar method through its constitutional changes regarding the symbols and emblems associated with Real Socialism. Later, in his analyses and evaluations, Öcalan made this distinction even clearer through the criticisms he developed towards Real Socialism, and with the theoretical openings he developed, particularly on women, the state, and power, he put forward assessments that surpassed the existing mindset of the time. He also introduced methods other than armed struggle in the resolution of the Kurdish national question.

Likewise, it is understandable that those who were in search during such periods attributed different meanings to concepts they used under the conditions of their time, or expressed themselves with different concepts. When examined closely, it will be seen that there are many such examples in the periods of Marx–Engels and Lenin. Therefore, in order to correctly understand the concepts used, whether we agree with them or not, the correct approach is to evaluate them within the meaning framework in which they were first used and reach conclusions accordingly. Concepts used by Öcalan should also be approached on this basis. Beyond this, to cherry-pick, to make them a matter of polemics through demagogic discourse, is unacceptable, nor is it an ethical attitude.

In both the Manifesto of Democratic Civilization and the Manifesto for Peace and Democratic Society, Öcalan very clearly expresses the meaning and reasoning of the concepts he uses. Yet, artificial agendas and debates are still being witnessed. There can be no acceptable aspect to this. What needs to be done is to correctly understand what Öcalan is saying and trying to achieve and to approach and struggle accordingly. Today, there is no other valid path. What is valid is persistence in socialism. Searching for other

paths, or occupying oneself with different searches, is not only the wrong choice, it also does not lead to socialism.

Real socialism

The following can also be noted for some of the key concepts: Real Socialism, this concept began to be used during the Brezhnev period for the "achieved socialism" in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern European countries, except Albania and Yugoslavia. What was highlighted by this concept was that the political practices implemented in these countries diverged from and differed from, the general socialist theory. When this concept was used, these countries were the first that came to mind. However, the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, as well as those of countries such as Bulgaria and East Germany, influenced Communist Parties in various geographies of the world through their relations and thus these were also referred to as ideological and political projections of Real Socialism.

At the time, when the concept of Real Socialism was being used, the World Socialist Movements were also internally divided. The Party of Labour of Albania (Enver Hoxha) and the Communist Party of China (Mao Zedong) were in a practical confrontation with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which they accused of social-imperialism. This confrontation also showed its impact within revolutionary and socialist movements internationally. As a result, Communist Parties in different countries that had relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries were evaluated as parties under the ideological and political influence of Real Socialism.

In the end, the Soviet Union and the states which, like Albania and Yugoslavia, defined themselves as having different "models of socialism" collapsed. Most of the Communist Parties there either dissolved or attempted to continue under different names. Those in various geographies of the world who claimed to stand in opposition to the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, and who had carried out revolutions and attempted state-based "socialism", also became part of the capitalist system. From that point onward, Real Socialism turned into a general concept used for the "achieved socialism" experiments that dissolved and became extensions of the capitalist system, that is, for state-based socialism.

Whatever name is used, when discussing the state-based "achieved socialism" experiments that dissolved and became an appendage of the capitalist system, correct conclusions must be drawn from the practices of the groups, movements, and parties that were under their ideological and political influence and that set out on the same road. Likewise, it must be known that the primary reason behind such an outcome is the very parametric framework which shaped their ideological and political line. Above all, within these parameters, it must never be forgotten that the dominant approach was that of a power- and state-centred understanding of revolution and socialism, along with thought structures which reproduce the human–nature, primary–secondary, centre–periphery, subject–object, and female–male divisions.

Scientific socialism

Scientific Socialism must be considered completely separate from "achieved socialism." Confusing these, or assigning similar meanings to them, will never lead us to a correct conclusion. On the contrary, it leads to mistaken thinking, and to erroneous political and practical attitudes. While the concept of Real Socialism which entered the literature during the Brezhnev period in the Soviet Union, referred to the experiments of states that claimed to act in the name of socialism, socialism itself carries a broader meaning. Scientific

Socialism, however, bases itself on dialectical materialism in the struggle to achieve socialism. It formulates universal theses based on objective reality and scientific facts. It develops social, political, and economic theories. Marxist Socialism is also known as Scientific Socialism. It takes into account the conditions of time and place. It grounds material, economic, and social life in the mode of production. It regards the disruption of harmony between the productive forces and the relations of production and the transformation of this into contradiction, as the inevitability reached by social change. Since Marx, this has been taken as the fundamental datum guiding the theory and practice of individuals, parties, and movements who base themselves on Scientific Socialism. In this sense, it must never be confused with Real Socialism.

Democratic socialism

Democratic Socialism gains meaning as an ideological and political concept. At its core, democracy and socialism are not concepts that exclude one another. They possess an intertwined unity of meaning. Therefore, using democracy and socialism together as a concept carries no theoretical or ideological drawback, on the contrary, it allows the emphasis to be made more strongly. When this concept was first used, it was not approached differently. Engels, when expressing the distinction from the Utopian Socialists, did not reject this. It is also known that many Marxist Socialists defined themselves as "Democratic Socialists." In this sense, it is not a concept rejected in general. However, later this interpretive framework diversified according to changing conditions and became a subject of polemics. The reason for this was the differences that began to emerge in the struggle for socialism and their reflection onto the ideological and political sphere. More precisely, this concept being taken out of the general definition of socialism and made "specialised." Even further, being used to identify individuals and groups accused of deviation from socialism, turning its usage almost into a "crime."

What befell the concept of "Democratic Socialism" is no different. So much so that, under the conditions in which the Social-Democratic and Revolutionary Communist line took shape, leading towards party formation within the Second International, this concept was specialised to describe people's positions, and became loaded with a metaphorical meaning that characterised social democrats. In this framework, they were defined as representing a deviation from the struggle for socialism, a drift into the capitalist modernity system. As mentioned above, the concept of Social Democracy became an ideological and political term that expressed their exclusion from socialism, following the betrayal of its official representatives.

When the history of socialist struggles is examined, it is possible to encounter many similar outcomes. Of course, socialists must draw correct conclusions for themselves from historical experiences. However, drawing conclusions from history and experience does not justify reductionist approaches that slip into dogmatism. On the contrary, it makes it necessary to update concepts according to changing conditions and to interpret them correctly and appropriately, and to build thought upon this basis. Furthermore, under the conditions in which "Real Socialism" collapsed, and in which "achieved socialism" became an appendage of the capitalist modernity system, such an approach becomes even more necessary.

Giving meaning to concepts solely on the basis of the phases they went through, interpreting them accordingly, and building thought upon this basis, is not correct, it means confusing what should be distinguished, or putting apples and pears on the same scale.

Democratic society socialism

Democratic Society Socialism is also a concept that is charged with a meaning in which the terms complement one another without mutual negation. The fact that socialism is embodied on the basis of democracy and society should not be subjected to a different interpretation. Essentially, what this concept describes are the policies that were developed and put into practice towards democracy and society within "achieved socialism." In other words, it is the assertion that socialism can reach success only by rising upon its fundamental bases in the face of the fully proven bankruptcy of policies that sought to build socialism without democracy and without society. The Kurdistan Democratic Communes Union is the realised form of Democratic Society Socialism. The Communalist Fellowship Movement is the blood that gives life to the body, that keeps it standing, that runs through its veins.

Undoubtedly, these concepts that we emphasise with a single sentence each require a much broader elaboration and exposition within themselves. They will later be explained and written in greater detail. What can be stated here is that the meaning attributed to these concepts does not constitute the "updating of Marxism" or of socialism. That is, it is not the construction of the theory of socialism from scratch. Both of these approaches would contain many errors within them and would not carry a meaning other than an obscuration that prevents the essential from being seen. The historical conditions in which Marxist Socialism or Scientific Socialism, as the founders defined it emerged, and the historical role it played, make its repetition impossible; and in the meaning that socialism expresses historically and socially, this also does not allow such a thing. What must be understood here is to become an agent of existence within the struggle grounded upon the fundamental bases of socialism, which exists within its historicity, its sociality, and its contemporaneity, within the "longest duration."

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Democratic integration and resolution

SINAN ŞAHIN | 8 November 2025

Integration means that the parties accept one another and base themselves on living together. Integration emerges when different colours and cultures come together and complete one another. On this basis, a mutual acceptance and completion take place. This is what Abdullah Öcalan expresses. In integration, harmony and unity are essential. If we approach integration as a form of mutual adaptation, then the two sides discuss certain issues, understand each other and establish common ground. In other words, integration imposes itself as a historical and social necessity within the reality of life. Therefore, every individual, with their own uniqueness, their own thought and their own free will, takes their place within integration. In this sense, integration does not mean assimilation. The concept of integration is especially used in the legal context. In Turkish law it is also a term borrowed from Europe. It is of Latin origin and means "merging, unification."

The form of integration that we understand is different from external approaches. To express this difference, we use the term democratic integration. When we want to use the concept of integration in a positive manner, we emphasise its democratic dimension. By contrast, negative integration refers to assimilation. Yet when the state wants to apply integration in line with its own interests, it demands that you abandon your identity, your colour, your distinctiveness, it wants to make you resemble itself. With this approach, the state moves towards a line of uniformity and imposes a submissive, assimilationist policy.

For example, we can look at refugees in Europe. There, assimilation is applied under the name of integration. In these states, individuals are obliged to learn the language, lifestyle and culture of that country. Thus the person becomes distanced from their own language, their own culture and their own lived reality.

Abdullah Öcalan asks the following question: "Our fundamental question is, how will we live together? This is a question that applies both to democratic societies and to statist societies. How can democratic society and statist society come together, how can they live together? This is an important question. Can these two social structures live together, or can they not?" Here we are faced with a dialectical issue. Abdullah Öcalan's dialectical approach is not a destructive or negating dialectic; on the contrary, it is a positive dialectic based on living and struggling together. Abdullah Öcalan states that metaphysics is also a method, but dialectics is a more evolved and more successful method. According to this understanding, the state and democracy can exist together; their contradictions gain meaning within struggle. When the state tries to narrow the space of democracy, democracy seeks to expand its own space and surpass the state. Öcalan defines this situation as state+democracy.

Integration is a stance against assimilation

Abdullah Öcalan says: "Integration expresses the coexistence of democratic society with the nation-state. This is the most accurate definition. Society does not organise itself as a state, nor does it bind itself to another state. It integrates itself as a democratic society with the democratic republic. Integration also includes equivalence and equality. This is ensured through democratic negotiation. Integration makes democratic negotiation a necessity. Democratic negotiation makes the unification of democratic society and the nation-state possible. The nation-state today is founded upon the basis of assimilation. Some may interpret integration as assimilation, but we, on the contrary, treat it as a stance against assimilation."

Placed before us in this way, these theses clearly show the strength of Abdullah Öcalan's views. It is understood that he defends the social values that have been achieved and emphasises that a model of solution must be developed with the state in order to protect these values. The integration policies developed by European states towards migrants are an example of this. The aim of those approaches is for individuals to learn the language, find work, and gain a place within the system. Similarly, institutions such as NATO are the result of a form of military integration. The European Union is an example of political and economic integration within itself. When societies, individuals and communities come together and, while preserving their own distinctiveness, form a new political, economic, cultural or social unity, this situation is called integration; such unification is realised through integration.

For more than a century, the Turkish state has pursued a hostile policy against the Kurds. Every form of warfare has been applied, and especially a comprehensive special war policy has been developed against the Kurds. These policies have reached the level of cultural and national annihilation. Yet Kurdish society, under all conditions, has resisted these policies and continued its struggle for existence. Abdullah Öcalan, analysing history, is developing a new model of solution and giving a new direction to the process. His method of struggle renews itself together with transformation. He seeks a new ground of social contract based on the historical Kurdish–Turkish relationship and on foundational principles. In this way, he aims to create a democratic transformation within the state. The Democratic Republic thesis was shaped on this basis. The construction of the Democratic Republic is essential for a democratic solution to the Kurdish question.

The current constitution denies the existence of Kurds

The Democratic Integration Model expresses the coexistence of democratic society and the democratic republic. Its aim is the establishment of an equal and common life between Kurdish society and the state. Therefore, integration becomes possible not with the government, but with the state itself. Here, the state must recognise the culture, history and existence of Kurdish society. For this, reforms must be made within the legal system of the state. Because the current constitution and the current laws deny the existence of Kurds. The culture, language, land, identity and society of the Kurds are erased by the existing laws and policies. This politics of denial continues today. The construction of democratic integration is only possible through the changing of laws, that is, through the acceptance of the Kurdish reality. Otherwise, integration cannot be achieved with a fascist state structure. Without doubt, the state will always try to turn integration into an instrument of assimilation. The only way to prevent this is for this reality to be legally guaranteed.

For this reason, integration cannot take place without a legal change. The alphabet of democratic integration is the recognition of the rights of individuals and of society and this can only be realised by law. Democratic integration expresses that society has the right to organise and govern itself on the basis of democracy. For a society to build its own democratic politics with its own culture, language and thought requires an organisational right that is guaranteed by freedom laws. Therefore the most fundamental matter of freedom laws is to pave the way for society to organise itself by its own will. In this context, the most important point within freedom laws is the right of women's liberation. The nation-state was entirely constructed by a male-dominant mentality and is governed accordingly.

The current constitution and laws were also built on the basis of this male-dominant mentality. Therefore, they are all anti-democratic. The more the laws are against democracy, the more they are against women. The more they are against women, the more they are against the people. A radical correction of the laws is possible only through the recognition and acceptance of women's rights. The criterion of democratic integration is the establishment of women's rights. This is the foundation of democracy. Today there is not even the slightest place for women's rights within the existing laws. While there is no guarantee for women's rights, the democratisation of peoples and of the state will remain incomplete.

Negotiations are necessary for democratic integration

Democratic integration is not possible without negotiations. In other words, the first stage is the beginning of negotiations. This means that the parties show respect to one another, discuss the paths and methods of the solution, and clarify them. After this mutual consensus, it becomes possible for the people and the state to come together, to accept one another, and to reach an agreement on the basis of democratic principles. What is important here is struggle. Nowhere in history have negotiations ever succeeded without struggle. The correct attitude in this process is to strengthen the struggle, advance democratic action, and organise society. Moreover, the construction of institutions is also important in the process of democratic integration. Institutions that will be established in the fields of language, health, sports, economy and culture are among the fundamental duties and responsibilities of this process.

Democratic integration is also valid for the Kurds. Öcalan emphasised that, on this basis, relations among Kurds, including parties such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) must be developed and unity must be achieved. The most important step at this stage is to

discuss and develop integration among Kurdish parties. The criteria and principles of democratic integration are the most accurate and useful method for achieving Kurdish unity and for bringing together the existing political lines on a common ground. In this way, Kurdish unity will develop and advance through structures such as the Kurdish National Congress, a parliament, and self-defence mechanisms. The democratic integration solution is also the most appropriate path for the problems of Middle Eastern societies. Öcalan states that in this period in which the conditions of the Third World War are increasingly intensifying, democratic integration is the most suitable path of solution for all societies and all states.

This is a new paradigm of solution. Because the capitalist hegemonic system is trying to drag the entire region into destruction. Abdullah Öcalan states clearly: "The problems experienced by the Kurds are at the same time the heaviest problems of the Middle East. But in terms of the solution, the most favourable position is with the Kurds. Solving the Kurdish and Turkish question is the solution of the Middle East. This issue is so important and urgent that the solution here will open the way to the solution of the entire Middle East. Therefore, the Kurdish–Turkish solution is not a regional issue; it is not a narrow problem squeezed into time. It is a definitive solution for the Middle East."

Placed before us in this way, these facts show how strong Abdullah Öcalan's thesis is. He defends the social values that have been achieved, and proposes a democratic model of solution with the state in order to protect those values. In the process of democratic integration, there is always a need, more than anything else for struggle, for the strengthening of democratic politics, and for the construction of democratic institutions. This struggle and organisation will be the guarantee of the success of the process of peace and a democratic society, of the freedom of the Kurdish people, and of the security of Abdullah Öcalan.

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