

# THE IMRALI POST

YOU HEARD HIS NAME. LEARN HIS STORY. DEMAND HIS FREEDOM.

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# Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

## Abdullah Öcalan: The process is entering a new phase

ANF | 6 JULY 2025

The DEM Party İmralı Delegation, consisting of Pervin Buldan, Mithat Sancar, and Özgür Faik Erol, shared the results of their morning meeting with Abdullah Öcalan in a written statement.

The statement included the following remarks: "Today, as a delegation, we held a very productive meeting with Mr. Abdullah Öcalan at İmralı Prison, which lasted two and a half hours.

Mr. Öcalan was in good health and spirits. In our meeting, he emphasized that the process is transitioning into a new phase. He stated that with the new steps to be taken, everyone, all of us, has responsibilities to fulfill the requirements of this process.

He stressed that he attaches great importance to the meeting our delegation members will have with the President and described this meeting as historic. Similarly, he underlined that the commission to be established in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey will also play a major role in peace and resolution.

We saw that his hope, confidence, and faith in this process contributing as a whole to Turkey's democratization are extremely strong.

During the meeting, we received information that soldiers lost their lives due to methane gas poisoning in the territory of the Kurdistan Regional Government today. This incident caused profound sorrow in Mr. Öcalan and in all of us. On this occasion, we wish God's mercy upon those who lost their lives and extend our condolences to their families and loved ones."

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## DEM Party Delegation meets with President Erdoğan

ANF | ANKARA | 7 JULY 2025

Members of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) İmralı Delegation, Pervin Buldan and Mithat Sancar, met with AKP President Tayyip Erdoğan at the Presidential Complex.

The meeting, which began behind closed doors, was also attended by the head of the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), Ibrahim Kalın, and AKP Deputy Chairman Efkan Ala.

Before this meeting, on 6 July, the Imrali delegation went to Imrali and held a 2.5-hour meeting with Leader Apo. Today, the delegation also met with the DEM Party co-chairs.

### **Pervin Buldan: This will be a historic meeting**

Speaking before the meeting with Erdoğan, Pervin Buldan said that it would be a historic meeting.

Pervin Buldan stated: “Because the process is now entering a new phase. In this new phase, there is a need for consultations, there is a need for an exchange of views. Therefore, today we will discuss and debate all these matters with the President and his delegation. It is important in terms of ensuring consultation and taking necessary steps.”

Sancar also emphasized that the meeting was significant, saying: “A little while ago, we also consulted with our co-chairs. It is known that the process has entered a new phase. Today we will discuss with President Erdoğan and his delegation the characteristics of this phase and the requirements that follow. We will convey our views on these matters and listen to their perspectives.”



## **Statement from the Imrali Delegation**

ANF | ANKARA | 7 JULY 2025

Members of the Imrali Delegation of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), Pervin Buldan and Mithat Sancar, held a one-hour meeting with AKP President Tayyip Erdoğan starting at 3:00 p.m. Ankara time.

The meeting was also attended by the Head of National Intelligence (MIT), Ibrahim Kalın, and AKP Deputy Chairman Efkan Ala.

After the meeting, the DEM Party İmralı Delegation released a brief statement.

According to the DEM Party Press Office, the statement read: “Our DEM Party İmralı Delegation members, Pervin Buldan and Mithat Sancar, met today with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at Beştepe. Our delegation shared their views and proposals regarding the new phase the process has reached and what should be done next. During the meeting, it was emphasized that the mutual will to advance the process continues.”



## Prisoners on Imrali meet with their families

ANF | 7 JULY 2025

Asrın Law Office reported that a family visit took place at Imrali F-Type High-Security Prison.

A statement posted on Asrın Law Office's X account said: "Today (07.07.2025), within the scope of a family visit, Mr. Abdullah Öcalan, who is being held in Imrali Island Prison, met with his brother Mehmet Öcalan and his legal guardian Mazlum Dinç, as well as Mr. Hamili Yıldırım, Mr. Ömer Hayrı Konar, Mr. Veysi Aktaş, Mr. Ergin Atabey, Mr. Zeki Bayhan, and Mr. Mahmut Yamalak, who also met with their visitors. We share this information with the public."

— ★ —

## KCK: Journalists will not be able to attend ceremony in South Kurdistan due to security reasons

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 7 JULY 2025

The KCK Information Office issued a statement regarding the ceremony that will be organized in South Kurdistan (Başûrê Kurdistan) by guerrillas.

The statement, which informed that the previously planned arrangements for media outlets and journalists had changed, reads as follows:

"Due to the changing security situation, the details regarding the ceremony planned to take place in Sulaymaniyah had to be revised quickly. The ceremony will proceed as planned, but it will not be broadcast live, and the participation of members of the press will not be possible. We are truly sorry for this and kindly ask for your understanding regarding this urgent last-minute change.

A screen will be set up near the location of the ceremony where video recordings will be shown afterward. This will be the only way we can keep you informed. You are invited to attend there. Some of you may decide not to participate in the ceremony due to this last-minute change in approach; we fully understand and respect that decision, and we apologize for the inconvenience caused."

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## Turkey tells the Council of Europe that it will not grant some prisoners the “right to hope”

ANF | 8 JULY 2025

In its Action Plan communicated to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Turkey announced that it will not recognize the “right to hope” for some prisoners sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment.

The Action Plan, dated June 27, 2025, assesses obligations regarding the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) judgments in the cases of Emin Gurban, Civan Boltan, Hayati Kaytan and Abdullah Öcalan (No. 2).

The European Court of Human Rights had ruled that the lack of any prospect of release or the possibility of a review of the penalty for those sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment in these cases violated Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment), stating that even those convicted of the most serious crimes should have the opportunity to demonstrate rehabilitation and apply for release. The Court asked Turkey to amend the relevant legislation.

Despite the fact that Abdullah Öcalan has been kept in solitary confinement since 1999, the Action Plan claims that “no further individual measures are required”. This indicates that the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan in İmralı will continue despite the ECHR ruling.

Under the heading “exceptions to conditional release”, the Turkish Government said aggravated life imprisonment sentence is applicable for only the most serious offences, but added: “Those sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment for crimes stipulated by virtue of the 2nd book, 4th chapter, subchapters 4, 5 and 6 of the Criminal Code (crimes against state security, constitutional order and national defence) committed within a terrorist organisation are not eligible for conditional release. Certain most severe offences are exempted from this possibility.”

Thus, Turkey has officially announced that it will not amend the legislation on the “right to hope”.

In May, Minister of Justice Yılmaz Tunç said that “there is no such situation” with regard to the right to hope for Abdullah Öcalan. Turkey’s Action Plan reveals that this approach has become official policy.

Turkey’s stance raises serious questions about whether it will fulfill its international obligations and continue its isolation policies despite the ECHR rulings.

### Background

Following Abdullah Öcalan’s *Call for Peace and a Democratic Society* on 27 February and the PKK’s announcement of its dissolution on 12 May, attention has turned to the legal steps the Turkish state may take.

The 10th judicial reform package, introduced before the Eid al-Adha holiday, fell short of expectations, and it was announced that the continuation of reforms would be postponed until September. During the discussions on the reform package, opposition proposals, especially from the DEM Party, were largely ignored.

Since the PKK's announcement of its dissolution, there have been repeated calls for improving Öcalan's physical detention conditions, but no progress has been made.

Within this context, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers addressed the 'right to hope' issue for Öcalan at its meeting on 17-18 September 2024, and gave Turkey a one-year period to take action.

The 'right to hope' became a topic of political debate in Turkey when Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli mentioned it during his party's parliamentary group meeting on 22 October 2024. Bahçeli said: "If the government shows determination and resolve, legal regulations concerning the 'right to hope' should be enacted, and this right should be fully accessible." The Turkish state has taken no official steps in this regard so far.

The 'right to hope' refers to a legal provision concerning prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. This principle is based on the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling in the 2013 *Vinter and Others vs. the United Kingdom* case, where the Court found that life imprisonment without a prospect of release violates Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (which prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment).

The reason the Committee of Ministers took up Öcalan's case is due to a ruling by the ECHR dated 18 March 2014. Öcalan's lawyers had filed a complaint in 2003, arguing that the conditions of his sentence violated Article 3 of the ECHR. In its decision, the ECHR found that Öcalan's aggravated life sentence, which offers no chance of release or review, and his solitary confinement constituted a violation of Article 3, just as it had ruled in the *Vinter* case. The Court also stated that appropriate legal reforms needed to be implemented. This was the first decision against Turkey regarding the 'right to hope.'

Following that, the ECHR issued two similar rulings: one in the *Hayati Kaytan v. Turkey* case on 15 September 2015, and another in the *Gurban and Civan Boltan v. Turkey* case on 15 December 2015. In both, the Court reaffirmed that life sentences without a mechanism for review or parole violate the prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment.

Despite it being ten years since the two rulings on Öcalan, Turkey has yet to enact any legal reforms to address the violations. As a result, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, which monitors the implementation of ECHR rulings, initiated a monitoring process to push for legal and practical changes regarding the right to hope and aggravated life imprisonment. At its 17-18 September 2024 meeting, the Committee gave Turkey one final year. Although Bahçeli's statement shortly followed this decision, no legislative action has been taken so far.

## Abdullah Öcalan's historic call

ANF | 19 JULY 2025

Abdullah Öcalan makes historic call from İmralı.

Abdullah Öcalan's historic call on video is as follows:

"Dear Comrades

Ethically, I feel duty-bound to provide, via an – albeit repetitive – comprehensive letter, explanatory and creative responses for the problems, solutions, the achieved levels, and the concrete situation of our Communist Camaraderie Movement.

1. I continue to defend the call for “Peace and Democratic Society”, [declared on] February 27, 2025.
2. By convening PKK’s 12th Dissolution Congress, you provided, with the right substance, a comprehensive positive response to my call. I attach historical value to your response.
3. The level that has been achieved is highly valuable and historically significant. The efforts of the comrades who bridged this communication are equally valuable and praiseworthy.
4. At the end of this process, I prepared a “Manifesto for Democratic Society”, which has to be evaluated as a historical transformation. This Manifesto has the necessary attributes to successfully substitute the 50-year-old Manifesto of “The Road to Kurdistan Revolution”. I believe that the last Manifesto carries a historical and social substance not only for the historical Kurdish society but also for the regional and global society. I have no doubt that it will epitomize the historical tradition of manifestos.
5. I should clearly state that all these developments have resulted from the meetings I have held in İmralı. Great care has been taken to ensure that these meetings are held on the basis of free will.
6. The achieved level necessitates new steps for implementation. Making progress inevitably depends on emphasizing and understanding the historical nature of this level and adhering to the necessities of it.
  - a. The PKK movement and its “National Liberation Strategy”, which emerged as a reaction to the denial of the existence [of the Kurds] and thus aimed at setting up a separate state, has been dissolved. The existence [of the Kurds] has been recognized; therefore, the basic aim has been achieved. In this sense, it has had its day. The rest has been regarded as excessive repetition and stalemate. This will constitute the basis for comprehensive critique and self-critique.
  - b. Politics knows no vacuum; therefore, the vacuum should be filled with the program of “Democratic Society”, the strategy of “Democratic Politics” and the basic tactic of “holistic law”. What we refer to is a determining process characterized by historical significance.



c. As a necessity of the process, it is important to voluntarily take the weapons away and to ensure the comprehensive activities of a legally authorized commission established in TBMM [Turkish Grand National Assembly]. While being wary of descending into illogical “you first, then me” approaches, the necessary step should inexorably be taken. I know that these steps will not go spare. I see the sincerity and have trust.

d. Therefore, there are efforts to make breakthroughs via taking more practical steps. The following are the principal theses I suggest:

1) A positive integrationist perspective would enable the Movement to shoulder its mantles and achieve its aim of “Peace and Democratic Society”. The aforementioned arguments take us to the following conclusion: the PKK has renounced its nation-statist aim; renouncing its basic aim implies renouncement of its military strategy and thus leads to its dissolution. This historical point awaits being taken to a further level.

2) You should take it in your stride that your ensuring of the laying down of arms, before the witnesses of the public and related circles, would not only count with the TBMM [Turkish Grand National Assembly] and the Commission, but also reassure the public and honor our promises. The establishment of a mechanism to lay down the arms will take the process forward. What has been done is a voluntary transition from the phase of Armed Struggle to the phase of Democratic Politics and Law. This is not a loss, but has to be regarded as a historical gain. The details of the laying down of the arms will be specified and expeditiously implemented.

3) DEM [Party], which is under the umbrella of the parliament, will do its share and will work with other parties to ensure the success of the process.

4) As for “My Freedom Situation”, which you have put forward as an indispensable provision in your [12th] Congress’s resolution texts, I should say that I have never regarded my freedom as a personal issue. Philosophically, the freedom of the individual cannot be abstracted from the [freedom of] society. The freedom of the individual is a measure of the freedom of society; and the freedom of society is a measure of the freedom of the individual. The necessities of the inclination will be observed.

I believe not in the arms, but in the power of politics and social peace and call on you to put this principle into practice.

The latest developments in the region have clearly proved the importance and urgency of this historical step.

I should state that I am looking forward to receiving all kinds of criticisms, suggestions and contributions you can make about the process.

I state, ambitiously and vehemently, that these discussions will take us, the forces of Democratic Modernity, to a new theoretical program, to a new strategic and tactical phase at the national, regional and global level, and I express my optimism and readiness for preparatory efforts.

As to the future stages, I call on you to embark on putting into practice the resolutions of the [12th] Congress, in line with the views and suggestions of this last letter, and to ensure successful progress.

Permanent Comradely Regards

Best Wishes

**Abdullah Öcalan**

June 19, 2025"

Note: you can watch the video in Turkish from here: <https://anfenglishmobile.com/features/abdullah-Ocalan-s-historic-call-80196>

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## All eyes on the PKK's expected disarmament ceremony after Öcalan's call

ANF | 9 JULY 2025

Following Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan's historic call published by ANF earlier today, all eyes are now on the disarmament ceremony to be held by the PKK in Sulaymaniyah.

The ceremony will be based on Öcalan's call: "I believe not in the arms, but in the power of politics and social peace and call on you to put this principle into practice."

Under the leadership of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), a large crowd including writers, intellectuals, politicians, and journalists is expected to travel from Amed (tr: Diyarbakır) to Sulaymaniyah.

### Political parties

The political parties, human rights and legal organizations, associations, and civil society organizations that were invited to the ceremony and expected to send representatives to the historic ceremony are listed below:

Revolutionary Party, Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP), Green Left Party, Socialist Reconstruction Party (SYKP), Socialist Solidarity Platform (SODAP), Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP), Social Freedom Party (TÖP), Labor Party (EMEP), Labourist Movement Party (EHP), Socialist Assemblies Federation (SMF), People's Houses, Left Party, Felicity (saadet) Party, Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA), Future Party, New Welfare (Yeniden Refah) Party, CHP, Homeland (Vatan) Party.

Co-chairs and co-spokespersons from the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), and the Democratic Unity Initiative are also expected to travel to Sulaymaniyah to attend the ceremony.

### **Kurdistani Parties**

Kurdistan Communist Party (KKP), Human and Freedom Party (PîA), Kurdistan Socialist Party (PSK), Kurdistan Democratic Party-Turkey (PDK), Freedom Party, Freedom Movement, Revolutionary Democratic Kurdish Association (DDKD), KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party)-Bakur.

### **Bar associations and legal organizations**

Bar associations in North Kurdistan, Asrın Law Office, Union of Turkish Bar Association (TBB), Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), Contemporary Lawyers' Association (ÇHD), Peace Foundation, Human Rights Association (İHD), Social Initiative for Peace, Initiative for Rights and Justice, Art Initiative for Peace, MAZLUMDER.

### **Civil society organizations and business circles**

Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK), Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Trade Unions (DİSK), Turkish Chamber of Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), Turkish Medical Association (TTB), Turkish Confederation of Trade Unions (TÜRK-İŞ), HAK-İŞ Confederation, Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (TÜSİAD), Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association (MÜSİAD), Diyarbakır Industrialists and Businessmen Association (DİSİAD), Southeast Industrialists and Businessmen Association (GÜNSİAD), Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB), Federation of Eastern and Southeastern Businessmen Associations, Turkish Municipalities Union.

### **Alevi and women's organizations**

Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinen Azad- TJA), Peace Mothers, feminist organizations, Alevi Bektaşî Federation (ABF), Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Association (PSAKD), Turkey Alevi Federation (ADFE), European Alevi Unions Confederation (AABK), Alevi Culture Associations General Headquarters (AKD), Şêx Seîd Association, Democratic Alevi Associations (DAD), Democratic Islam Congress (DİK), Association for Mutual Aid, Solidarity, Unity, and Culture of Families Who Lost Their Loved Ones in the Cradle of Civilizations (MEBYA-DER), Federation of Legal Support and Solidarity Associations for Families of Detained and Convicted Persons (TUHAD-FED), 78'ers Initiative.

### **Families**

I Need Peace Initiative, Saturday Mothers, Roboskî Families, October 10 Families, Suruç Families, and Gezi Families.

### **Representatives from various communities**

Representatives from the Syriac, Armenian, Circassian, Arab, Laz, and Azerbaijani peoples.



## Internationalist women take over the vigil in Strasbourg: We want to contribute to Öcalan's freedom

ANF | STRASBOURG | 9 JULY 2025

The Freedom for Öcalan Vigil, which was launched in Strasbourg on June 25, 2012, with the aim of achieving the physical freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and ending the İmralı torture system, continues with determination.

The vigil is held in Strasbourg, where institutions like the Council of Europe, the CPT (Committee for the Prevention of Torture), and the European Court of Human Rights and the European Parliament are located.

The action, which is carried out every week in front of the Council of Europe by groups of Kurds living in Europe and their friends, entered its 14th year last month.

The vigil also aims to promote Abdullah Öcalan's ideas, raise awareness of the Kurdish people's struggle, and build public pressure on international institutions to take responsibility.

In its 682nd week, the vigil was taken over by women activists running the “Women Defend Rojava” campaign in Germany.

The group includes Nele Möhlmann, Petra Onnen, Rebecca Alpers, and Lilli Gruber. Inspired by the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan, the activists delivered powerful messages about both the Kurdish leader's freedom and the role of women in social transformation.

### **‘We have read his writings and discussed them extensively’**

Lilli Gruber expressed the change that Öcalan's ideas have brought about in their lives with the following words: "We are here for freedom. Some things may be missing, but we are here as women activists because the common struggle is very important to us. We came here on a bus organized for solidarity and took over the vigil for a week because we want to contribute to the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan."

Lilli Gruber stated that women in Europe were greatly influenced by Öcalan's ideas, emphasizing that his analysis of the role of women in society was transformative for them: "As women from Germany, Abdullah Öcalan plays a significant role for us. We have read his writings, discussed them extensively with our Kurdish women friends, and seen that, in his thinking, the role of women occupies a central place. This is extremely important for us in building a free and just society. We do not know of any other man who has fought as consistently and deeply for women's rights as he has—and he continues this struggle to this day."

### **'Freedom for Mehmet Çakas, Maja and all political prisoners'**

Petra Onnen drew attention to both Abdullah Öcalan and political prisoners in Europe. She brought up the case of Mehmet Çakas, whom Germany is trying to extradite to Turkey before he has served his sentence, stating: "We are particularly concerned about the situation of Mehmet Çakas at the moment. The federal prosecutor's attempt to deport him to Turkey by declaring his sentence to have been prematurely terminated in violation of applicable laws is a major scandal. The German state is clearly acting in violation of the law, as Mehmet Çakas cannot expect a fair trial in Turkey on charges of PKK membership."

Petra Onnen also recalled that anti-fascist activist Maja T. (extradited from Germany in 2024) has been on hunger strike for over a month in inhumane conditions in Hungary. Stating that Germany is violating human rights with such political extraditions, Onnen continued: "We call on all people to expose this hypocrisy and to fight for human dignity, justice, and peace. Freedom for Mehmet Çakas! Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan! Freedom for Maja and all political prisoners! And peace in Kurdistan!"

### **'Öcalan's paradigm can save us from the ongoing wars'**

Another member of the group, Rebecca Alpers, drew attention to the global war environment and said that Abdullah Öcalan's ideas offer an alternative for all the peoples of the world: "We are currently in the Third World War. We see this in Gaza, Iran, Syria, and Turkey's attacks. But there is also hope. Abdullah Öcalan's idea of Democratic Confederalism and the paradigm of Democratic Modernity are what can save us from these wars."

Rebecca Alpers stated that Öcalan's paradigm is not only a way out for the Kurdish people, but also for the peoples of the world, and made the following call: "We are all needed to achieve this. We need to stand up and carry these ideas in our hearts. Women and young people are, of course, leading this change. That is why we call on women and young people all over the world to join this resistance for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan. Only together can we free him and save the world from oppression."

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## **KCK: We will take the step Leader Apo asked us**

ANF | BEHDINAN | 10 JULY 2025

Responding to Abdullah Öcalan's video message released on July 9, the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council Co-Presidency made a statement to the public, saying: "We are determined to take the step Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] has asked of us. We are taking this new step with our people and peoples in mind. However, it should be understood that the process cannot move forward solely through our actions. The process should be approached accordingly, and the necessary steps must be taken."

The KCK emphasized that Öcalan, who initiated this process, must also be freed.

The full statement from the KCK Executive Council Co-Presidency reads as follows:

"To advance the Peace and Democratic Society process, Leader Abdullah Öcalan has made a new call. This call was released yesterday, and thus the public has become aware of its content. First of all, we are very pleased that Leader Apo's voice and image have reached the outside. We believe that our people and all friends are equally pleased. On this occasion, we respectfully greet Leader Abdullah Öcalan, our long-missed comrade, with longing, love, and gratitude.

This call is the second one following the historic February 27, 2025 call. Like the previous one, this is also historic. In this call, Leader APO summarized the goals and principles of the 'Peace and Democratic Society' process, highlighting the progress made, and the steps needed moving forward. He once again clearly expressed his commitment by saying, 'I continue to support the Peace and Democratic Society Call of February 27, 2025.'

As the Freedom Movement, we have evaluated this historic call from Leader Abdullah Öcalan. We feel it necessary to share our conclusions transparently with our people and the public.

We declared our full support for the 'Peace and Democratic Society' process announced on February 27, 2025, and affirmed our commitment to fulfill our responsibilities completely. Driven by our historical responsibility and belief in the goals of this call, we have made strategic decisions and taken concrete steps.

Our people have also supported this historic process with great attention, sensitivity, and belief. However, as of now, the Republic of Turkey and the current government have not taken any steps in response to the process or our actions. Despite this, we remain committed to the goals outlined in the 'Peace and Democratic Society Call.' We believe our efforts in this regard have been recognized.

Now, in response to this new historic call, we declare that we will take the concrete step Leader Apo has asked of us. As with our previous steps, we take this one out of our loyalty to Leader Abdullah Öcalan and our belief that the Democratic Society Manifesto will lead to the liberation of our people and humanity.

In his June 19, 2025 call, Leader Apo outlined the necessary steps and called on everyone to fulfill their responsibilities, thus setting a roadmap for the process. These points must be understood and taken seriously. This call is not just to us but to the state, parliament, and all political actors with responsibilities.

We have taken strategic steps based on our historical responsibility and high sensitivity. Now we are determined to take the step Leader Apo has asked of us. We are taking this new step by thinking of our people and peoples. However, it should be known that this process cannot move forward solely with our actions. The process must be approached correctly, and all necessary steps must be taken.

On this basis, Leader Apo, the architect of the Peace and Democratic Society process, must be freed. Only if Leader Apo is free can the process advance and achieve its goals. Otherwise, no further progress can be made under current conditions. Secondly, necessary measures must be taken for democratic politics and a holistic rule of law. Political institutions and parliament must take initiative accordingly. A meaningful process and progress can only be possible under these conditions.

In conclusion, as we express our determination to take this historic step, we feel the need to reiterate what must be done with the same sense of responsibility. We hope what we have expressed is understood and acted upon accordingly. As we have done so far, we are taking this step in the belief that it will bring great gains for our people. We maintain our belief that our steps will be reciprocated and that the 'Peace and Democratic Society' process will succeed."



## 150 people on their way to Sulaymaniyah: We will no longer carry coffins on our shoulders but peace

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 10 JULY 2025

Following a call from Abdullah Öcalan to lay down its arms, the PKK will hold a disarmament ceremony in Sulaymaniyah tomorrow. Delegations from various cities in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan gathered in the Cizre district of Şırnak before leaving for Sulaymaniyah to attend the ceremony.

The delegation of around 150 people includes DEM Party Co-Chairs Tülay Hatimoğulları and Tuncer Bakırhan, DBP (Democratic Regions Party) Co-Chairs Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar and Keskin Bayındır, ÖHD (Association of Lawyers for Freedom) Co-Chairs Ekin Yeter and Serhat Çakmak, members of the Peace Mothers Assembly, and DEM Party MPs.

Speaking at a meeting while leaving Cizre, DEM Party Co-Chair Tuncer Bakırhan answered questions from journalists and said the following: "We are very excited. An important step is being taken toward ending the conflict and violence that began 50 years ago. This process is both historic and very valuable. Everyone here will witness this moment. This development will go down in history. Those who bear witness will also take their place in history. This is a beginning and it imposes a great responsibility on all of us. If we fulfill this responsibility, we will no longer carry the coffins of young people on our shoulders, but peace. As the DEM Party, we will do our part. We expect everyone to fulfill their duties."

Ali Fuat Önder, brother of Sırrı Süreyya Önder, a member of the İmralı Delegation who lost his life in May, is also among those traveling to Sulaymaniyah. Önder shared his feelings with the following words: "I am grateful to everyone who contributed to bringing this process to this point. Peace was my brother's greatest ideal in his political life. Despite all the obstacles, he remained steadfast in his pursuit of peace. Unfortunately, he was not able to witness this historic moment. Peace will bring joy to his soul. This peace will be very precious to everyone living in this country. I hope everything goes well. My only wish is that we all see absolute peace together."

Mele Kasım Yiğit, who came to see the delegation off, expressed his feelings as follows: "I have been dreaming about this for 50 years. Now our hopes are slowly becoming reality. The Kurds are an oppressed people and want to live freely. A heavy price has been paid to date. Now, the fact that our 50-year-old dream is turning into reality is creating great excitement among us. We trust in Mr. Öcalan's efforts. The delegation is heading to Bashur (South Kurdistan) with great hopes. God willing, all peoples will breathe freely."

Asya Tay, spokesperson for the Silopi Peace Mothers Assembly, delivered the following message: “We salute everyone who has set out on the path to peace. It is essential that the message of peace delivered at the leader’s call is understood correctly by the whole world. Among those who have set out are mothers. These mothers have been demanding peace for years. They are going to reunite with their children. May their path be open. May their departure be crowned with an honorable peace.”

The delegation set out for the Khabour Border Crossing in Silopi to cross into southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).



## Group for Peace and Democratic Society: We voluntarily destroy our weapons

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

The Group for Peace and Democratic Society made the following statement during today’s disarmament ceremony in the countryside of Sulaymaniyah province in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq):

### “To Our People and the Public Opinion

As members of the “Group for Peace and Democratic Society”, formed to accelerate the process of Democratic Change and Transformation, we respectfully greet you and all those who witness our historic democratic move.

In order to defend the existence of the Kurds against the denial and annihilation offenses, we, as freedom fighters, male and female, joined the PKK at different times, and waged a freedom struggle in different regions. We are now here to respond to the call Kurdish People’s Leader, Abdullah Öcalan, made on June 19, 2025. Our coming here is, at the same time, based on the call Leader Abdullah Öcalan earlier made on February 27, 2025, and on the resolutions of PKK’s 12th Congress, which convened on 5-7 May, 2025.

In order to ensure the practical success of the “Peace and Democratic Society” process, to wage our freedom, democracy and socialist struggle with methods of legal and democratic politics on the basis of enacting laws for democratic integration, we voluntarily destroy our weapons, before your presence, as a step of goodwill and determination.

We wish that this step will bring about peace and freedom and will have auspicious outcomes for our people, the peoples of Turkey and the Middle East, and all humanity, particularly women and the youth.

We agree wholeheartedly with the remarks of Leader Abdullah Öcalan who maintained “I believe not in arms, but in the power of politics and social peace and call on you to put this principle into practice”. We take great pride and honor in doing what is necessary for this historic principle.



As you know, things did not come about with ease, at no cost, and without waging a struggle. Quite the contrary, all gains came at heavy costs, through struggling tooth and claw. And what follows will definitely need a compelling struggle. We are well aware of this fact, and with the aim of securing more democratic gains, we wholeheartedly believe in the insight and paradigm of Leader Abdullah Öcalan as we trust ourselves and the collective power of our community of comrades.

Given the rising fascist pressure and exploitation around the globe and the current bloodbath in the Middle East, our people are more than ever in need of a peaceful, free, equal and democratic life. In such a context, we fully feel and comprehend the greatness, righteousness and urgency of the step we have taken.

We hope that everyone - the youth and women, laborers and workers, socialist and democratic forces, all the peoples, and humanity - will observe, comprehend, and appreciate the historic value of our step for peace and democracy.

We call on regional and global forces responsible for the sufferings of our people, to respect the utmost legitimate democratic and national rights of our people and support the process of "Peace and Democratic Society".

We call on all the peoples, socialist and democratic circles, intellectuals, writers, academics, lawyers, artists, and politicians to rightly comprehend our historic step and stand in solidarity with our people. We also call on them to take a more active part in the struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Abdullah Öcalan and a democratic solution to the Kurdish question, and to develop and strengthen the global democratic socialist international struggle and solidarity.

We call on our people and their political forces to rightly comprehend the characteristics of this historic process of "Peace and Democratic Society" developed by Leader APO, to successfully discharge their duties and responsibilities in educational, organizational and operational fields, and to develop a democratic life.

Oppression and exploitation will end; freedom and solidarity will prevail.

The process of "Peace and Democratic Society" will surely succeed.

**The Group for Peace and Democratic Society**

July 11, 2025"

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## 30 guerrillas led by Besê Hozat lay down arms

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 11 JULY 2025

The Group for Peace and Democratic Society destroyed their weapons during a historic ceremony that began at 11:25 a.m. and ended at 11:45 a.m. Kurdistan time.

Besê Hozat, co-chair of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council, Nedim Seven, Tekoşin Ozan, and Tekin Muş were also present at the ceremony.

Led by Besê Hozat and Nedim Seven, a group of 30 people, consisting of 15 female and 15 male guerrillas, entered the ceremony site.

Besê Hozat, who was the first to speak at the ceremony, said, “We have come here in response to Leader Apo's (Abdullah Öcalan's) call to determine our stance. We have taken up arms against denial and annihilation to give momentum to this process. We are freedom fighters. We are taking this step in response to Leader Apo's call, the February 27 call, and the decisions of the PKK's 12th Congress.”

Following the brief speech, Besê Hozat read the group's statement in Turkish. Nedim Seven then read the statement in Kurdish.

Speaking again after the reading of the statement, Besê Hozat said: “Legal regulations are needed for all of this to continue and happen.” She added that they destroyed their weapons to pave the way for the process.

Following the statement and Hozat's speech, guerrilla fighters burned their weapons and belts. The ceremony ended after the guerrilla fighters left the area.



## PKK disarmament ceremony followed with great interest in Kurdistan and Turkey

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

The PKK's disarmament ceremony, where a group of guerrillas destroyed their weapons in the Şikefta Casenê area in the Sulaymaniyah countryside, was watched with great interest, excitement, hope, and emotion by people in many cities across Kurdistan and Turkey.

### Amed

Citizens gathered at the MEBYA-DER building in Amed (tr: Diyarbakır) and watched the ceremony attentively for hours, accompanied by emotional moments, applause and the slogans “Bijî Serok Apo” (Long Live Leader Öcalan), “Bijî berxwedana gerilla” (Long Live the guerrilla resistance) and “Şehîd namirin” (Martyrs are immortal).

Some women could not hold back their tears as the crowd was captivated by the images. Citizens gathered at the DBP provincial building in the morning also watched the ceremony together.

## **Bismil and Çınar**

People in the Bismil and Çınar districts of Amed watched the ceremony in their homes and party buildings. Makbule Akyüz, a member of the Peace Mothers, witnessed this historic moment by watching the ceremony on her phone screen due to a power outage.

## **Siirt**

In Siirt province, crowds gathered at the Deniz Poyraz Conference Hall and watched the ceremony, chanting the slogan “Bijî Serok Apo”. Mothers who lost their children watched the destruction of the weapons with tears in their eyes.

## **Batman**

Citizens who gathered at the MEBYA-DER building in Batman followed the ceremony with slogans and applause. A young woman who noticed that one of those destroying their weapons was a relative fainted due to the emotional intensity of the moment.

## **Şırnak**

People gathered in Şırnak province and the districts of Cizre, İdil and Silopi to watch the ceremony under the leadership of the DEM Party and MEBYA-DER. In Cizre, Peace Mother Makbule Demir said, “Today is a historic day for the peoples of the Middle East,” and called for political steps and legal reforms.

## **Mardin**

Citizens gathered in the Kızıltepe district of Mardin under the leadership of MEBYA-DER and watched the ceremony with excitement on screens.

## **Istanbul**

Citizens in Istanbul gathered at the DEM Party Istanbul Provincial Headquarters. The crowd watched followed the ceremony with great excitement.

## Bese Hozat: We burned the weapons, now the ball is in the other side's court

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Bese Hozat, co-chair of the KCK Executive Council, who led the 30-member Peace and Democratic Society Group's disarmament ceremony, spoke to Numedya24 about the event. "We took this step with a clear decision. It is a political action, and we want to see a response," she said.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Bese Hozat emphasized that the process began with Abdullah Öcalan's call and that there was no hesitation in bringing it forward.

Hozat said: "Our arrival here was based on a very clear decision. We are aware of why we are here. This step is a political stance," adding that they acted in accordance with Abdullah Öcalan's call made on 27 February. "There was no hesitation from the leadership," she said.

### A step toward a political solution

Hozat described the decision to disarm as a gesture of goodwill and said this step should not go unanswered.

"We don't just want to come down from the mountains. We want to become pioneers of democratic politics in Amed, Ankara, and Istanbul," said Hozat, arguing that the state's current approach makes this transition difficult.

### "Weapons are now an obstacle"

Speaking about the weapons burned during the ceremony, Hozat said: "For a movement that calls for democratic politics, weapons are now an obstacle. We want to remove these obstacles with seriousness and responsibility." She also added that the peace process cannot be one-sided.

### "We made sacrifices, now we expect a step"

KCK Executive Council co-chair Hozat said that they have done everything they can for the process to progress successfully and have made sacrifices. "Now the ball is in the other side's court. We are waiting for the necessary steps," she said, adding that the state's stance will be decisive for the continuation of the process.

### "What I wore represents my political identity"

Responding to a question about why she wore a different outfit from the other guerrillas at the ceremony, Hozat said: "I came to this ceremony as a representative of a political movement. That's why I chose a different outfit. I also carry out my duty as KCK co-chair."



# Prisons

## Mehmet Çakas: Greetings to everyone who is fighting for me outside

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

Kurdish activist Mehmet Çakas, who is jailed in Germany and is facing imminent deportation to Turkey, has sent a message through his lawyer saying, "Greetings to everyone who is fighting for me outside."

Speaking to ANF after visit to the Uelzen prison where Çakas is held, the Kurdish activist's lawyer Dr. Björn Elberling said his client is doing well under the circumstances and is very pleased about the interest in his case and the activities against his deportation. Lawyer Elberling stated an urgent appeal is currently pending before the Constitutional Court to prevent the deportation. A decision is expected early next week.

### 'High-profile actions could be decisive'

Mehmet Demir from the legal aid fund AZADÎ e.V. told ANF that the coming days are important for raising awareness of the case and generating public interest. "It is crucial to prevent Mehmet Çakas from being deported before the Constitutional Court reaches a decision. There are two criminal proceedings against him in Turkey, and we have also submitted new documents on this matter today," said Demir. In principle, the authorities can be expected not to wait for the Constitutional Court's decision and to act immediately. "That is why immediate high-profile actions could be decisive," said Demir.

### Actions expected over the weekend

The Confederation of Kurdish Communities in Germany (KON-MED) has called for the immediate suspension of the possible deportation of Mehmet Çakas to Turkey and has urged the public, members of parliament, and civil society organizations to follow the case closely and build political pressure. KON-MED demands not only an immediate halt to the deportation, but also a fair asylum procedure in Germany. Activities are expected over the weekend, with the location and time of a central action to be announced.

### Cansu Özdemir calls for suspension of deportation

Cansu Özdemir, a member of the German Parliament from Hamburg, is also campaigning against the deportation of Mehmet Çakas. The foreign policy spokesperson for the Left Party in the Bundestag has pulled various strings to raise awareness of the case among the public and the authorities involved.

“Mehmet Çakas faces political imprisonment in Turkey,” warned Cansu Özdemir. “It is unacceptable that politically persecuted people are deported to the country where they are persecuted. We demand that the deportation be suspended and that a fair asylum procedure be granted,” the Left Party MP told ANF.

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## Family of Mehmet Çakas: Possible extradition decision would be political rather than legal

ANF | HAMBURG | 6 JULY 2025

Kurdish activist Mehmet Çakas, who comes from Bingöl, was detained in Italy in December 2022 at the request of German authorities and extradited to Germany in March 2023. In April 2024, the Higher Regional Court of Celle sentenced Çakas to two years and ten months in prison on charges of “membership in the PKK.” Çakas is currently being held at the Uelzen Prison in Lower Saxony, with his release date scheduled for October 4, 2025.

The political activist’s asylum application was rejected by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). The Lüneburg Administrative Court also rejected the appeal against his deportation without considering the grounds. Recently, the public prosecutor’s office waived the execution of the prison sentence, paving the way for his deportation to Turkey.

Mehmet Çakas’ family warned that “the serious risk of deportation continues.” The family stated that the German courts’ possible extradition decision would be political rather than legal.

The Çakas family issued a statement, saying the following:

“At present, there is a serious risk of extradition to Turkey. Legal, political, diplomatic, and other measures are being taken to prevent this decision from being implemented. We view this decision as a political stance rather than a legal one. It will also have a negative impact on the ongoing process (for peace and democracy in Turkey). We condemn the German court’s decision and will never accept it. At a time when there is a possibility that the Kurdish question could be resolved through democratic means and methods, the anti-solution stance of some European states, particularly Germany, is thought-provoking from the perspective of the Kurds.”

Mehmet Çakas’ lawyer, Cornelia Ganten-Lange, filed an urgent appeal with the German Constitutional Court against the imminent deportation. The decision is expected to be announced in the coming days.

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## ÖHD: Ill prisoners in Tokat prison denied access to treatment

ANF | URFA | 8 JULY 2025

The ÖHD Urfa Branch published a new report exposing rights violations in Tokat Type T Prison, where ill prisoners are unable to access medical care.

The report presented at the association's office in Urfa (Riha), stated that many ill prisoners have withdrawn their hospital transfer requests due to the imposition of oral cavity searches, which has seriously disrupted their access to treatment.

According to Meral Halat, a member of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), 11 out of 15 ill prisoners in Tokat Type T Prison are in critical condition, but they are either transferred too late or not sent to the hospital at all.

The health of several inmates is at risk of permanent damage due to the barriers to medical care.

The loss of vision suffered by 70-year-old Ömer Yaman, as well as the lack of intervention in serious conditions such as cancer and vision loss among other inmates, are among the most alarming violations cited in the report.

The report also noted discriminatory practices and arbitrary decisions to deny sentence reductions. It emphasized that political prisoners are subjected to separate execution regimes and face discriminatory treatment.

Meral Halat stated that this situation is incompatible with international law and called for the immediate establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms.

ÖHD also called on the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey (TİHEK), and the Human Rights Commission of the Turkish Parliament to investigate the violations taking place in Tokat Prison.

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## Arbitrary obstacle to the release of ill prisoner Abdullah Yılmaz

ANF | İZMİR | 8 JULY 2025

Abdullah Yılmaz, held in İzmir Kırıklar No. 2 Type F Prison, was expected to be released on 5 July. However, during a phone call with his family, he reported that the Observation Board had postponed his release for three months, citing a decision that he was “not of good conduct.” It was stated that his situation would be reevaluated at the end of this period.

## **Wounded by 12 bullets, sentenced to life in prison**

Abdullah Yılmaz, born in Siirt (Sêrt), was severely wounded and detained in 1995. Despite surviving after being shot twelve times, Yılmaz rejected the court's attempts to pressure him into submission and instead delivered a political defense. Because of this stance, he was sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment. Over the course of his 30-year imprisonment, he has been subjected to repeated transfers between prisons and numerous rights violations.

## **His health condition remains critical**

In a statement from his family, it was emphasized that Yılmaz is battling serious health problems. He has suffered from kidney disease for years, underwent a high-risk surgery due to narrowing in his carotid artery, and now lives with a stent in his head. Reacting to the obstruction of his release, his family called for the immediate release of seriously ill prisoners.

## **Observation boards have become a new tool of repression**

Established under a law passed in 2020, the Administrative and Observation Boards have become a new mechanism of repression, particularly against political prisoners. Using disciplinary penalties or political stances as justification, these boards arbitrarily deny "good conduct" evaluations, effectively prolonging sentences indefinitely and turning prison terms into life-long captivity.

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## **Kurdish political prisoner released after 31 years**

ANF | İZMİR | 8 JULY 2025

After 31 years behind bars, Kurdish political prisoner Abdullah Aksu has been released from Izmir T Type Closed Prison No. 3 on Tuesday.

Aksu was welcomed by family members and EGE-TUHAYDER executives outside the prison.

In a short statement after his release, Aksu said he was happy to regain his freedom, but expressed concerns over the situation of sick prisoners.

"I hope that all prisoners will be released. The leader (Abdullah Öcalan) has opened the way to peace. I am hopeful, I hope peace will be achieved in a short time, our friends will be released and we will meet in a free country," he stated.

The Kurdish political prisoner then left for his hometown, Siirt, with his family.



Abdullah Aksu was imprisoned in Siirt in 1994. He was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Diyarbakır State Security Court (DGM) for “disrupting the unity and integrity of the state”. He served his sentence in Siirt, Antep, Diyarbakır and Şakran prisons.

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## Mass welcome in Siirt for Abdullah Aksu released after 31 years in prison

ANF | SIIRT | 10 JULY 2025

Abdullah Aksu, who was released from İzmir No. 3 Type T Closed Prison, was greeted with great enthusiasm in his hometown of Siirt (Sêrt) after 31 years of imprisonment.

The welcoming event took place at the Kezer River at the entrance of the city, where Aksu’s family and many people gathered to receive him.

After the emotional welcome, Aksu proceeded to his home in the Alan neighborhood of central Siirt.

### We are filled with joy at seeing Abdullah Öcalan

Ahmet Göğün, a member of the executive board of TUHAY-DER, said, “After so many years, we are filled with joy at seeing Abdullah Öcalan on screen. We hope that, together with all political prisoners, Mr. Öcalan will be free as soon as possible.”

Sebahat Erdoğan Sarıtaş, MP for Siirt, stated, “The Kurdish people have paid a heavy price. And those who paid the highest price are the comrades in prison. Despite all the injustices and unlawful practices, they have not taken a single step back. They turned the prisons into spaces of resistance.”

Abdullah Aksu, recently released, also expressed his happiness regarding the video message shared today by Abdullah Öcalan. He said, “With these principles in mind, we remember Abdullah Öcalan and our comrades who were martyred through resistance in the Diyarbakır (Amed) Prison. We will uphold the legacy they have left behind.”

Aksu was detained in 1994 in Siirt and later sentenced to life imprisonment by the State Security Court (DGM) in Diyarbakır. Throughout his incarceration, he was held in prisons in Siirt, Gaziantep (Dîlok), Diyarbakır, and Şakran.

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## International call for freedom for environmentalist Onur Yılmaz

ANF | 10 JULY 2025

Onur Yılmaz, a member of Polen Ecology, was detained upon entering Turkey on 25 June and arrested on 27 June on charges of “membership in an illegal organization.” It was reported that authorities cited his participation in public panels and the statements of a secret witness as grounds for his prosecution.

In the joint statement, it was emphasized that Yılmaz had made significant contributions to various ecological struggles, including the “Drop the Pickaxe” campaign, the Earth Social Conference, and the “Life Is More Precious Than Gold” campaign. It also highlighted his solidarity with villagers in the Aegean region, communities in the Black Sea region, and urban laborers in their fight against ecological destruction.

The statement further underlined that Yılmaz’s academic work on ecology and socialism has offered valuable contributions both in theory and practice.

The statement called for justice and the rule of law, stressing that the criminalization of climate activists is unacceptable: “We demand that all climate activists in Turkey be allowed to defend nature without fear of retaliation, arbitrary restrictions, or judicial harassment.”

Among the signatories were renowned sociologist Korkut Boratav; environmental scientist Julia Steinberger (University of Lausanne); economist James K. Boyce (University of Massachusetts); political ecologist Bengi Akbulut; ecological activist Beyza Üstün; Marxist theorist Alex Demirovic (University of Frankfurt); ecology writer John Bellamy Foster (University of Oregon); and Katharina Pühl of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, along with many other prominent academics and activists.

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## Military aggression and occupation

### DEM Party: Justice and the rule of law for everyone

ANF | ANKARA | 5 JULY 2025

The Central Executive Board of the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) issued a statement regarding 44 people, including the former Izmir Metropolitan Mayor Tunç Soyer, who were detained on 2 July as part of an investigation into the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality.

The statement said: "These operations carried out by members of the judiciary in line with political calculations, and the deprivation of freedom of numerous politicians, are as unlawful as they are damaging to the hope of peace.

Tunç Soyer is an important politician who has supported and contributed to the Peace and Democratic Society Process. We consider this stance he has displayed throughout his political career to be valuable and significant. We also see this detention order as an intervention against the demand for peace. We once again express that we condemn the issuing of hasty detention orders in an investigation that could have proceeded through trial without arrest."

The statement added: "The right to a fair trial, the presumption of innocence, and trial without detention are fundamental constitutional rights and universal principles. The truly impartial and independent functioning of justice is a shared demand and right of all our citizens. The DEM Party will continue to stand for justice and the rule of law for everyone. The detention order must be revoked immediately, and Tunç Soyer must be released at once."



## Film about the people's resistance at Tishreen Dam available on YouTube

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

A film about the people's resistance at the Tishreen (Tishrin) Dam is now available in Italian, Portuguese, English, and German on YouTube ([m.youtube.com/@Berxwedan\\_Jiyane\\_film](https://m.youtube.com/@Berxwedan_Jiyane_film)). The film tells the story of the people of Rojava who defended the dam through a peace vigil.

The dam is located on the Euphrates River, which separates the regions of Afrin and Kobane. Ten years ago, on January 26, 2015, the Syrian Democratic Forces and the Women's Defense Units defeated Daesh (ISIS) in Kobane in a historic battle that marked the beginning of Syria's liberation from the Islamic State's fascism. In recent months, especially since November 27, there have been heavy clashes in the area around the dam between the Syrian Democratic Forces (the council of self-defense units of the people of northeastern Syria) and the Syrian National Army (SNA) militias, who are armed by the Turkish state to attack the Autonomous Administration and continue the genocide of the Kurdish people.

In early December, when SNA militias attacked Manbij and the Shehba region, hundreds of thousands of people were displaced and had to flee to escape the militiamen entering houses to loot and rape, and massacre patients in hospitals. These people fled east towards safer cities of the Autonomous Administration, far from the front line forming along the Euphrates' banks. The dam itself was in danger of collapsing, which would have resulted in a devastating humanitarian, ecological, and economic disaster.

For this reason, on January 8, the people of Rojava organized a peace vigil as a form of civil protest. However, the first convoy of cars was attacked by Turkish warplanes, killing five people before they could reach the dam. Resistance grew, and more convoys came to help, defend, and protest at the peace vigil. As the

resistance grew, attacks continued and friends and comrades fell as martyrs. Martyrs embody resistance and demonstrate the great sacrifice made for the struggle for existence and life. "Berxwedan Jiyane" means "resistance is life," indicating that one can only have a life based on dignity and freedom through resistance. This resistance, which continued with great sacrifice for over 100 days, brought significant gains.

On May 5, the Autonomous Administration announced the victory of the resistance (<https://anfenglish.com/rojava-syria/-79200>) and stated, "The Tishrin Dam has become a symbol of national unity. It stands as a living example of resistance against the Turkish state and its mercenaries."

This film tells the story of one of the convoys of the People's Resistance at the Tishreen Dam. Translated into Italian, English, and German, with more translations to come, the film is available on YouTube. It can be shared to commemorate this great resistance and sacrifice with a victorious outcome as a symbol of a society that resists for the sake of resistance, which means life. Berxwedan Jiyane! Resistance is life!



## Turkey extends flight ban on Sulaymaniyah

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 6 JULY 2025

The Turkish state has extended its flight ban on the international airport in the Sulaymaniyah province of southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) once again. The ban, which was set to expire on Sunday, will remain in force until October 6 for the time being.

Flights to and from Sulaymaniyah, one of the largest cities in southern Kurdistan, were first suspended in April 2023. At the time, the Turkish Foreign Ministry justified the flight ban with alleged "threats" from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). It claimed that the PKK had "infiltrated" the airport, thereby threatening flight safety. Since then, several bans have been issued on the same grounds.

The airspace closure affects not only direct flights but also flights over Sulaymaniyah Airport. Authorities in the KRI suspect that the measure was taken in response to the joint fight by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the Peshmerga of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which governs Sulaymaniyah, against the terrorist militia "Islamic State" (IS)IS. A few weeks before the airspace closure, in March 2023, nine fighters from the anti-terrorist unit YAT were killed in two helicopter crashes in the KRI. The members of the SDF elite unit wanted to exchange information with the PUK on security issues and military expertise.

The crashes were caused by poor weather conditions at the time. After the fatal accident, Turkey repeatedly threatened the PUK with countermeasures, one of which was a no-fly zone. Last year, the party led by Bafel Talabani was then declared a "security problem" for Turkey by the government in Ankara. Unlike the Barzanî clan-dominated Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), the PUK does not collaborate with the Turkish state to attack the Kurdish freedom movement and other emancipatory groups and organizational initiatives perceived as threats.



## YRK announces the death of three female guerrillas

ANF | 6 JULY 2025

The East Kurdistan Defense Units (YRK) announced the deaths of three female fighters. According to a statement by the YRK on Sunday, Ararat Bawer, Stêra Sîser, and Tara Hewram were martyred on 3 July 2024 in the Asos Mountain east of Sulaymaniyah “while carrying out a revolutionary mission.” No further details about the circumstances of their deaths were given.

The YRK obituary for the three female guerrillas states the following:

“Our martyrs are those who have left their mark on human history and lived great and meaningful lives. Representing the free women built on the thoughts and philosophy of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan), they serve as a model of a meaningful life and provide guidance for all of humanity, having asserted themselves under all conditions and circumstances over centuries. Our comrades Ararat Bawer, Stêra Sîser, and Tara Hewram have become the embodiment of the steadfast commitment to the path of the free woman through their participation and stance. Our comrades, who are the true example of genuine comradeship with Leader Apo, have left an indelible mark on the history of humanity.

We express our deepest sympathy to the people of Kurdistan and the families of our fallen comrades, and we reaffirm our promise to realize their dreams.”

### **The identity information of the fallen YRK guerrillas is as follows:**

Nom de Guerre: Ararat Bawer

First-Last Name: Nehar Avcı

Birthplace: Muş

Mother's-Father's Names: Meryem-Tahsin

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 2024 - Asos

Nom de Guerre: Stêra Sîser

First-Last Name: Sevda Kosen

Birthplace: Aleppo

Mother's-Father's Names: Fatma-Ali

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 2024 - Asos

Nom de Guerre: Tara Hewram

First-Last Name: Kejan Muyzî

Birthplace: Sine

Mother's-Father's Names: Geşîn-Behrüz

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 2024 - Asos



## DEM Party visits CHP: Operations against municipalities undermine the peace and democracy process

ANF | ANKARA | 6 JULY 2025

A delegation consisting of DEM Party Co-Chair Tülay Hatimoğulları, Deputy Co-Chairs Özlem Gündüz and Mahfuz Güleriyüz, and Central Executive Committee member Emirali Türkmen visited the CHP headquarters and met with party leader Özgür Özel in Ankara on Sunday.

Speaking at the joint press conference after the meeting, Tülay Hatimoğulları spoke out against the wave of detentions and arrests targeting CHP-run municipalities, calling it “a blow to the will of the people.”

### 'The trustee mentality is maintained in other ways'

Calling for the immediate release of those detained and imprisoned, Hatimoğulları said, "We see these operations as a continuation of the trustee mentality. Our party understands this best. As a party that has had trustees appointed to its municipalities for three terms, we see that the trustee mentality is maintained in other ways. I would like to emphasize that these operations are politically motivated. If there are allegations of corruption, and if there is evidence to support them, then, of course, investigations can be launched."

### 'The operations are political'

Hatioğulları continued: “Our proposal is for a commission to be formed, for independent judiciary to be involved, and for an investigation to be conducted not only into the municipalities of the opposition parties but also into those of the ruling party. Whatever justification is given for these operations, they are demonstrably political. We strongly recommend that the municipalities taken over by trustees are also investigated. We have significant experience in this matter from the past. If you look at the reports by the Court of Accounts, you can see the blatant and obvious corruption committed by the trustees in the previous terms.

Today we are talking about the Peace and Democratic Society Process. We are on the eve of resolving the Kurdish question. And in such a process, when we are talking about peace and disarmament, it is unfortunate that experiencing these issues and witnessing these operations is not good for Turkey's society. We can see that questions such as "Is this how peace and democratization will be achieved in Turkey?" are being raised from all corners of the country. Especially with yesterday's operation against three metropolitan municipalities, we all witnessed how the intensity and tone of these questions have risen significantly.

### **'These operations weaken our belief in peace and democracy'**

A disarmament ceremony will take place in the Federal Kurdistan Region in a few days. While discussing the resolution of an issue that has become chronic in this country for 100 years, the fact that we are suddenly talking about these operations unfortunately weakens our belief in peace and democracy. That is why we are once again addressing those behind these operations from here: The process toward peace and a democratic society must not be obstructed. These operations are undermining this process and must be brought to an end.

### **'All political circles in the country must become the main actors in achieving internal peace'**

Today, the path to ensuring internal peace in Turkey and advancing the democratization process lies in achieving the broadest possible social consensus. As operations are being carried out against municipalities, everyone must be aware that the voice of peace cannot be heard, democracy cannot develop, and the difficulties in achieving the broadest possible social consensus will only grow. All political circles in this country must become the main actors in achieving internal peace, starting with politics. We may think differently, some of us may be in power and some in opposition, but no one should exclude the other, no one should deprive the other of their rights, and the authority that holds the judiciary should not wield it over the opposition like the sword of Damocles.

We reiterate our call: let us achieve true peace and stop these operations. While these operations continue, all mayors and elected officials should be released and tried without detention. We once again express our solidarity with the CHP, the mayors, their constituents, and all the people of Turkey."

### **'Were the previous trustee appointments political?'**

Speaking after, Özgür Özel stated the following: "Everyone believes that these operations are political. Tülay Hatimoğulları reminded us that they suffered greatly under the trustees. Countless trustees were appointed. During the previous term, trustees were appointed to all but four of the municipalities they won. At that time, Mr. Erdoğan appeared on television with his current self-confidence and said the following: "They are being detained because they sent money to terrorist organizations and provided financial support to terrorism. The issue, however, was the Kurdish citizens' right to elect their local administrators. Now that a new process has begun, Mr. Erdoğan said, "The process will continue, and the trustee system will remain an exception." So, does that mean that all cases outside this exception are political? Does that mean that all previous trustee appointments were political?"

## 'Peace can never be separated from democracy'

Responding to a question from journalists about whether the pressure on the CHP would be discussed during tomorrow's meeting between the DEM Party İmralı Delegation and President Tayyip Erdoğan, Tülay Hatimoğulları said, "We stand against any attack against any political party. In other words, our fundamental goal today is the democratization of Turkey. Turkey currently has a historic opportunity in its hands. We are a party working day and night to ensure this process is not wasted. Turkey has reached a stage where it can resolve its 100-year-old problem. We have stated from the outset that the resolution of this process, that is, the establishment of peace in this country, can never be separated from democracy. Democratic transformation is possible through peace, and peace is possible through democratic transformation. If we separate these two concepts and understandings, we cannot establish lasting peace in this country. If we exclude peace, we cannot establish democratization in this country. Regardless of whom we meet with, we have consistently expressed this principled stance and will continue to do so. Of course, we expect that the pressure on the opposition and the operations targeting municipalities will also be on the agenda in tomorrow's meetings."



## Number of soldiers dead from gas poisoning in South Kurdistan rises to 12

ANF | 7 JULY 2025

The Ministry of Defense reported that four more soldiers affected by methane gas in the operation area in Southern Kurdistan have died. Thus, the number of dead soldiers has increased to 12.



## Commune and council system in Rojava being renewed

ANF | QAMISHLO | 7 JULY 2025

The Peoples' Assembly of Northern and Eastern Syria convened last 28 June, with the special agenda of "evaluating commune and council activities," and decided on a comprehensive reorganization.

In the decree published regarding the decision, it was emphasized that commune and council activities should be re-evaluated and that extensive efforts are needed to implement the social system.

The decree stated that Thursdays were designated as environmental cleaning days and Saturdays as days for participation in commune activities.



In line with this decision, preparations for restructuring communes and councils in all cantons have begun, and work was also launched in Cizirê, the largest canton in the region.

Speaking to ANHA, Hesên Şero, co-chair of the Executive Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of Cizirê Canton, said that the activities of the 2,069 communes in the canton would be reviewed and restructured.

Hesên Şero noted that the decision for participation in commune activities on Saturdays also applies to the Autonomous Administration institutions: “Starting last Saturday, 5 July, employees, co-chairs, and executive council members of all institutions, except for those providing services, health, and security, have joined the commune activities.”

Şero explained that co-chairs and managers of institutions will also participate in the work as commune members: “They will join the discussions in the communes, jointly identify the people’s needs, and then develop solutions together with the commune co-chairs and members.”

According to the decree of the Peoples’ Assembly, all managers and members of institutions affiliated with the Cizirê Canton Autonomous Administration will clean their workplaces every Thursday.

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## Clash between the Herki tribe and KDP forces

ANF | 9 JULY 2025

Violent clashes broke out between the Herki tribe and the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) forces in the area between Akre and Duhok and in the town of Xebat yesterday.

A large number of vehicles belonging to KDP forces were burned, one person was killed in Zerevan, and the Herki tribe captured several members of the KDP forces.

Masrour Barzani, Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region, called for an end to the clashes in the Kurdistan Region.

Ethem Herki, commander of the Herki tribe, said, “We are concerned that the conflict might spread to Behdînan. We therefore want the conflict to be stopped.”

On the other hand, Xurşîd Herki, military commander of the Herki tribe, was detained in Hewlêr (Erbil).

According to videos circulated on social media, intense clashes have taken place since yesterday evening. Light and medium-caliber weapons were used in the clashes.

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## Details of Damascus meeting: 10 March agreement must be implemented

ANF | 9 JULY 2025

A high-level meeting took place at the Tishrin Palace in Damascus between representatives of the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria and officials from the Syrian interim government. The delegation from North and East Syria included Mazloun Abdi, General Commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF); İlham Ehmed, Co-Chair of the Department of Foreign Relations of the Democratic Autonomous Administration; Foza Yusif, Co-Chair of the North and East Syria Delegation; and Ebîd Hamîd al-Mehbash, Co-Chair of the Future Syria Party.

The meeting was attended on behalf of the Syrian interim government by Foreign Minister Esad al-Shibani, Interior Minister Anas Khatab, Defense Minister Murhef Abu Qesra, and Head of the Syrian Intelligence Service Huseyn Salame. Also present at the meeting were Thomas Barrack, the United States Special Representative for Syria; Scott Bowles, the United States Special Representative for North and East Syria; a member of the United States Congress; and Jean-Baptiste Faivre, representative of the French government, along with his accompanying delegation.

According to available information, the meeting focused on the implementation of the agreement signed on March 10 between Mazloun Abdi, General Commander of the SDF, and Ahmed Al-Sharaa (Al-Jolani), Head of the Syrian interim government. It was emphasized that the obstacles and challenges hindering the implementation of the agreement must be removed.

The North and East Syria delegation reportedly stressed that the interim government must fulfill its promises to those forcibly displaced from Afrin (Efrîn), Serêkaniyê, and Tell Abyad (Girê Spî). The discussion also addressed the issue of border crossings and how institutions of the Autonomous Administration could be integrated with government bodies. In addition, both parties underlined the need for security and military cooperation.

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## Bahçeli: PKK's founding leader kept his word

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Devlet Bahçeli made the first statement following the PKK's disarmament ceremony. He noted that the country and surrounding regions are gradually transitioning into a new and hopeful era. Stressing that the PKK, in line with the "Call for Peace and Democratic Society" made public with the February 27 İmralı declaration, held its 12th congress on May 5–7, 2025, during which it announced its organizational dissolution and decision to lay down arms, Bahçeli said: "As was clear in his latest video message, the founding leadership of the PKK has kept its promise, honored its commitment, and foresaw global and regional threats in a timely manner."

Bahçeli also commended the DEM Party for maintaining a prudent and responsible political stance, aligning with a balanced and accurate discourse, and taking its place alongside the centuries-old brotherhood. He stated: "Our President and the government, who have embraced the state policy of a 'Terror-Free Turkey' from the outset and have shown every kind of sacrifice, have fully supported this process."

Emphasizing that, as of today, the organization has begun surrendering weapons in groups and that a dark era is coming to a historic close, Bahçeli added: "Those political and ideological circles who engage in exploitation, slander, and denial to keep a provocative atmosphere alive have been disappointed in the face of blossoming hopes and a broadening climate of peace and stability. Indeed, we are living through days of the utmost significance for both our nation and our region. These positive developments that bring relief to the heart are a milestone, and collective conscience is pleased. I extend my gratitude to everyone—especially our President—who has contributed, acted, and supported the realization of a 'Terror-Free Turkey,' and I pray to Almighty God for this new era to be auspicious for our beloved nation."

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## AKP spokesperson Çelik: A critical threshold has been passed

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Following the disarmament by 30 PKK guerrillas, who presented themselves as the "Peace and Democratic Society Group," the AKP Spokesperson, Ömer Çelik, posted the following message on X (formerly Twitter): "The meetings and consultation process initiated by the DEM Party among political parties significantly contributes to the achievement of the process's goals. With the involvement of the Grand National Assembly's will to support the process, the contributions of all political parties in Parliament will become concrete."

The statement added: "Under the instructions of our President, state institutions are continuing comprehensive efforts, particularly in diplomacy, intelligence, and security, to reach the goal of a 'terror-free Turkey.'"

Stating that "a critical threshold has been crossed" at the current stage, Çelik emphasized the need for "the dissolution and disarmament process, namely, the destruction or surrender of weapons, to be completed swiftly," and added: "With the determination of our President, this process, carried out as a state project, remains on alert against any form of provocation in order to achieve its intended goals."

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## Nechirvan Barzani vows to provide all support for the success of the peace process

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Following the destruction of weapons by a group of PKK guerrillas in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) earlier today, the President of the Federal Kurdistan Region, Nechirvan Barzani, said they are ready to fulfill any task for the success of the peace process.

The statement released by Barzani on his X accounts says the following:

“We welcome the move of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to disarm today in a ceremony attended by the leadership of the PKK, representatives of the Kurdistan Region and a number of politicians and Turkish media personalities and agencies, held in the Kurdistan Region.

This was another important and encouraging step in the success of the peace process. We are sure that this step will take the peace process to a new stage and will be followed by other practical steps that will move the process in the right direction.

On this occasion, we reiterate our full commitment to continue all support for the success of the peace process. For this purpose, as always, we are ready to provide all necessary assistance and facilities and to fulfill any task that falls on our shoulders.

The peace process comes at a time when the region is going through a sensitive stage and requires all parties to make every effort to achieve peace. Everyone wins in peace and the victory of peace will serve Turkey, the entire region and everyone.

We express our gratitude to President Erdoğan for his initiatives, support and efforts to make the peace process a success. We also respect the role of Mr. Bahçeli, Mr. Öcalan and all those who work for peace.”

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## Parliament Speaker: We have reached the final stages of our work on the commission

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Parliament Speaker Numan Kurtulmuş, who is on a visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, spoke about today's disarmament by the Peace and Democratic Society Group. Stating that the process is proceeding as planned, Kurtulmuş said, "Everything is going well with good intentions. I invite everyone to support the process. We have reached the final stages of our work on the commission. We will determine which issues will be prioritized."

Kurtulmuş added that the commission's top priority was to follow up on the process of disarming and dismantling the organization on behalf of the Parliament.

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## Özel: Full peace is only possible through justice and democracy

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Republican People's Party (CHP) Chair Özgür Özel described the PKK's ceremony, in which some weapons were destroyed, as "gratifying," emphasizing that "establishing a full peace in Turkey is only possible through justice and democracy."

CHP leader Özgür Özel made a statement on social media, saying: "Our party stands by peace."

Welcoming the disarmament with "satisfaction," Özel stated: "We thank all political figures and authorities who contributed to this process—especially the late Sırrı Süreyya Önder. We hope this step marks the beginning of a new era in which weapons are permanently silenced. This process must be managed without excluding any political party or segment of society, with full transparency under the roof of Parliament, guided by broad societal consensus, and through swift and determined steps."

Özel added: "Achieving a true atmosphere of peace in Turkey is only possible through justice and democracy. The appointment of trustees in place of elected mayors, ongoing investigations that treat Kurdish participation in municipal councils as a crime, the imprisonment of elected politicians through unlawful means, and the undermining of democratic competition are all enemies of social peace and major obstacles to strengthening our internal unity."

What our country needs is a terror-free and democratic Turkey. Peace requires prosperity, prosperity requires unity, and unity requires democracy and justice. For our shared future, we will continue to contribute to and fight for peace with determination."

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## Erdoğan: I hope this step will bring good results

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan shared a message on his X account regarding the PKK's disarmament ceremony. He said: "I hope the important step taken today on the path to our goal will bring good results."

Emphasizing the significance of the step, Erdoğan added: "May today's important step lead to positive outcomes. May Allah grant us success in achieving our goals on this path we walk for the security of our country, the peace of our nation, and the establishment of lasting peace in our region."



## Bafel Talabani: Guerrillas' decision to start a new era is a historic step

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Leader Bafel Talabani said in a statement that the guerrillas' decision to start a new era through dialogue and peace is a historic step and noted that this would have a direct impact on the stability of the Kurdistan Region.

Talabani said: "The guerrillas' decision to initiate a new era through dialogue and peace in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey is a historic step. We are fully convinced that the spilling of blood only deepens the problem. Now is the time to silence the weapons and move toward dialogue."

Talabani added that efforts to implement the peace initiative will continue: "The peace initiative started by Mam Jalal is coming to life today."

Talabani expressed his hope that this step would mark the beginning of a new phase in normalizing relations between the parties and that it would directly contribute to the stability of the Kurdistan Region.



## Davutoğlu: What we must do now is leading the new era

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Ahmet Davutoğlu, leader of the Future Party, and Ali Babacan, leader of the Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA), shared statements on their X (formerly Twitter) accounts regarding the PKK's weapon destruction ceremony.

### **"Not an end but a beginning"**

In his post, Davutoğlu described the disarmament ceremony as "not an end but a beginning." Emphasizing that there are still crucial stages ahead, he said, "We cannot achieve real stability and a climate of peace without reaching a full and complete democratic order based on human rights and rooted in a freedom-security balance. Our path is tough, our surroundings filled with risks. What we must do is to set aside small political calculations and lead a new era where all 85 million citizens feel equal and free, within national unity and solidarity."

## “I hope it leads to peace”

Ali Babacan, on the other hand, said he welcomed the PKK's disarmament ceremony with satisfaction and added: “I hope it will be beneficial for our country and lead to lasting peace and stability. We will continue to monitor the process with cautious optimism and to voice our proposals and warnings.”

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## DEM Party co-chairs: We will defend this process with proud commitment

ANF | 11 JULY 2025

Tülay Hatimoğulları and Tuncer Bakırhan, co-chairs of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), made a statement regarding the PKK's weapon disposal ceremony. Referring to the new era that began with the historic call for peace from İmralı, they said it was a strong step toward a democratic solution, equality, and freedom for the peoples of Turkey and the Middle East. “The ceremony to give up arms was an invitation to our peoples for a democratic, just, and free life,” they stated.

The statement, signed by both co-chairs, added: “Today marks a turning point in the century-long history of the Middle East and Turkey. The video call for peace from İmralı, coming after 26 years, is the strongest expression of a call to the ancient spirit of these lands. With the PKK's weapon-burning ceremony following this call, a new era has begun for resolving the Kurdish question and building a Democratic Turkey. The PKK's decision to lay down arms is the guarantee that not only the Kurdish question but all of Turkey's problems can be resolved through democratic means.”

The co-chairs added: “The PKK's ceremony is an invitation to a democratic, just, equal, and free life. This ceremony has renewed our peoples' hope for the future. Our hope has grown for days when a century of suffering ends and brotherhood prevails. Peace is our shared achievement. On this sacred journey, we will leave no individual or group behind. From the fertile lands of Anatolia to the rich plains of Thrace, from the wavy coasts of the Black Sea to the ancient cities of Mesopotamia, every citizen will be both witness and partner in this democratic transformation.”

## We will defend this process with proud commitment

The statement continued: “The winners will be the people. The winners will be equality, democracy, and peace. We will defend this process with proud commitment, patience, and determination. With this spirit, we wholeheartedly salute the disarmament and transition to democratic politics launched with historic resolve by the Peace and Democratic Society Group on 11 July 2025. For this step is not only part of the Kurdish people's legitimate freedom struggle, but it also marks the beginning of a new era in Turkey's and the entire Middle East's quest for peace, equality, and democratic transformation. Now is the time to come together and implement democratic political and legal reforms. Now is the time to advance the struggle for democratic politics...”



# Feminicide

## "Women should establish communal unions to empower themselves" - Part Three

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

Ayten Dersim, a member of the Kurdistan Free Women's Party (PAJK) Coordination, while Çiğdem Doğu, a member of the Executive Council of the Kurdistan Women's Communities (KJK). The two women spoke about the martyrs of June and the struggle for socialism in an interview with Medya Haber TV.

**Ayten Dersim:** As a Movement, from the very beginning, we have been grounded in socialist culture and socialist consciousness. The conditions of that period, real socialism... we were influenced by it as well. President Öcalan evaluates this extensively in his manifesto. To be a socialist is, at the same time, to be communal. But being communal does not necessarily mean being surrounded by dozens of people. That is a crude interpretation. President Öcalan says he lives as a socialist on Imralı. And the more we come to understand him each day, the more we grasp what that truly means. We have spoken at length about what the "Imralı system" represents, what is being attempted through this system. We have discussed its implications from the perspective of international powers.

Socialist struggle involves communal life. A socialist way of life includes free thought. It is about constantly producing, making oneself useful, continuously growing intellectually and making all of that a lived reality. That is why President Öcalan critiques and evaluates many socialist movements. He says they were left incomplete, that they were insufficient. That is why the capitalist system surpassed them. When real socialism collapsed in the 1990s, many people said, "Capitalism has won." But President Öcalan said, "No, real socialism was defeated." This is a very important distinction. If you say "capitalism won, imperialism won," then you are legitimizing it, giving it a mission, as if saying, "it was right." But what really happened was the defeat of real socialism, not the victory of capitalism.

Why? Because real socialism failed to socialize its ideology, its philosophy, and its understanding of democratic freedom. It was sacrificed to a party, made dependent on a party. That party then defined itself as the "dictatorship of the proletariat." In truth, it failed to develop democracy. The ideas were insufficient, narrow. President Öcalan evaluates this. A system that is not socialized ends up confronting capitalist modernity as a mere bloc, built on walls, bans, prohibitions. Is that not what happened? It relied on expanding the military. Its logic for defeating capitalism was to grow the army and empower the party. It was not a truly communal life. It reduced socialism to crude egalitarianism. It said, "everything for the party."



We must recognize that this was not genuinely socialist life. In that sense, socialism cannot be confined to a space, reduced to a container, or seen as belonging to a single location. Because it also involves socialization. Socialism is socialization. Socialism is democracy. To understand both the present and socialism itself, we must look to history, starting from the formation of the first human societies.

### **The real issue is the unity of words and life**

What was the nature of early human society? These communities lived for thousands of years. How did they live? Was there oppression in that era? Denial? Hierarchy? Social classes? No. And yet, they endured for millennia. That means there was a free way of life. Perhaps the concept of “freedom” did not yet exist, because there was no oppression to resist. But there was communal life.

This is why a socialist life must naturally transcend individualism, reject power, yet continue to struggle in proportion to that rejection and be rooted in the understanding that the dominant system is a form of fascism against humanity. All of this requires deep awareness. It is not enough to say, “I am a socialist,” or “I lived like a socialist.” There are thousands of such claims. There are many socialist parties. But the real issue is the unity of words and life.

What has President Öcalan done in the 27 years of the İmralı process? Through thousands of pages of defense writings, he brought to light the answer to the question, “What is the history of humanity?”, not only for the Kurdish people but for the peoples of the Middle East and all of humanity. Because history, as written by those in power, does not reflect the reality of society.

That is why, in all of his defenses, he said: “I am not writing history anew. I am revealing the history that has never been written.” Because the histories of peoples have not been written. The history of women has not been written. He always reminded us of this. How did we develop as a movement? President Öcalan said, “The history of women’s enslavement has not been written. Nor has the history of their freedom but it is waiting to be written.”

### **Socialism is also socialization**

In order to write the history of freedom, one must first become free. Without liberation, how can the history of freedom be written? President Öcalan constantly guided us toward history. He defines history as follows: “History is hidden in the present, and we are hidden within history.” In other words, a person, or humanity, exists through their history.

Capitalist modernity, however, claims that history begins with itself. Everything that came before is labeled “barbaric,” “backward,” or “primitive.” It denies humanity to what existed before. President Öcalan does not do this. He traces humanity back thousands of years, asking: How did humanity become human? As revolutionaries, as militants, as women, if we do not pursue these questions, how can we understand? That is why President Öcalan, by returning to history, asks: “How did women live? How were they defeated? How were they enslaved? How were they stripped of their womanhood?” Because slavery became internalized through the enslavement of women, did it not? And we are still fighting against that.

There is a mode of existence shaped by slavery that has been embedded within us. Socialist life because socialism is not separate from democratic culture, is it? Also cannot be separated from communal life. Social-

ism is also socialization. Socialization means being in greater connection with others, sharing with everyone. But it also includes resisting what you see as wrong or inadequate. In this sense, President Öcalan redefined and deepened the concept, placing it once again on the agenda of humanity and women alike. From this, we understand: without grasping, internalizing, and embracing socialist culture and socialist ethics, it is impossible to build a new society, a free and democratic society. Because you are rejecting the given society. But if you reject it, what will you build in its place?

Here we are, facing capitalist modernity. Its scope is vast, it cannot be confined to a single program. So then, as women, how will we exist in opposition to it? How will we achieve freedom in terms of our identity and our gender? We must present an alternative. And that alternative cannot be just a program. You must have an ideology, a philosophy. What kind of life you envision ideologically and philosophically matters. That is what we call socialist life. A socialist is someone who rejects all forms of domination, all traditions, all enslaved modes of living and who also consciously understands how to construct a socialist life in their place. So as a woman, how do I want to live? For example, I do not want to be a man's slave. I do not want a man to dominate me. But in order to form my own self-confidence as a woman, I must develop women's consciousness. I must return to where women lost themselves. I must return in order to recognize it, and through that recognition, establish my own existence today. To be oneself, to exist, to be "xwebûn"... These are all expressions of what a socialist culture embodies.

### **Socialism is also organization**

We are facing a society that has been emptied of meaning, plundered, and assimilated. In terms of social cohesion, this is true for both the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey. The people of Turkey today have also been distanced from their own identity. If the peoples of Turkey and the Middle East were truly conscious of their identities and existence, the system of domination would not be able to expand itself so comfortably.

This is true for Turkey as well. What we are facing today is not merely the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). People see what is being done there. But the real issue is the formation of awareness and organization. Socialism is also organization. It is not just a body of thought. Many people have ideas, but those ideas must find their way into organization. Organization is the struggle to realize oneself socially, to assert one's presence in the world. It may be temporary or permanent, but it is the ability to maintain one's existence wherever one is.

Socialism encompasses this as well. But in order to do so, one must also deeply understand both the system of power and the system of slavery. Because what we carry within us is an internalized form of slavery, it has been embedded inside us. Today, capitalist modernity presents certain types of women to the world under the name of freedom and liberation. These are caricatured, distorted figures, personalities and representations that have gone completely off course. The characters used in TV shows, advertisements, fashion, and clothing... In response, we must create our own model.

To be a socialist means to embody a model. It requires humility, but also the ability to internalize it. It means expressing one's ideas freely and genuinely, while also being able to empathize with the other. The goal is not simply to impose one's own opinion. That is exactly what President Öcalan has done. The socialist thought he cultivated within himself, the philosophy of a free life, was presented to the world, reaching beyond the walls of İmralı.



## Zeynep Durgut: We are threatened for exposing the truth

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 6 JULY 2025

Journalists in Kurdistan are facing threats from criminal networks due to the news they report. In particular, members of the Free Press have increasingly become targets because of their investigative work. Zeynep Durgut, a reporter for Mezopotamya Agency (MA), was threatened by the family of Kenan Tatar, one of the defendants in the case of the “Prostitution Network” uncovered in the city of Şirnak (Şirnex).

Zeynep Durgut, a journalist threatened by the prostitution network, spoke to ANF about her experience. She said: “There is a legacy of truth that stretches from Apê Musa (Musa Anter) to Gurbetelli. For us, journalism is, at its core, a commitment to truth and a path guided by that principle. Journalism, for us, is a journey toward truth.

In social reality, truth is often met with anger. Because truth is frightening, unsettling, and illuminating. Journalists are either threatened, detained, or imprisoned. If you are a journalist in this country, you have to work with the constant awareness that something could happen to you at any moment.

Despite being in the right, we are not protected, we are treated as criminals and punished. Yet we believe in one thing: the only shield we have is truth itself, and our belief in that truth. Threats, violence, and even murders targeting journalists often go unpunished. Offenders are rarely prosecuted, or they walk free with very light sentences. This encourages further threats, especially where judicial independence is weak.

In countries where press freedom is restricted and freedom of expression is suppressed, threats against journalists rise. Because journalism functions as a mechanism of oversight, and authoritarian structures are disturbed by this. When media institutions are associated with specific political factions, journalists are no longer seen as independent voices but as spokespersons for one side. This perception legitimizes threats and attacks by certain individuals or groups.

The lack of strong solidarity among journalists, the weakness or neutralization of professional organizations, also leaves journalists more isolated and vulnerable.”

### Judiciary remains silent when journalists are targeted

Zeynep Durgut noted that members of the Free Press are facing serious pressure and threats and shared the following observations: “In many countries, especially those ruled by authoritarian-leaning governments, the judiciary has fallen under the influence of the executive. This situation obstructs the implementation of a fair and impartial legal process in cases involving crimes against journalists. If the individuals or groups issuing threats are politically connected, the cases are often shelved or dismissed without prosecution.

When journalists are targeted, the legal system rarely reacts. But when journalists become the target of the judiciary due to a report they publish, the same mechanism is triggered instantly. This shows that the judiciary acts according to political interests. We can call this a dual-standard legal system.

Public pressure is a key factor in activating the judiciary. Yet in a deeply polarized society, threats against certain journalists can be legitimized by large segments of the public. The media may also remain silent, which further weakens the possibility of building pressure on the judiciary.”

## **We write the truth**

Zeynep Durgut concluded by highlighting the importance of solidarity: “The most meaningful response we can give to the pressure, threats, detentions, arrests, and censorship targeting journalists is to produce more news, to uncover more truths, and to expose more wrongdoing. This is the path to resistance.

For a journalist, every place must become a space of struggle, and that is where the fight should begin. If you are persistent and determined in revealing the truth, then the truth will walk with you; those who stand for truth will stand with you.

Therefore, as journalists, we must remain in solidarity, both on and off the field. Solidarity makes us stronger.

Journalists must understand this: no one will protect us but ourselves. Because the profession we practice disturbs every segment of society, we write the truth. And for that reason, the form of struggle we build must be guided by even greater determination and resolve.”



## **JinNews: At least 19 women and one child murdered in one month**

**ANF | 6 JULY 2025**

According to data from the agency, which focuses on women-centered journalism, in the month of June, 19 women and one child were murdered, and 6 women and 4 children died under suspicious circumstances.

The details of the report stated the following about the perpetrators:

5 women were killed by their husbands, 2 women by relatives, 1 woman by her ex-partner, 2 women by acquaintances, 3 women by unidentified perpetrators, 2 women by their sons, 1 woman by her ex-husband, 2 women by their partners, 1 woman by a man she did not know.

**The provinces where the femicides occurred were listed as follows:**

1 woman in Adiyaman (Semsûr), 2 in Amed, 4 in Adana, 2 in İstanbul, 1 in Urfa (Riha), 1 in Şirnak, 2 in Bursa, 1 in İzmir, 1 in Burdur, 1 in Sakarya, 1 in Antalya, 1 in Bilecik, 1 in Hatay.

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## MKG: Seven female journalists detained, two imprisoned in Turkey in June

ANF | 6 JULY 2025

The Mesopotamia Women Journalists Association (MKG) has released its report on human rights violations against female journalists in Turkey in the month of June.

According to the report, seven female journalists were detained last month, and two of whom were remanded in custody. On the other hand, pressure, threats, and physical attacks against journalists continued.

The report highlighted the case of Mezopotamya Agency reporter Zeynep Durgut, who was threatened because of a news story she had written. This incident once again brought to the fore the security risks faced by journalists while doing their job.

MKG emphasized that journalistic activities are being criminalized and freedom of expression is being systematically violated. The dismissal of journalists working for VOA Kurdish was cited as an example of the lack of security in journalism.

**The report contains the following data for June:**

7 journalists were detained; 2 journalists were imprisoned; 3 journalists' homes were raided; 2 journalists were ill-treated; 3 journalists were threatened; 2 journalists were prevented from following up on news stories; 2 journalists were investigated; 1 journalist was sentenced to 2 years and 1 month in prison; 10 cases are ongoing against 11 journalists; 7 journalists remain in prison; 1 journalist was dismissed, 1 press card was revoked

MKG called on all institutions and society to fight for an end to violations of freedom of expression and the press and for the protection of journalists' fundamental rights.

The statement said: "Ending restrictions on journalists' right to report, ending impunity, transparently investigating rights violations, and decriminalizing journalism are among the minimum requirements of a democratic society. In addition to the physical violence and threats faced by journalists while conducting their work, policies aimed at intimidating journalists through arrest and prosecution continue. We reiterate-

ate our call to all institutions and society to put an end to violations of press and freedom of expression, protect the rights of journalists, and wage an effective struggle against the policy of impunity.”

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## TAJÊ: The genocide of Yazidi women continues, time to take the struggle to a new stage

ANF | SHENGAL | 7 JULY 2025

The Yazidi (Êzidi) Free Women’s Movement (TAJÊ) issued a statement marking the 11th anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide committed by ISIS on 3 August 2014.

In the statement made in Shengal with the slogan “With the Call for Peace and Democratic Society, We Will Avenge the Genocide Against Êzidi Women,” it was emphasized that the KDP, the Iraqi government, and the Turkish state are continuing their policies of genocide.

The statement, read by TAJÊ Diplomacy Committee member Suham Şengalî, underlined that Yazidi women have resisted physical, cultural, and “white” genocide for 11 years and declared that they will resolutely continue their struggle.

TAJÊ stressed that “the struggle will continue until the perpetrators are punished” and added that the fate of thousands of women is still unknown. They stated that the KDP resorts to dirty tactics to send Yazidi women to Europe and tries to force people to migrate from Shengal.

The statement emphasized that ISIS is a prototype of the male-dominated system and that with the Taliban and similar organizations, the genocide against women continues in different forms.

On the 11th anniversary, TAJÊ announced that the women’s struggle would be further expanded, organizational strength would be increased, and collective resistance would be raised.

Referring to Abdullah Öcalan’s words “The Call for Peace and Democratic Society is the answer to the 74 fermans (decrees of massacre),” the statement called on women to grow the struggle.

TAJÊ said: “With this consciousness and faith, on the 11th anniversary of the ferman, let us amplify our resistance, raise our collective social struggle, and make our voices heard everywhere.”

The statement announced the schedule of commemorations and events as follows:

- **8 July:** Statement “I Want to See Leader Öcalan”
- **14 July:** Letter discussion in Serdeşt
- **20–21 July:** Seminar on the ferman

- **24 July:** Commemoration of the martyrs of the ferman
- **3 August:** Large march led by TAJÊ and the Autonomous Administration.

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## KCDP: At least 136 women murdered in the first six months

ANF | ISTANBUL | 7 JULY 2025

The We Will Stop Femicide Platform (KCDP) presented its report on femicides and suspicious deaths for the first half of 2025 at a press conference in Beşiktaş, Istanbul.

According to the report, during this period 136 women were murdered, and 145 women died under suspicious circumstances.

65% of women were killed at home, and 35% were murdered by their husbands. It was emphasized that nine women lost their lives despite having restraining orders. While 96 women were killed by family members, it was noted that 15 of the perpetrators had criminal records.

KCDP representatives highlighted the importance of implementing the Istanbul Convention and called for an end to impunity and family-centered policies. They stressed that this cycle of violence can only be stopped through organized struggle.

The meeting also drew attention to the lack of justice in suspicious deaths. In particular, Hüseniye Yıldırım, the mother of Aysun Yıldırım, stated that she has been waiting for seven years for the truth about her daughter's death to be revealed.

KCDP underlined that violence against women can only be ended through a strong social and legal struggle, calling on everyone to stand in solidarity.

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## 10 women killed in Eastern Kurdistan in one month

ANF | 7 JULY 2025

In its report covering June 2025, the Kurdistan Human Rights Organization stated that at least 10 women fell victim to homicide in Eastern Kurdistan, while 9 women died under suspicious circumstances.

The organization reported that not only last month, but over the past year in total, 158 women were killed across Eastern Kurdistan and Iran, and at least 16,568 incidents of violence against women were officially recorded.

The report reveals that the rising violence against women and policies of impunity in the region have become a serious social problem. It is estimated that the true scale of the violence is much more severe.

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## Gruelling field work begins: Exploitation under 45-degree heat

ANF | AMED | 8 JULY 2025

As inflation rates in Turkey continue to rise, recent data shows that the hunger threshold has increased to 26,000 liras, while the poverty line has reached 75,000 liras. Alongside high youth unemployment, the overall unemployment rate has also risen, and millions of people work in unregistered and precarious conditions, excluded from official statistics.

One of these groups is agricultural workers who toil outdoors during the summer months when temperatures reach 45 degrees. From young children to mothers with children, many people work in these fields, usually for about three months. In addition to seasonal agricultural labor, women work ten hours daily in the fields near their hometowns but still cannot earn a decent livelihood.

Struggling with illness and exhaustion due to the intense heat, women often long for even a sip of cold water for hours.

In Amed (Diyarbakır), one of the districts where agricultural workers are most heavily employed is Xana Axpar (Çınar). During the summer, local people plant cotton, corn, or melons, relying on manual labor for all stages of production. From hoeing to harvesting, teams of women work in the fields, receiving a daily wage of 900 TL; however, part of this money is deducted by intermediaries known as “çavuş.”

Some women work to buy formula for their babies, others to purchase schoolbooks, but all say the money they earn is not enough for any of their needs and criticize the economic crisis.

Women working in onion fields in Xana Axpar shared their difficulties and demands with our agency. From 14-year-old children to 50-year-old mothers of four, everyone we spoke to said they had no choice but to work under inhumane conditions to avoid hunger.

These harsh conditions, which clash with their dreams for the future, once again highlight the region's social and economic problems.

### From university to the fields

Merve Alar, 24, says she started working in the fields again after graduating from university and failing to find a job.

“I used to work in the fields before. I went to university to get an education and have a profession. For two years, I both worked and studied. But after graduating, I couldn't find a job. As a last resort, I returned to



this work,” Merve Alar says, adding that she hopes to buy study books for the KPSS civil service exam with her daily earnings.

Merve Alar explains that they wake up at 3 a.m. and start work at 5 a.m.: “We only take three breaks throughout the day. When I get home in the evening, I’m so exhausted that I fall asleep without even eating dinner.”

She states that while their daily wage is 900 TL, 70 TL of this goes to the “çavuş,” and that payments being made at the end of the year makes life even harder.

“Unfortunately, there is no other employment option in the district. The only choice is the fields. Especially for women and students, support is essential,” she adds.



## Women demonstrate in Ankara, calling for legal foundations for peace

ANF | ANKARA | 8 JULY 2025

Women from various parts of the country gathered in Ankara on Tuesday under the slogan "Act now! Create the legal basis for peace" in front of parliament to send a clear signal for a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kurdish question. They called on parliament to immediately create a legal basis for a lasting and just peace.

The action was organized by the women's initiative “I need peace”. Numerous women from civil society organizations, the Kurdish women's movement, trade unions and political parties made their way to the capital from various cities. The aim was a protest march from Güven Park to the parliament. However, as soon as they arrived at the park, the police blocked the buses in which the participants were sitting and prevented them from getting off. Drivers were put under pressure with the threat of sanctions and some were forced to withdraw their vehicles as a result.

### Jin, Jiyan, Azadî!

Despite these restrictions, the women finally managed to gather at the Çankaya entrance of the parliament. They made their demands visible with banners reading “Withdraw the trustees”, “Involve women in peace talks” and “Abolish the anti-terror law”, and slogans such as “Jin, Jiyan, Azadî” (Woman, Life, Freedom), “No war, peace now” and “Bijî Serok Apo” (Long live Chairman Apo).

In a joint statement, Feride Eralp from the initiative and Zelal Anğay from the KESK trade union federation emphasized that it was no longer acceptable for peace demands to be criminalized. They stated that the existing policy of violence, repression and trustees was not contributing to a solution, but rather exacerbating social division. Instead, they highlighted the need for a fundamental change: “We demand a legal basis for peace - not tomorrow, but now.”

The focus was on three central demands:

The abolition of the anti-terror law, which serves as the legal basis for numerous arbitrary proceedings against journalists, politicians and activists.

The release of political prisoners and an end to the criminalization of the democratic opposition.

The withdrawal of the trustees from the Kurdish municipalities and the restoration of local democratic structures.

Eralp warned against reducing the demand for peace to individual measures such as the release of prisoners: "The government is trying to narrow the issue of peace down to the question of political prisoners. But peace needs more - it needs justice, participation and equality. Peace processes cannot emerge under conditions of war, military escalation and patriarchal oppression."

### **Sharp criticism of ongoing military violence**

The activists were particularly critical of the Turkish army's ongoing cross-border occupation operations in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Despite the recently announced self-dissolution of the PKK, the Turkish government has not stopped its military attacks. Just in the past few days, twelve Turkish soldiers were killed in an alleged methane gas accident during an army operation in the region. "These deaths show how absurd and destructive the current policy is - for all sides," said Eralp.

Activists pointed out that the trustee system, which is used especially in Kurdish cities to remove elected mayors and replace them with government officials, is also an expression of an authoritarian state that undermines democratic structures. "Turkey has become a republic of trustees," said Eralp, pointing out that over a dozen Kurdish municipalities are currently under trustee administration and many other mayors are in custody.

### **Gültan Kışanak: Make legal arrangements now!**

The former co-mayor of Amed (tr. Diyarbakır) and well-known politician Gültan Kışanak addressed the female members of parliament directly in a speech. "Every woman sitting in parliament today has a responsibility. You are not just MPs, you are also daughters, mothers, sisters - listen to your hearts!" said Kışanak. "If a political process has begun, then parliament must take legal action."

Recalling the PKK's decision to disband and disarm, announced in May, Kışanak pointed out that the Turkish state also has a duty to respond to this step. "Laws must now be made that allow them to return to society, to politics, to a life with equal rights. We demand a policy based on freedom, justice and democracy - not on oppression, mistrust and violence."

### **Women insist on participation in the peace process**

Zelal Anğay concluded the demonstration by pointing out that the action in Ankara is more than just a protest event; an expression of growing social pressure on the political class to break the decades-long spiral of violence: "Women once again made it clear that they are not only the victims of war and repression,

but also active agents for peace and justice. With our appeal to parliament, we are calling for a legal basis for a new era. And we make it clear: without women, without equal rights, without participation, there can be no lasting peace."

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## Ecocide

### Citizens protest cyanide gold mine project in Eskişehir

ANF | ESKİŞEHİR | 5 JULY 2025

The Eskişehir Nature and Life Platform made a statement in front of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change against the cyanide gold mine project that Eti Bakır A.Ş., affiliated with Cengiz Holding, plans to implement within the borders of Alpagut and Atalan neighborhoods.

Speaking during the 2nd Review and Evaluation Commission (IDK) meeting held regarding the project, platform member Meltem Oktay emphasized that the mine is located only 4 km away from the Sakarya River and that the area is of critical importance due to its agricultural and biological diversity. Meltem Oktay stated that if the project is realized, fertile agricultural lands and water resources would be destroyed and that cyanide and heavy metals would cause serious harm to the environment and human health.

Reminding that there are environmental risks such as 28 endemic plant species, 128 bird species, and proximity to a first-degree archaeological site in the region, Meltem Oktay said the project poses a serious threat not only to nature but also to human health.

The platform declared that, just as in the Public Participation Meeting held last year, their struggle would continue. Meltem Oktay also noted that the omnibus bill submitted to Parliament aims to open many natural areas, including olive groves, forests, and wetlands, to mining activities, adding: "What those who bring these legislative proposals don't know is the determination and perseverance of us, the defenders of nature and life."

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### Thousands of trees burned in forest fire on Mount Gabar

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 5 JULY 2025

A forest fire broke out in a restricted military area on Mount Gabar in the Kurdish province of Şırnak on Thursday afternoon. Strong winds caused the flames to spread rapidly to surrounding forest areas.

The affected area is closed to the public for “security reasons” and may only be entered by military personnel, so-called “village guards” and employees of the Turkish state oil company TPAO, which is searching for raw materials in the region.

Thousands of trees were reduced to ashes, and many animals died in the fire, which was brought under control only after 11 hours.

Mount Gabar is considered rich in natural resources and has long been the scene of Turkish warfare in Kurdistan. It is not uncommon for fires to be deliberately set by the army, as the Turkish state has been systematically targeting areas for decades in order to make them uninhabitable and drive the Kurdish population out of their villages. In recent years, the state-owned TPAO has also significantly expanded its oil exploration activities in Gabar and other mountainous areas in Şırnak. Environmental organizations have long criticized the destruction of nature through deforestation, military infrastructure measures, and fires.



## Euphrates River's water draining: Drought risk increasing

ANF | 6 JULY 2025

The water level of the Euphrates River is rapidly decreasing due to the Turkish state's blocking of water flow to Syrian and Iraqi territories. The Energy Council of Northern and Eastern Syria had warned that the water crisis in the Euphrates River would worsen after the water level at the Euphrates Dam dropped by 6 meters.

Despite being located on the banks of the Euphrates River, the people in the Tiwêhina Camp in Tabqa are experiencing a severe water shortage. Ahmad El Casim, a resident of the camp, told ANHA: "The situation is getting worse. Water is cut off for days, and when it comes, it's dirty and undrinkable. We have to buy water, and filling a tank costs 25,000 liras. Those who can't afford it bring water from the lake."

A citizen named Reslan El Ehmed told ANHA: "We buy bottled water to drink, but when the water comes, it's very dirty and undrinkable. We boil it, add chlorine, and leave it in the sun. Despite all this, many people who drink this water have developed kidney diseases."

Another citizen, Matar El Xalid, added: "There are insects and worms in the water, which is why some people have fallen ill and had to be hospitalized. The water has been cut for three days, and today it only came for two hours. Even the public bathrooms haven't been cleaned for days. The water we bring from the river has a terrible smell. We filter it with cloth and boil it, but we can't stand it anymore."

### **The situation is getting worse**

After the El Tinera station in the city of Tabqa went out of service, water was also cut off in the town of El Cirniyê and its 114 surrounding villages. As a result, the situation for people has become even more difficult. The El Cirniyê Water Administration is trying to implement urgent solutions to provide water to the public.

The co-chair of the El Cirniyê Water Administration, Ehmed Cemal, said that this situation has not been experienced since the 1980s, when the Euphrates Dam was built. He added: "Due to the drying of the water, some lands that have been submerged for decades have emerged, and some farmers have started working these lands."

Cemal also noted that two wells at the El-Tenara water station were out of service, which led to a halt in pumping water to the El Cirniyê water station.

Cemal warned that the continued water scarcity would lead to a catastrophe for people, animals, and plants, and called on humanitarian aid organizations to provide them with larger pumps. He emphasized, "The real solution is for Turkey to release the water; otherwise, the situation will lead to a disaster."

Alert in Raqqa, Deir Ezzor and Aleppo

The decrease in the water level of the Euphrates River is not only affecting Tabqa but also Raqqa, Deir Ezzor, Aleppo, and its countryside.



## Mining continues in Hesandin despite missing EIA report

ANF | AMED | 6 JULY 2025

Mining operations have been ongoing for 17 years on the Hesandin Plateau, located in the Pasûr (Kulp) district of Amed (Diyarbakır), and are being carried out by Kulp Mining and Foreign Trade Inc. The Diyarbakır Bar Association initially received confirmation from the Provincial Directorate of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change that the company's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report was invalid. However, this assessment was later changed upon the company's request.

The company unlawfully acquired an "EIA not required" decision and began exploration in Hesandin. In response, the Diyarbakır Bar Association's Commission on Environment and Urban Law filed a lawsuit with the Second Administrative Court of Diyarbakır. When the court requested the original report, the Directorate revealed that it had been lost in a flood in 2020.

Lawyer Ahmet Inan, Chair of the Diyarbakır Bar Association's Commission on Environment and Urban Law, detailed the legal process and commented on the controversial new mining law recently passed by a parliamentary committee.

### Company later obtained 'valid EIA' decision

Lawyer Ahmet Inan began by noting that the resistance in the Hesandin Plateau was one of the first places where ecological struggle became a social issue in Kurdistan: "There has been a struggle to defend the living environment in Hesandin since last year, and the public is somewhat aware of it. A year ago, this became a widely embraced issue, especially in the context of the ecological struggle in Kurdistan. In fact, it is one of the first places in Kurdistan where ecology became a collective cause."

It became a symbolic space where the participation of local villagers affected by the mine, the solidarity of civil society, and the legal efforts of urban actors all came together to form a comprehensive struggle.

Last year, in response to our written inquiry to the Provincial Directorate of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, we were told that the EIA report dated back 17 years and that it would be invalid unless operations began within five years.

After our inquiry, the company went to the same Directorate and obtained a completely different response, this time stating that 'the EIA is valid.' The administration reversed itself, saying, 'Sorry, we made a mistake. You started operations within five years, so the report is still valid.'

Here, the administration violated both the principle of good faith and the principle of consistency. The same authority issued two contradictory decisions on the same issue, with no new concrete developments, most likely due to pressure from the company or other undisclosed relationships. A year later, the company resumed operations based on this new 'EIA is valid' decision. This year's resistance was reignited because of this.

As the Diyarbakır Bar Association, we filed a lawsuit to annul this decision. The case is currently being heard by the Second Administrative Court of Diyarbakır."

### **Court must urgently suspend operations**

Ahmet Inan emphasized that it has now been revealed there was no valid EIA report to begin with: "In the lawsuit we filed, the Second Administrative Court requested the EIA report from the Provincial Directorate of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The response confirmed that the report no longer exists, it was lost in the 2020 flood.

There is no report, and yet mining activities are being carried out based on a nonexistent EIA. But every aspect of a project, from its geographical coordinates to execution methods, engineering data, blasting documentation, must be defined within the EIA. Without an EIA report, no project should be allowed to proceed. That is why the court must urgently issue a stay of execution.

The Ministry should also launch an investigation into its own departments and stop this activity through its own initiative. There are many examples of irregular EIA processes. These reports are often prepared by private companies, and legal battles follow. But in this case, there is simply no EIA report at all.

What kind of assurance does this company have to proceed with operations under these conditions? How is it possible that the court has not issued a stay of execution? How can the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization declare a missing EIA report to be 'valid'? This points to a web of corrupt and hidden relationships."

### **Locals to launch protest camp**

Ahmet Inan also underlined that despite everything, the people continue to resist mining activities. He also commented on the draft law recently passed by a parliamentary commission, which includes provisions on mining: "The people are aware and conscious. The village head told us they would set up tents

and begin a protest. The community is organized; which is why we know this issue cannot be reduced to a courtroom battle alone. Ecological resistance cannot be waged within four walls. But the legal violations here are so grave that even in a decayed and corrupted judicial system, this should not be allowed under any circumstance.

Yet we all know the current state of the judiciary. Without public pressure, they will do whatever they please. In that sense, we must build a dual mechanism of resistance, both legal and grassroots.

The draft law that recently passed through the parliamentary commission further undermines the status of pastures and forests, renders EIA reports meaningless, and paves the way for capital to implement its projects quickly and without obstacles.

We are also resisting renewable energy projects in Hesandin, particularly solar power plant (GES) initiatives. A legal arrangement that completely nullifies EIA processes for solar energy projects is a direct threat to society, to ecology, to humanity, and to life itself.

It is still unclear whether the law, if passed, will have a retroactive impact on the Hesandin case. But one thing is certain: it will create hundreds of similar situations, open the door to mass plunder, and likely make our struggle even more difficult."



## Solar Power Plant Project in Dersim cancelled

ANF | DERSIM | 7 JULY 2025

The company Büyükdere Electricity Generation and Storage planned to implement a Solar Power Plant (GES) project over an area of 22 hectares in the village of Xeceri in Dersim. On 6 May, a meeting about the project was held with the participation of the villagers. The villagers opposed the GES project.

Now a document prepared by the Provincial Directorate of Environment and Urbanization and the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process found that the GES project would divide the pastureland in the region. It also emphasized that the EIA procedure was found unsuitable.

The decision stated: "According to the letter referenced (b) from the Tunceli Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry, the pasture property registered in parcel number 134, block 101, in Haceri Village is of good quality, and the planned activity would seriously and negatively impact its use purpose by dividing the pasture parcel into fragmented pieces. As a result of the evaluation, it has been expressed that the EIA process was found unsuitable."



## Villagers in Hesandîn on watch against mining company

ANF | AMED | 9 JULY 2025

Kulp Mining and Foreign Trade Inc. continues its mineral exploration activities in the Hesandîn region of the Pasur (Kulp) district in Amed (Diyarbakır), drawing strong reactions from villagers due to the environmental impact. Although the company's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report was officially cancelled, it has persisted with its operations, prompting local residents to launch a protest.

To stop the mining activities, villagers have set up tents and begun a continuous vigil at the site.

### Every step taken by the company violates the law

Murat Ipek, Co-Mayor of Pasur, visited the protest site and stated that the company is unlawfully destroying nature.

Ahmet Inan, Chair of the Environment and Urban Commission of the Diyarbakır Bar Association, also visited the area and emphasized that the company's operations violate legal procedures, adding that every action taken constitutes a criminal offense.



## Autonomous Administration mobilizes against forest fires in coastal regions

ANF | 9 JULY 2025

In light of the devastating forest fires in the coastal regions, the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES) provided help to contain the flames with its own emergency services. According to a statement by the Ecology Council of the Autonomous Administration, this is a “serious ecological disaster” that requires coordinated action.

On Wednesday, the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria sent a support convoy consisting of 18 fire trucks and water tankers with 150 firefighters to help fight fires that have been raging for seven days in Syria's coastal regions. The teams participated in firefighting and follow-up work to bring the fires under control and prevent them from spreading. The convoy has returned after the fire was brought under control.

A delegation affiliated with the Syrian Transitional Government welcomed the convoy in the Salamiya countryside of Hama and reported that the forest fire in the coastal region had been brought under control.



Speaking on behalf of the Transitional Government's Ministry of the Interior, the delegation thanked the convoy for its support.

According to the Syrian transitional government's disaster control agency, the fires, which have been raging for a week, mainly in the coastal province of Latakia, have destroyed over 14,000 hectares of forest so far. According to UN figures (OCHA), around 5,000 people have been affected and several villages have had to be evacuated. No fatalities have been reported so far. Firefighting efforts are being hampered by heat, strong winds, and mines left over from the civil war.

In a statement, the Ecology Council referred to the fires as a “war against the environment.” It said that the long-term consequences of military attacks, bombings, and the collapse of infrastructure in recent years had massively weakened the environment's ability to protect itself. The current situation once again shows how urgent regional and international cooperation is to protect natural resources, it added.

The council also called on the international community and environmental organizations to actively help contain the fires and to commit to the long-term preservation of Syria's forests. Yesterday, the Syrian transitional government asked the European Union for assistance in fighting the forest fires in the country. Some countries are supporting the local emergency services.

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## Human Rights Violations

### Mayors of Antalya, Adıyaman, and Adana taken into custody

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

As part of the investigation conducted by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office targeting the “Aziz İhsan Aktaş criminal organization” (the informer in the investigation against the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality), detention orders were issued for 10 individuals.

Adana Metropolitan mayor and deputy chair of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (TBB) Zeydan Karalar, Semsûr mayor Abdurrahman Tütüdere, and Antalya Metropolitan mayor Muhittin Böcek have been taken into custody.

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## Acting mayor of Büyükçekmece taken into custody

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

As part of the investigation conducted by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, Adana Metropolitan Mayor and Deputy Chairman of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (TBB), Zeydan Karalar, and Semsûr Mayor Abdurrahman Tutdere, were taken into custody.

Within the scope of the investigation, Ahmet Şahin, who was elected as acting mayor to replace Büyükçekmece Mayor Hasan Akgün, who had been detained some time ago, has also been taken into custody.



## Beltur workers taken into custody in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 7 JULY 2025

Three workers, members of Dev Turizm-İş, affiliated with the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK), were dismissed on June 17 due to "WhatsApp posts and low performance."

The workers, who stated that they were unfairly and unlawfully dismissed, have been organizing various protests since that date to demand their rights.

Today, in front of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality building, workers holding signs that read "We were unlawfully dismissed, we want justice," "We want our jobs back," and "We demanded our rights, we were dismissed" staged a chained protest, chanting slogans such as "Beltur workers are not alone" and "Where are rights, law, and justice?"

Police intervened in the protest and cut the chains with bolt cutters, detaining a total of 7 union members, including 3 who had been dismissed.



## Journalist Ceylan Şahinli faces investigation for commemorating colleagues killed in Turkish attack

ANF | 8 JULY 2025

The public prosecutor's office in Urfa has opened an investigation against journalist Ceylan Şahinli with the Mezopotamya news agency (MA) for alleged violation of the law on assembly and demonstrations. Şahinli is expected to give a statement to the police in the coming days.

Şahinli was targeted over a speech she gave last year on the border between Suruç and Kobanê, where she remembered her colleagues Nazım Daştan and Cihan Bilgin, who had been killed just a few days earlier in a targeted drone attack by the Turkish army near the Tishrin Dam in northern Syria. The two journalists were documenting attacks by Turkish occupying forces and allied jihadists on the Euphrates front.

Another investigation was launched against the then co-chair of the provincial association of the DBP (Democratic Regions Party) in Amed (Diyarbakır), Mehmet Şirin Gürbüz, and Bekir Benek, a provincial administrator of the DEM Party in Urfa, also for alleged violations of the assembly law.

The Mezopotamya agency strongly condemned the investigation, calling it another example of the systematic criminalization of critical voices in Turkey, especially when it comes to Kurdish issues or reporting on human rights violations.

Journalists who deal with such content are repeatedly exposed to criminal prosecution. At least 34 media professionals in Turkey are currently in prison for their work (as of June 30).



## Iran hands death sentences, long prison terms to Kurdish civilians over ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ protests

ANF | 8 JULY 2025

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN) reported that Branch One of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Orumiyeh has sentenced five Kurdish men – Ali (Soran) Ghassemi, Pezhman Soltani, Kaveh Salehi, Rizgar Beygzadeh Baba-Miri, and Teyfour Salimi Baba-Miri - to a total of 11 death penalties, lengthy prison sentences, and financial penalties for their involvement in the anti-government ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ (Woman, Life, Freedom) protests in Bukan.

Eight other defendants have also received prison terms and fines.

Previously, Branch One of the Juvenile Criminal Court in West Azerbaijan Province had sentenced Soltani to death on charges of “premeditated murder”, a crime punishable by qisas, which gives the victim’s family the right to retaliate under Islamic law.

The verdicts, issued by Judge Reza Najafzadeh with Esmail Bazrkari as advisor, were delivered to defence lawyers on Monday following three recent online court sessions.

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network has learned that the court ignored allegations of torture, forced confessions, and security-led fabrications that took place during the men’s detention at the Ministry of Intelligence’s facility in Orumiyeh.

Ghassemi, Soltani and Salehi, who are Kurdish political prisoners, were each sentenced to two death penalties on charges of “armed insurrection” (baghi), “enmity against God” (moharebeh).

Ghassemi was also sentenced to death for “leading and forming an armed criminal group” under titles including “Rebels’ Association, Shamaran, Komala, and PAK”.

Additionally, Beygzadeh Baba-Miri received three death sentences on charges of “armed insurrection” (baghi), “leading and forming an armed criminal group” under titles including “Rebels’ Association, Shamaran, Komala, and PAK” and “espionage for Israeil”, while Salimi Baba-Miri – who had previously been released on bail – was given one death sentence for “leading and forming an armed criminal group” under titles including “Rebels’ Association, Shamaran, Komala, and PAK”.

They have also been sentenced to five to 15 years in prison and fined a total of 3.580 million rials (nearly 40,000 USD) on charges including “collaboration with the hostile government of Israel through intelligence missions for Mossad”, “involvement in the smuggling of 120 Starlink satellite devices”, “propaganda against the state”, and “assembly and collusion with the intention of acting against national security”.

Previously, Branch One of the Juvenile Criminal Court in West Azerbaijan Province had sentenced Soltani to death on charges of “premeditated murder”.

During the same trial, Baba-Miri was given a 15-year prison sentence for “instigating murder”, while Ghassemi was sentenced to 10 years and one day for “aiding and abetting murder”. Salehi was acquitted of all charges.

The Islamic Revolutionary Court in Orumiyeh also sentenced eight more defendants – Siamak Hayasi, Savareh Azizzadeh, Hemin Kirmanj, Hossein Hosseinzadeh, Jalil Mowloudi, Ahmad Mamehzadeh, Javanmard Mam-Khosravi, and Salar Daghdar – to prison sentences and financial penalties.

The charges included “membership in an armed group” under the titles “Rebels’ Association, Shamaran, Komala, and PAK”, “collaboration with the hostile government of Israel”, and “insulting the Supreme Leader”. Seven of them had previously been released on bail.

One defendant, Dr Salahaddin Ahmadi, was acquitted of all charges in this case. However, he has been charged separately with “financing terrorism” and the case has been referred to the Criminal Court.

According to the KHRN report, the case file, consisting of 33 volumes, was compiled by the Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor’s Office in Orumiyeh, and all evidence is based on Ministry of Intelligence reports and confessions extracted during detention, with no independent or credible documentation presented to the court.

For instance, only a few defendants were reportedly found in possession of Starlink devices, while others were arrested simply for installing satellite equipment. Nevertheless, they have been prosecuted under severe national security and political charges.

The 14 defendants were arrested by security forces in April and May 2023 over alleged involvement in the anti-government protests of the Women, Life, Freedom uprising in Bukan and Baneh, and were transferred to the Ministry of Intelligence’s detention centre in Orumiyeh.

They were reportedly subjected to months of physical and psychological torture, forced confessions, and denied access to lawyers and family visits.

On 14 July 2024, Tasnim News Agency, affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), broadcast portions of these confessions. The defendants later claimed that these statements had been extracted under duress and had formed the basis for the court's heavy sentences.

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## ISIG: 164 workers lost their lives in June

ANF | ISTANBUL | 9 JULY 2025

According to the report, 164 workers lost their lives in occupational murders in just one month.

Data from the Workers' Health and Work Safety Observatory (ISIG) show that the highest number of worker deaths occurred in Istanbul. The most common causes of death include traffic and shuttle accidents, being crushed, and falls from height.

Among those who lost their lives were 15 women and 149 men. In addition, 4 were refugees and 5 were migrant workers.

The sectors with the highest number of deaths were listed as follows:

Construction: 24%

Agriculture and forestry: 23%

Transportation: 10%

Municipal and general services: 10%

Mining: 5%

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## Seven journalists and two politicians face prison sentences over protest for Nazım and Cihan

ANF | ISTANBUL | 10 JULY 2025

On 19 December 2024, Kurdish journalists Nazım Daştan and Cihan Bilgin were [murdered](#) in a targeted drone attack by the Turkish state south of Kobanê. Both had been working for the Kurdish media for

many years and were most recently reporting from the Euphrates front about the attacks by the Turkish army and the jihadist alliance SNA on the self-governing Rojava.

Two days later, on 21 December, press associations based in Turkey wanted to make a public statement in Istanbul against the murder of their colleagues. However, the police forcibly prevented the gathering and [detained](#) almost 60 people. One day later, a court of emergency ordered the imprisonment of seven journalists and two local politicians from the DEM Party.

Journalists Gülistan Dursun, Hayri Tunç, Yeni Yaşam newspaper reporter Enes Sezgin, Osman Akın, Can Papila, Etkin News Agency (ETHA) reporter Pınar Gayıp, and Mücadele Birliği journalist Serpil Ünal, and two politicians, Hacı Uğış and İmam Şenol, were remanded in custody on charges of “making propaganda for an illegal organization” and “opposing Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations”.

The third hearing of the case against nine people was held at the Istanbul Çağlayan Courthouse on Thursday.

Two police officers who testified at the trial claimed that the Beyoğlu District Governor's Office had banned the demonstration and that they had therefore intervened against the group gathered in front of the Şişli Municipality. The police officers claimed that they had made a warning announcement before the intervention.

In his opinion on the case, the prosecutor requested that each of the nine defendants be separately sentenced for “making propaganda for an illegal organization” and “organizing an unauthorized demonstration.”

While the journalists' lawyers requested time to respond to the opinion, the court postponed the hearing to a later date.

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## Interview

### Karasu: Attacks by Turkish army are a provocation

ANF | 5 JULY 2025

KCK Executive Council member Mustafa Karasu spoke to Medya Haber TV about the Peace and Democratic Society Process, as well as current developments in Kurdistan, Turkey, and the Middle East.

## **Attacks by the Turkish army are a provocation**

There was a call by Devlet Bahçeli. Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) responded positively to it. In reaction to this, because it was a call to halt the armed struggle, the Movement first declared a ceasefire before the congress. They were carrying out no actions, making no plans for action whatsoever.

The congress was held; a decision was made to dissolve (the organization), and to end the armed struggle. Despite this, the continuation of these attacks is clearly a provocation. Who is accepting this? Which government official or state authority acknowledges this as acceptable? Which politician does? How could such a thing be possible? Of course, the people there will defend themselves. You are going there to kill, you are using chemicals, using prohibited weapons. This is truly a very serious situation.

We evaluate it as follows: a faction within the state wants to disrupt this process. That is what this means. Why are you attacking these people? There is no action, no attempt, no effort, no planning for any action. This is a serious matter. Naturally, things like this create anxiety in society, in everyone. Yes, we say that a part of the state wants to sabotage the process. Then the state itself and the government managing the process must intervene. They must not merely watch.

## **Not enough to approach with concern, we must actively struggle**

From society's point of view, and our friends' point of view, there are many factors to be concerned about. From this perspective, we cannot say: "Why are they worried?" Sick prisoners are not being released. They are being left to die. Arrests are still happening. The opposition is being targeted, journalists are being imprisoned. Even though we have taken important steps... Ending the armed struggle is a very significant development. Dissolving the PKK is a very important step. Yet, despite this, no steps are being taken by the state or the government, and this naturally creates concern—among our friends, among the public. In this sense, we understand this too. But merely approaching it with anxiety is insufficient. Yes, our friends, our people may be worried, they may think this way, but what matters is to own this process, to fight to bring it to success. This is what must be done. Acting out of anxiety only blocks the struggle, hampers efforts, prevents enthusiastic participation. We must join this process with enthusiasm. That is, with excitement, we must organize, wage an active struggle. We must create social pressure on the state and the government. This is the task. Yes, let's criticize—we do criticize—but saying, "Why are they not acting? Why are they not stepping in?" and developing only such discourse is wrong and inadequate.

We will struggle. We will develop democratic struggle and organization. We will make the Peace and Democratic Society process belong to all of society. We will turn it into a social force, spread it widely. By doing so, we will fulfill our duty. Because this is not something that only the government can do. If society does not embrace it, if democratic political actors and socialists do not embrace it, if there is no such social force behind it, the state and the government can simply archive the matter and move on. This happened in the past. Therefore, merely expressing concern is truly inadequate.

## **The language of democracy is action**

All segments of society—women, youth, Alevis, workers, laborers, socialists, ecologists—all the different social groups must organize around the Call for Peace and Democratic Society, embrace this process, and

exert pressure on the government and the state. This is how democracy develops. Democracy is the result of tension. It arises when society's struggle and demands are organized and transformed into action.

Leader Apo said: The language of democracy is action. When I say action, I don't mean armed action—I mean democratic action. There are a thousand and one forms of democratic action. If it is like this, then we can truly say we are waging a struggle for democracy, that we are owning this process. Anything else is not a correct approach. Anything else is not a democratic approach. Democrats do not wait. Democrats organize, take action, demand, and strive to change things—to change laws. In this respect, we call on everyone to organize around this Call for Democratic Society and to develop the struggle in this direction.

### **No freedom in Turkey without a solution to Kurdish question**

The government's pressure operations, initiated in Istanbul together with the CHP, are continuing relentlessly. In fact, now the issue of appointing a trustee (kayyum) to the CHP has even become a matter of open debate.

The Kurdish question is a question of democratization. And democratization is a matter of struggle. As I said, it is not a problem that will be solved merely by waiting for the state or the government.

Undoubtedly, it is truly difficult to make sense of these efforts by the government—in the context of the Call for Democratic Society. Because everywhere in the world, in conflict resolution processes, governments and those involved try to increase societal and political support. They try to solve the issue this way. This is a general rule. Everyone wants this. The AKP and MHP, and even the CHP, should be working to ensure that all opposition groups support this process. Now, with these arrests, they are sabotaging that support. This creates a situation that prevents the support from being given. It actually has the opposite effect. This contrary attitude also has a contrary impact among the opposition. In this sense, when the opposition says, "There are so many attacks on democracy, so many anti-democratic practices, how will this be solved?" can you really say they are wrong?

Therefore, this is truly not the right attitude or approach. Thus, it becomes an approach that also calls into question the sincerity of the process.

It was said: "If there is fascism in Turkey, there cannot be democracy in Kurdistan." This is true. If there will be democracy, it will be both in Kurdistan and in Turkey. If there is fascism somewhere, it is everywhere. This is absolutely certain. But here, some discourses are truly incomprehensible. It's as if the Kurdish question has been solved, democracy has come to Kurdistan, everything is rosy in Kurdistan, but nothing positive exists in Turkey! Is there really such a situation in Kurdistan? There are still tens of thousands of detainees.

What does this mean? Is there a Kurdish ethnicity? Yes. Is there also a Turkish ethnicity, a nation? Yes. So what rights do Kurds exercise? What rights do they have? Do they use their language? Their culture? Do they have self-government? Nothing. Yet, it's as if Kurds have gained everything, and in Turkey mother-tongue education is restricted, national rights are restricted, and Turks are somehow oppressed. What rights have Kurds obtained? Which basic rights have been secured legally? To hear some people, you'd think that everything in Kurdistan is wonderful and now Turks are starting to be persecuted. They are almost going to say there is no mother-tongue education in Turkey, no culture, no self-government. They



are practically saying that. They must understand this: without solving the Kurdish question, there will be no democracy and freedom in Turkey.

If there is something you complain about regarding freedom and democracy in Turkey, its cause is the existence of the Kurdish question, the existence of the Alevi question. Without solving these two fundamental issues, how will democracy and freedom come to Turkey? In this respect, if they are sincere, if they are truly democrats, if they are truly in favor of freedom, they need to understand this dialectic. This is an equation. Whatever difficulties and problems you have, their source is the lack of resolution of the Kurdish question.

Therefore, such simplistic propaganda statements are also statements that provoke Turkish society. This is, in a sense, anti-Kurdish sentiment. This must be avoided.

### **The philosophical perspective of our Leader**

Leader Apo's intellectual focus is extremely important. In prison—and by reflecting on prisons themselves—he has developed this. Historically, it has been like this: those who remained in prison have turned prisons into places of intellectual deepening, ideological and theoretical development, and personal transformation. The greatest example of this in history is Leader Apo. There are other historical examples, but the most striking is Leader Apo. In the last 10 years, he has gone through a process in which he has conveyed his intensive reflections. His conditions are inadequate—under those inadequate conditions, he is trying to convey 10 years of concentrated thought to the Kurdish people, the peoples of Turkey, and the peoples of the world. Especially his most recent evaluations, and subsequent additions, were also guided by him.

Essentially, there is a philosophical perspective. The Leader evaluates the world, phenomena, socialism, democracy, and the struggle with a new philosophical approach. A philosophical outlook. This is important. When we first waged the struggle for socialism, we read “The Principles of the Philosophy of the Beginning,” then “The Basic Principles of Philosophy,” and “Historical Materialism.” There was Engels' book, “Dialectics of Nature.”

In this way, a philosophical outlook emerged. Of course, in the shortcomings of real socialism, there were also deficiencies in this philosophical view. The Leader also evaluates that. He philosophically assesses the shortcomings and inadequacies of historical materialism. The shortcomings of real socialism stem from there. The Leader has a significant philosophical concentration to correct the philosophical foundations of these deficiencies. He has important evaluations on this matter. Leader Apo says: there are laws of nature, but the laws of the social sphere are not like the laws of nature. There are tendencies. This is an important philosophical approach.

Therefore, the Leader's assessments should of course be read by everyone, discussed, and, if necessary, criticized. If there are deficiencies, they should be pointed out. There is no problem with that. As long as it is done sincerely and in good faith, people may see deficiencies, may criticize, may not fully understand. One must approach it correctly.

I have raised this issue many times in past programs. Repeating exactly what Marx said 150 years later is not loyalty to Marx or Engels. What was the level of physical science 150 years ago, and what is it now? What was the level of social sciences then, and what is it now? There is also important accumulated experi-

ence. Taking all this into account, Leader Apo criticizes the evaluations of Marx and Lenin. This must be understood. Leader Apo does this out of respect for their labor. He does it to create a socialism that is true and effective.

## Criticizing deficiencies

I can say this: today in the world, the most profound, comprehensive, and correct anti-capitalist is truly Leader Apo. He is the most profound, comprehensive communitarian—socialist—in history. That is how we see it. Yes, it can be read and criticized, but there must not be cheap approaches. No propaganda-based approaches. It must be debated, evaluated. In one sense, the Leader has reflected on behalf of everyone. The intense thought processes others should have carried out, Leader Apo has undertaken. We must understand this. His approaches to the new understanding of socialism and the understanding of struggle are like this.

Yes, in the past there were inadequacies, deficiencies. The accumulation was not as developed. Archaeological discoveries are new. In our time, there was Engels' book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. There were the things Morgan wrote about primitive society. Now so much archaeological work has been done—the most recent is Göbeklitepe, and there are others. These inevitably change and will change the way we look at and interpret history. This must be understood in this way.

Otherwise, it is not like this: in Leader Apo's philosophy, approach, there is no intention to lessen the struggle against capitalism, the state, the dictatorships, or to accept them. On the contrary, he exposes their true nature and opens the way for a more effective struggle. He lays their reality bare. In this respect, the Leader's criticisms are justified. Marx opposed capitalism but did not sufficiently evaluate the capitalist system.

In this sense, we must give Leader Apo his due. Leader Apo, let me emphasize again, gives everything its due. He does no injustice to anything. Neither to Lenin, nor to Marx, nor to Engels—to no one. Neither to Jesus, nor to Muhammad, nor to Moses—he wrongs no one. As the saying goes: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's." In leadership, there is such an ethic, such a conscience. But there is also a critical thinking. There is a philosophy of criticizing deficiencies and creating what is right. This is very strong in the Leadership.

Leadership has standards of acceptance and rejection. He does not accept everything. He does not call what is untrue true—he rejects it. For this reason, I especially call on leftist and socialist circles to understand the Leadership more correctly, to give him his due, and to make criticisms not in a propagandistic or emotional way, but constructively. Yes, they can criticize and debate aspects they do not see or understand. We have no issue with that. We have no problem with those who debate. But there must not be approaches that are deliberate, malicious, or ill-intentioned.

## Karasu: Rojhilat forces can present a common program

ANF | 6 JULY 2025

KCK Executive Council member Mustafa Karasu spoke to Medya Haber TV about the Peace and Democratic Society Process, as well as current developments in Kurdistan, Turkey, and the Middle East.

### Criticism to correct shortcomings

There are some negative attitudes. Truly, there has been opposition to the PKK and Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] for 50 years in certain circles. This has not ended for them. In fact, many of the things they say now, they were already saying 50 years ago, 30 years ago, 10 years ago—they still repeat them today. Nothing has changed, according to them. They have not done anything either. They have contributed nothing to humanity, to the Kurdish people, to the struggle for freedom and democracy. But simply because they oppose the PKK and Leader Apo, as the saying goes, they say, “You have an eyebrow above your eye.” There are such people and circles. I don’t want to name names. I looked at one of them and he was truly shameless.

Yes, Leader Apo also began the first Apoist thought by criticizing the Kurds. He did not accept the shortcomings of the Kurds. He was angry at their mistakes and deficiencies. That anger is what made him a great revolutionary leader. That anger has made us great revolutionaries, has put us into the struggle for 50 years. Our anger is great—toward deficiencies, toward mistakes. Firstly, our anger is toward the deficiencies within ourselves. If we don’t correct the shortcomings in ourselves, how will we crush the enemy? How will we repel them? In this regard, they say, “The leadership has criticized this or that part of Kurdish history, has criticized the Kurds.” Yes, he criticizes them; he also criticizes us every day. This is the character of Leader Apo. He does not accept deficiencies. He does not accept mistakes. He will not live side by side with deficiencies or errors. He doesn’t want the Kurds to live side by side with them either. That is why he has now revealed the beautiful Kurd. The Kurd revealed now is the most beautiful people in the world. Yes, there are still shortcomings, inadequacies. There are still collaborators. There is still alienation from Kurdish society, from the reality of Kurdistan. But the Kurd created over these 50 years, the reality of Kurdistan, the reality of Kurdish women, all came into being on the basis of this criticism.

### Leader Apo is trying to create a 'Kurdish thought'

Honestly, when Kurdish men were first criticized, it was very hard for them to accept. Even we were not in a position at first to accept the women’s liberation struggle and to transform ourselves accordingly. Through the leadership’s criticism and insistence, we came to this line. If Kurds are fighting today, if our youth are even more self-sacrificing, if there is such profound patriotism, if Kurds everywhere—in Rojava, Rojhilat, all regions—are in struggle inspired by Leader Apo’s ideas, it is because deficiencies and inadequacies were criticized. To turn this into demagoguery... What Kurdish values were created over 50 years? What emerged? If this struggle hadn’t existed, which of them would have survived? A person should feel some shame when speaking!

From the earliest Hurrians, Gutians, Medes onward, he revealed all the positive values in Kurdish history and made the Kurds visible. There is still a lot yet to be brought to light. He is giving the Kurds a historical foundation. Leader Apo says, “I am trying to create a Kurdish intellect.” This is very important.

In the past, the Kurdish intellect always served others, could not see its own interests, could not serve itself. Now the leadership is creating a Kurdish intellect that will serve itself—and while serving itself, it is not narrow-minded or nationalist—one that will serve not only itself but also all peoples, all humanity. The Kurdish people he seeks are not adversarial, not enemies of others. He is trying to create a Kurdish intellect that will both elevate itself and elevate those around it. All Kurds should strive to understand and learn this Kurdish intellect. In this regard, the criticisms from some Kurdish circles should not be taken seriously at all. They are simply unserious. What are you even talking about? What do you have?

I will say something on this point. Some friends saw this and sent it to me. This Ali Kemal Özcan did an interview on a YouTube channel; there, he supposedly criticizes us. As if we were the ones blocking the leadership’s solution processes and so on.

So that there would not be misunderstandings in society, I said, “Everyone should know that Leader Apo neither deceives nor is deceived. Everyone must know this truth.” The leadership is not one that is deceived or that deceives. I said this openly in the program.

Ali Kemal Özcan comes out and says: “I listened to Karasu. He basically says that they are deceiving our leadership.” What kind of completely reversed interpretation is this? What kind of distorted assessment is this? You were supposedly an academic, a professor. You were supposedly doing research and analysis and telling the truth. Is this how you understand everything you read and hear? I am saying, “This leadership is a leadership that cannot be deceived.” You come and say, “Karasu is saying that our leadership is being deceived.” This shows your level.

I don’t even want to get into his tone. Really, could it be like this? He also says false, fabricated things about other friends. It is clear that he has a prejudice against us, so in his mind, this organization is opposed to Apo... Because he formed such a prejudice, he listens to us and understands the opposite. He should abandon this approach.

Fine, you are making evaluations about the leadership—right or wrong. But to twist a truth to this extent does not suit anyone.

He also said, like some “Rotten Brains,” that I didn’t attend the congress or whatever. He comes out and says, “Karasu did not attend the congress, I hope he is healthy.” Already your mentality is obvious. It means your mind works like those “Rotten Brains.” Just as those Rotten Brains claim Apo is an enemy of the PKK... They think like that. You too are adopting a similar attitude.

On this point, let me say this: Kurds, intellectuals, those who understand correctly, should take a stance against this. Everyone should not find the public arena empty and speak so cheaply. Can such shallow approaches be acceptable? “I don’t know, he didn’t attend the congress, I wonder if he’s well? I hope he is...” says Kemal Özcan. An interesting man, but really—to distort things so much, to work so hard to mislead the public, to create negative perceptions about us... It’s unbelievable!

## Dominant powers don't want chaos Iran

Regarding the new emerging process in the Middle East: What kind of Middle East do they want to create? What do the hegemonic, capitalist powers want to do? This has been explained. In this respect, it has been repeatedly stated that Iran would be next in line. Iran could not correctly assess the developments anyway.

This Hamas incident, Hezbollah attacking Israel, the attacks from Yemen—this was actually Iran cutting the branch it was sitting on, even striking itself. In politics, current developments are assessed based on their concrete conditions—this is called concrete analysis.

In the past, you formed an ideology, a policy. That is separate. Ideological approaches can exist. But Iran was, in the past, a very political society, a political state.

Hezbollah was crushed, Syria fell. The proxy forces were worn down, and thus Iran became a target. Clearly, the US and Israel both showed the attitude: “You will not stand in the way of our Middle East policies. You will comply.” They said, “If you don’t, we will come after you, crush you.”

Now, this reality also exists: Israel is very angry with Iran. The US is very angry too. There are historical reasons why Israel is so furious. It should be known: Perhaps the longest-lasting emotional, strategic relationship in history was between the Jews and the Iranians. The relationship between Persians and Jews is historical. Jews, in some ways, tie their existence to the Iranians. This is also a fact. The Persians played a very important role in the survival of the Jews. They supported them. This became a historical relationship.

When the Iranian Islamic Revolution and later periods became so anti-Israel, Israel felt a great rage: “You turned our historical friend, historical Iran—a society and state with whom we had the best relations—into our enemy. You deprived us of this.” This understanding is what makes them so furious and reactive. So, alongside Israel’s current regional reactions, there are also these reactions based on historical realities.

This is, in a way, also the reaction of the US. Because Iran leans somewhat on the Middle East, on Asia, on Russia. It has such a geopolitical position. They say the same for Turkey, but in fact, Iran’s geopolitical position is also very important. Therefore, they wanted to weaken Iran. They also wanted to subjugate it, but they saw this: If they went too far, chaos and turmoil in Iran would not serve their interests. I also think—they want an intact Iran. An Iran that is tied to them, that plays a role in their strategies. They didn’t dare. They couldn’t risk Iran’s collapse and the uncertainty it would bring, so they stopped. But they did weaken it. Right now, they have been weakened. In fact, from now on, they will try to pursue their policies through this weakened Iran. That is how it appears.

If the Iranian state does not produce creative policies to strengthen itself, it cannot maintain this current state for long.

The same is true for Turkey. They say, “strengthen the domestic front.” How will the domestic front be strengthened? Through democratization. By recognizing and embracing the rights and freedoms of other

communities. For Iran—and Turkey—to strengthen themselves and their domestic fronts, they need democratization.

In fact, Iranian history is inclined toward this. But in recent years, in the recent period, a nation-state mentality has emerged that is distant from their own history. In this sense, Iran's future depends somewhat on its ability to change and transform its policies.

### **Rojhilat forces can present common program**

No doubt, the Middle East is being turned upside down, transforming. Iran too has experienced upheaval, has been weakened. Maybe from now on, it will become even more difficult. In this regard, the approach of the Rojhilat Kurdish forces and all the peoples and democrats of Iran should be to put forward a common program with a democratic understanding—free of nationalism, free of authoritarian approaches towards different religions and ethnicities, seeing them as part of a democratic system, with the perspective of democratic nation and democratization.

Presenting such a program can also be a program of reconciliation with the state. Just as Leader Apo is currently trying to present and reconcile around such a program in Bakur, in Rojhilat too, with such a program—one that is based on democratizing all of Iran, ensuring the free and democratic life of all different ethnic and religious communities in Iran, their local democracies—they must conduct their struggle and define their stance. This is what Iran needs.

External attacks can happen. Other developments can occur. These are issues beyond their control. But the reason why there are already external attacks on Iran is precisely because Iran does not have such a democratic system, such a democracy. Without being democratic, without relying on the democratic strength of their own society, no one can be anti-imperialist anymore. You cannot resist an external attack just with weapons. The greatest self-defense, the greatest source of resistance, is to reconcile with your own society and become a democratic system.

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## **Foza Yûsif: Policies of exclusion must end for the unity of Syria**

**MANSUR ADALI | HESEKE | 6 JULY 2025**

Despite international rhetoric of inclusion and unity, the political realities of Syria under the new transitional government remain marked by contradictions. The Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria, which has been testing grassroots democratic and multi-ethnic administrative models for over a decade, has so far been systematically excluded from negotiations on the country's future order.

Speaking to ANF, Foza Yûsif, a member of the Presidential Council of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), commented on the political developments in Damascus, the security concerns in light of arbitrary arrests of Kurds, and the pressing question of returning to the Turkish-occupied areas in northern Syria. Her message: anyone who is serious about structural solutions must be prepared to recognize real power relations and existing self-governance structures.

*After the adoption of a transitional constitution in Damascus, a gathering titled “National Dialogue Conference of Syria” was held, within which a transitional government was formed. Despite a previously agreed eight-point accord, you and the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria were excluded from these political processes. Reports indicate that preparations are also underway to establish a nation-wide parliament. Was there any consultation or dialogue with your side in this context?*

As far as we can follow developments, the transitional government is indeed preparing to convene an all-Syrian parliament. Unfortunately, to this day, no formal contact has been made with our negotiating team. Likewise, the democratic institutions of the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria and the civil society people's councils have so far been completely excluded from these consultations.

Already in earlier stages, during and after the proclamation of the transitional constitution, the formation of the government, and the so-called national dialogue conference, a systematic exclusion of our structures could be observed. We have repeatedly analyzed and criticized these shortcomings publicly. Unfortunately, this pattern is repeating itself.

The building of a new, democratically constituted Syria requires a cooperative and inclusive transitional process in which trust can be established between the different political and social actors. The current strategy of exclusion undermines this ambition. It reproduces old patterns of domination and weakens the political coherence of the country. Sustainable stabilization of Syria can only succeed if all social forces, especially those that have been practicing democratic self-administration for years, are included on an equal footing. Only on this basis can viable agreements be reached.

*There are reports that specific people were selectively invited to participate in the planned parliament. How do you assess this selective form of inclusion?*

Indeed, we have received numerous indications that contact was made with individual personalities to persuade them to participate in the planned parliamentary formation. From our perspective, this practice is highly problematic. Such participation on an individual level, without institutional legitimacy and without formal representation of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, runs counter to the claim of democratic inclusion.

We see this as a politically calculated trap: individuals who participate on this basis would not be representing the population or the institutions of our region, but would objectively contribute to marginalizing legitimate democratic structures. That is why we appeal to all intellectuals, activists, and personalities from our region not to follow this strategy.

Our goal remains the construction of a federal, pluralistic, and democratic Syria. For this, political representation, institutional dialogue, and mutual recognition are necessary. Official negotiation structures exist for both the North and East Syria region and for the Kurdish side. Only through dialogue with these bodies can sustainable results be achieved. Any form of individual cooptation, however, weakens the collective political will of our people.

Recently, there have been arbitrary arrests of Kurdish citizens in Damascus and Aleppo without any stated reasons. What is your assessment of these incidents?

The recent arrests of Kurdish citizens in Damascus and Aleppo are cause for great concern. These measures are apparently being carried out without any legal basis and create the sense that the authoritarian practices of the former Syrian regime are returning in a modified form. Public perception is accordingly alarmed.

According to the information available to us, many of these arrests are based on vague or fabricated accusations, such as alleged connections to the Autonomous Administration or to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). This practice is all the more contradictory given that the transitional government itself has reached agreements with the SDF and has partly cooperated with our structures.

The government urgently needs to clarify which forces are behind these repressive measures and to ensure that they are stopped immediately. If this does not happen, distrust of the political process will deepen further. Arbitrary arrests undermine fragile trust, foster social fragmentation, and evoke memories of systematic repression in the past. They are in clear contradiction to a democratically oriented new beginning for Syria.

*You have stated that a commission was established to promote the safe return of the population to occupied areas, especially Afrin and Serêkaniyê. Have there been any concrete steps in this regard yet?*

Although the commission in Damascus initially promised a meeting after the Eid al-Adha holiday, the body intended for Afrin has so far not commenced its work. Despite repeated offers for dialogue, there has been no response from the transitional government to date. This is negatively affecting the already tense situation.

The question of return for displaced persons is a central challenge for the entire Syrian state. All displaced people, particularly those from Afrin, Serêkaniyê, and Girê Spî, must be able to return to their home regions in dignity and safety. So far, however, there are no reliable initiatives in this regard.

The ongoing human rights violations in Afrin, including arbitrary arrests, extortion, and violence, show that a safe return process is not yet guaranteed. Therefore, the appointed commissions must convene without delay and jointly develop measures for security, infrastructure, and social stability. Unilateral steps will not bring a sustainable solution. On the contrary, the population living there has suffered multiple displacements and is living in precarious conditions. The responsibility of the transitional government is evident.

*Is there anything else you want to add?*

All political and social forces in Syria are called upon to take responsibility for building a democratic, pluralistic, and stable state. It requires a collective commitment to dialogue, understanding, and political inclusion. Any practice that weakens, obstructs, or reverses the construction of this new Syria must be avoided. Our common goal must be to create a political order that guarantees the rights of all peoples and communities, within the framework of justice, equality, and self-determination.



## Imret shares outcomes of talks with German officials

MUHAMMED KAYA | BERLIN | 5 JULY 2025

Leyla Imret, co-representative of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) in Germany and a member of the delegation that met with German authorities last week, said the meetings were very positive.

Tuncer Bakırhan, co-chair of the DEM Party, held several meetings in Germany and the United Kingdom (UK) last week. The delegation led by Bakırhan met in Berlin with representatives of political foundations affiliated with German parties, civil society organizations, political party officials, and representatives from the Federal Foreign Office, including senior advisors. In addition to holding a public panel and two community meetings in Berlin, Bakırhan was accompanied by Germany co-representative Leyla Imret, who responded to questions from ANF about the meetings.

*Can you share some details about the meetings and gatherings in Berlin?*

A new government has recently taken office in Germany. Our goal was to strengthen our relations with the newly elected administration and to share information about the historic process we are currently going through. We also held meetings with our sister parties, civil society foundations, and especially with our community in Berlin. The aim was clear: this process, initiated by Abdullah Öcalan, is a democratic society initiative, a project to build a democratic society. The intention was both to explain this initiative and to ensure public awareness and participation. Alongside that, we held diplomatic meetings to convey these developments.

*What issues stood out during the meetings? How did your counterparts approach the process?*

Overall, their approach was positive. They expressed their support for the process initiated by Mr. Öcalan. Regarding the February 27 call in particular, they said, “we are following it with attention and appreciation.” Over the past ten years, the Turkish state has waged an intense war against the Kurdish people and especially against our political party. There have been mass arrests, the appointment of government trustees, arbitrary and anti-democratic practices. Despite all this, they told us, “You are extending a hand for peace. So far, the Kurdish side has taken very significant steps. What is the purpose behind this?” They were trying to understand. There were also questions such as, “Is there something going on behind the scenes? Has peace already been established? Is there enough trust to justify these steps?” Still, they saluted and welcomed the process. In fact, all of our counterparts, from political parties to government representatives, including officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had already issued a public statement following Öcalan’s call on February 27, and they reiterated their support during our meetings. They said, “We welcome this call and, if there is any role we can play, we are ready to take responsibility.” They repeated this several times in our discussions. They also asked us directly: “Is there a request for a third-party monitoring mechanism? If such a request comes from either side, we are ready to take part as observers.”

*Did they express a willingness to observe or monitor the process?*

Yes. They stated that if a request came either from the Kurdish Freedom Movement or from the Turkish government, they would accept it. They said, “We are ready.”

*Was this proposal brought forward by the government?*

Yes, it was also a proposal from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so we can say it reflects the government’s position. The other political parties and civil society organizations we met with also conveyed this proposal to us. We explained that steps are currently being taken toward the establishment of a parliamentary commission in Turkey, and that such a commission should assume the legal and constitutional responsibility to oversee and guide necessary changes. At the same time, we took note of their offer and acknowledged that, should both sides agree, there is already international interest in playing such a role.

Of course, we also had questions. We conveyed to both the political parties and government officials we met with that Germany could revise its domestic policy towards the Kurds. We stressed that ending the criminalization of the Kurdish people living in Germany would contribute meaningfully to the process and serve its goals.

*What did your counterparts say about the issue of criminalization?*

MPs from the Left Party had previously submitted a parliamentary question to the Bundestag on this matter. During our meeting, they said it was not currently on their agenda but that they would monitor how it develops and is implemented in practice. Germany and Turkey have a long and historically rooted relationship. Any political development in Turkey eventually has an impact here as well. That is why the conclusion we drew from our meetings is that this policy may take some time to change. Still, there was an overall positive atmosphere.

*You also held two community meetings in Berlin. How did the community respond to the process? What kind of questions were raised?*

Naturally, the community wants to understand the process. People trust themselves, their movement, and their leader (Abdullah Öcalan) but there are still many unanswered questions, which is entirely understandable. For a hundred years, the Kurdish people and the Alevi community have been subjected to policies of violence and massacres. The government has not taken any concrete steps that would satisfy society. People are demanding the physical freedom of Mr. Öcalan. They are calling for the release of prisoners and expect legal and constitutional reforms. These are the kinds of questions being raised. In order to believe the government is sincere, people are demanding practical steps. On the one hand, there are ongoing talks; on the other, people are asking: why are there attacks on the guerrillas? Is Erdoğan approaching this process positively or negatively? These are the concerns they want answers to.

# Opinion

## The PKK's expected statement, and AKP with CHP targeting media

ALI HAYBERİ | 7 JULY 2025

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, much like its predecessors, has not refrained from resorting to special warfare methods against society. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that it has performed even worse than those before it in this regard.

Despite a century of republican experience and the wealth of institutional knowledge within the state, the AKP has managed to use state resources for its own benefit more skillfully than the members of the Republican People's Party (CHP). In this context, it is often said that they have made even the notorious actions of the Gülen Movement seem mild by comparison.

It is clear that methods have been employed which leave many stunned in disbelief. Particularly in recent times, the developments unfolding in this area are far more striking than before and deserve close attention.

As is known, the judiciary under the AKP has made a sudden decision to suspend the broadcasts of two television channels, Halk TV and Sözcü TV, that are known to operate in line with the CHP. According to available information, both channels are expected to be taken off the air on the evening of July 8. Unless there is a last-minute change of decision, neither will be broadcasting on July 9.

Naturally, this news brings to mind previous government decisions and policies targeting the free press, even though Halk TV and Sözcü TV may not fully fall into that category.

For example, in the 1990s, it is well documented that the state attempted to silence the free press by directly murdering journalists and bombing newspaper offices. The newspaper Özgür Gündem and the tradition that followed it serve as concrete examples. Dozens of writers, reporters, editors, and distributors were murdered; newspapers were shut down, and every method was used to prevent them from publishing.

Journalists and press workers such as Musa Anter, Metin Göktepe, Hüseyin Deniz, Cengiz Altun, Hafız Akdemir, Nazım Babaoğlu, Ferhat Tepe, Adil Başkan, Yahya Yaşa, Halil Adanır, and Orhan Karaağar were among the hundreds deliberately targeted and murdered during this period.

This era can be described as a time when the free press was subjected to physical attacks and outright assassinations.

## 2002–2010: The era of controlled repression

Undoubtedly, attacks against the free press continued during the rule of the AKP. The period between 2002 and 2010, however, carries a unique character. These were the years when the AKP portrayed itself as pro-European Union and relatively democratic, essentially marketing itself here and there as a “libertarian” party.

Various “initiatives” were constantly on the agenda: the Kurdish initiative, the Alevi initiative, the Roma initiative, and so on. Yet behind the scenes, a very different mechanism was in motion. There was a deliberate effort to silence the free press. The main method was to obstruct media outlets through the instrumentalization of the legal system.

Due to the European Union accession process and similar concerns, directly targeting or arresting journalists was limited. However, attacks against the free press continued in different forms. The most common method was to suspend publications or shut them down entirely through court rulings.

A long list can be compiled of the publications that were attacked, obstructed, or shut down during that period. The reason for presenting this list is as follows: the AKP’s early years are often portrayed in society as a period in which freedoms were expanded and democratic space was opened. However, the reality tells quite the opposite story. Some of the publications targeted during this so-called liberal era include:

Yeniden Özgür Gündem (2 September 2002 – 28 February 2004), Ülkede Özgür Gündem (1 March 2004 – 16 November 2006), Toplumsal Demokrasi (16 November 2006 – 5 January 2007), Gündem (17 January 2007 – 16 December 2007), Güncel (19 March – 17 October 2007), Yaşamda Gündem (9 March – 12 March 2007),

Gerçek Demokrasi (October – 21 November 2007), Yedinci Gün (5 November 2007 – 8 October 2008), Yaşamda Demokrasi (15 December 2007 – 4 April 2008), Toplumsal Demokrasi 2 (22 December 2007 – 25 February 2008), Öteki Bakış (31 March – 4 April 2008), Yeni Bakış (14 April – 8 May 2008), Alternatif (19 May 2008 – 20 October 2009), Gelecek (28 May – 27 September 2008), Özgür Ülke (30 September – 1 October 2008), Gerçek (12 – 18 October 2008), Ülkeye Bakış (12 – 18 October 2008), the weekly newspaper Yeni Mezopotamya (22 October 2008), Politika (22 October 2008 – 14 February 2009), Analiz (8 November 2008 – 28 February 2009), Ayrıntı (29 November 2008 – 28 March 2009), Özgür Yorum (21 December 2008 – 14 March 2009), and Günlük (9 January 2009 – 4 April 2011).

Özgür Gündem was relaunched on 4 April 2011; on 24 March 2012, it was shut down for 30 days, and the newspapers printed at the printing house the following day were confiscated. Özgür Mezopotamya (11 April 2009) received three separate shutdown orders, each lasting 39 days. Özgür Görüş (18 April 2009) was issued four separate shutdown orders, each for 30 days. Süreç (13 June 2009) was shut down once for 15 days and twice for 30 days. Özgür Halk Tavrı (20 June 2009) was banned for 39 days. Siyasi Alternatif (6 June 2009) faced two shutdown orders, each lasting 30 days.

Özgür Ortam (27 June 2009) received two shutdown orders, each lasting 30 days. Haftalık Yorum (7 February 2010) was ordered to be confiscated for 30 days. Yorum (27 March 2010) was banned twice, each time for 30 days. Politik Yorum (3 April 2010) received one shutdown order lasting 39 days. Ülkede Yo-

rum (20 April 2010) was banned for 30 days. Demokratik Açılım (26 August 2009) was subjected to a 38-day shutdown order.

### **Post-2010: The brazenness of power**

The period following 2010 marks a distinct shift. This was when the AKP secured its position through the constitutional referendum, and the steps it took from then on reflected that confidence. In 2011, under what was called the “KCK Press Case,” a large-scale wave of arrests targeted journalists in Northern Kurdistan (Bakur) and Turkey, journalists who, in many ways, upheld the dignity of the profession. Dozens were detained, many were imprisoned, and numerous media outlets were shut down.

The arrested journalists were kept in prison for years based on indictments lacking any substantive content, in an attempt to silence dissenting voices. Although some were released in 2014 under the influence of the ongoing political process, their return to journalism was short-lived. In 2015, the collapse of the peace process, and in 2016, the staged coup attempt, opened the door to a new wave of repression against the free press. Dozens of TV channels, newspapers, magazines, news agencies, radio stations, and digital platforms were shut down.

Among those closed were IMC TV, Azadi TV, Özgür Gün TV, Van TV, Jiyan TV, Özgürlükçü Demokrasi newspaper, Azadiya Welat newspaper, Radyo Ses, Radyo Rengin, and Radyo Karacadağ, to name just a few.

It should also be noted that during this period, the assets of the closed media outlets were confiscated, an act that amounts to outright legal plunder. Even after more than a decade, the confiscated properties of these outlets have still not been returned to their rightful owners.

### **The darkest period**

The period from 2016 to the present can be described as the darkest era under the current government. During this time, journalism in the true sense of the word and independent broadcasting have been effectively banned. No media outlet outside of those aligned with the government has been allowed to operate. In place of yesterday’s “military-backed media,” a new palace-controlled media structure has been constructed. Although this policy suffered a significant blow with the local elections held in 2024, it has continued to exist in a more subtle form to this day.

In this period, not only the free Kurdish press but the entire opposition media has been targeted by the government. Media outlets affiliated with the CHP, perhaps for the first time in the history of the republic, have been subjected to such an intense campaign of intimidation and suppression.

At present, the government has declared war not only on traditional media but also on digital platforms that are equally influential. Posts made on platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook are now considered grounds for prosecution. Even the simplest statement or post criticizing the government can result in immediate arrest and imprisonment. Fatih Altaylı, even though he is widely known as someone aligned with the deep state, is among those who have been detained under this crackdown.

## **What is the AKP's objective?**

Undoubtedly, every time the government has attacked the free and opposition press, it has had a specific objective and if it is attacking now, it has one again. In 2016, after targeting the Free Press and shutting down all media outlets, the government immediately turned to civil society organizations, associations, and foundations, silencing them as well. That was not enough. It then targeted the leadership of political parties. A wave of repression was launched to ensure that not a single person engaged in political activity or production remained untouched. Thousands of influential and authorized individuals within political party leaderships and municipalities were arrested and imprisoned. A significant number of them remain behind bars to this day.

Through this strategy, the government aimed to silence opposition voices in both the media and politics, to eliminate them if possible and thus win over the majority of society. However, when looking at the situation today, it is clear that this goal has not been achieved. The most-watched media outlets in Turkey are those that oppose the government. This fact is confirmed by both public opinion polling data and the mood on the streets.

Naturally, this leads to a pressing question: Why now? Why is the government moving to black out Halk TV and Sözcü TV? What does it not want people to see? What is it trying to hide from the public?

## **What is the connection between blacking out Halk TV and Sözcü TV and the ongoing process?**

There will certainly be different interpretations; other reasons can no doubt be proposed. For instance, such a move may have been taken, at least temporarily, to cover up the truth in preparation for a broader operation against the CHP.

However, the fact that the broadcasts of both television channels are being suspended specifically on Tuesday evening seems to carry a particular significance. As is known, the main topic in the media these days is the expected disarmament of PKK members. Zagros Hiwa, spokesperson for the KCK Press Office, recently stated that this step, described as a declaration of intent, is expected to be made within a few days, specifically between 10 and 12 July.

Meanwhile, Halk TV and Sözcü TV are being taken off the air from the evening of 8 July until the morning of 9 July. It is clear that there is a link between these two developments. Seeing and interpreting this connection is not difficult.

The real question, or rather, the issue that requires analysis, is why the government specifically does not want these two media outlets to report on the ceremony and the discussions that will follow. It is well known that these two channels have strongly criticized the AKP for the way it has handled the ongoing process. In fact, they have frequently “stoned” it, so to speak. It is also clear that, at times, they operate with a classic anti-Kurdish reflex and present a traditionally Kemalist stance.

But is this alone the reason for the suspension decision? Is it only to prevent criticism of the AKP? Or are there other motives at play?

For example, could it be that there is fear these two outlets, however limited, might actually reflect what is happening as it is? It is well known that the AKP is attempting to frame the expected announcement as an act of “surrender” and is working hard to present it that way. However, the PKK insists that this is not the case and that the process will move forward through reciprocal steps from both sides. Naturally, the resulting public image may not align with what AKP circles want to see.

One might recall how the AKP-aligned media initially chose to ignore the Kurdish National Unity Conference held in Qamishlo. But when the CHP-aligned media reported on the conference and its outcomes from their own perspective, the AKP media was forced to cover it as well and soon after, launched its attacks.

It seems a similar fear is at play again today. Time will tell.

Ultimately, it is not possible to separate these broadcast bans from the broader political process currently underway. The AKP-MHP government wants everything, including the media, to remain under its control. It seeks to prevent any dissenting views or alternative perspectives from reaching the public. Clearly, at a time when discussions around democracy and peace are at their most intense, the policy being followed is one of uniformity, self-centeredness, and authoritarianism.

For this reason, resisting this blackout at every level and in every form and exposing it is not only a duty of the free press, but also a necessity for anyone who claims to be a democrat.

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## Akay: Peace process cannot be reduced to ill prisoners

ANF | MÜS | 9 JULY 2025

There are 1,500 ill prisoners in Turkish prisons, 600 of them in critical condition, according to data from the Human Rights Association (İHD). Along with the call for peace, people expecting concrete steps frequently state that the first step should be the release of ill prisoners.

Soydan Akay, one of the ill prisoners released after 32 years in prison, said that the government aims to overshadow the real agenda by shaping all public discourse around ill prisoners. Akay stated that “the peace process cannot be reduced to prisons,” and emphasized that social dynamics need to carry out effective work on this issue.

Soydan Akay (49) was arrested in İzmir in 1993 on the allegation of being the “Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) Aegean Region Officer.” He was sentenced to life imprisonment by the State Security Court (DGM). Akay was held in prison for 32 years and was transferred between the prisons of İzmir, Aydın, Nazilli, Kırıklar, Siirt (Sêrt), Diyarbakır (Amed), Maltepe, and Silivri.

After the coup attempt on 15 July 2016, Soydan Akay was transferred from Silivri Prison to Maltepe Prison, where he was placed in the ward of judicial detainees. He was attacked shortly thereafter. He was then transferred back to Silivri Prison, where, despite not having an aggravated life sentence, he was placed in a solitary cell.

In 2018, Akay was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He also suffers from rheumatism, hepatitis B, and heart spasms. For these reasons, he was included in the IHD's list of ill prisoners. Nevertheless, despite not having an aggravated life sentence, he was held in a single cell for seven years.

Although the conditions for conditional release were met in 2023, Soydan Akay's release was postponed four times by the Execution and Observation Board (IGK). He was released from Silivri Prison on Monday, 12 May.

Akay spoke to ANF, evaluating the situation of ill prisoners in prisons and the ongoing process following the call for peace.

### **The government is deliberately keeping it in limbo**

Soydan Akay stated that the issue of ill prisoners is a humanitarian and moral matter and added that no new legal regulation is needed to resolve it. He said: "There is no need for any law. This is entirely a matter of implementation. If the government wants to, it can resolve it in two days. The current administration is consciously keeping this issue in limbo."

### **The peace process is not a matter tied to prisons**

Akay said the government wants to constantly turn the issue of ill prisoners into a bargaining chip.

Akay said: "They are making political calculations. By dragging it out, they want to turn this issue into a bargaining tool with the Kurds and democratic forces during election periods." He stressed that the release of ill prisoners is essential, but the peace process cannot be reduced to this issue alone.

Akay added: "They want to use it for election bargaining with the Kurds and democratic forces as much as possible. That is the main point. Secondly, this process is truly a process of struggle. The peace process is not something where all negotiations have been made, all preparations completed, and everything resolved directly. It is a process of struggle. The government is also holding onto this issue on a psychological level, trying to draw all attention to the prisons." He said the government is using the matter as a psychological tool to distract society.

### **The resisting spirit of the prisons must be made visible**

Soydan Akay said the conditions in prisons are extremely poor, which is why illnesses have come to the forefront. He emphasized that what truly needs to be brought into view is the spirit of resistance inside. He described the atmosphere inside the prison and said: "What should be highlighted about our comrades is their fighting spirit. They are hopeful, cheerful, and smiling people. That's how we are even within four walls. Everyone inside, despite their illnesses, maintains a strong and dignified stance. It is a space of resistance. Whether ill or not, everyone inside wants to live with dignity, to research, to think, and to show a



sensitive attitude toward society and politics. Those who are released come out with high morale. They never bow down in any way.”

### **Social forces must take responsibility**

Akay said the peace process should be approached from a broad democratization perspective and criticized the government for trying to obscure the real issues by directing all attention toward ill prisoners.

Akay said: “All attention has been drawn to ill prisoners. Among the people, a perception is being created: ‘If ill prisoners are released, the problem will be solved, peace will come.’ But this is part of a much larger struggle. Instead of waiting for the government to take action, social forces need to develop more sensitive and concrete projects in this area. Otherwise, this problem will remain on the agenda continuously in the future.

The real aim is to obscure the field of democratization. The peace process is not something entirely tied to prisons. Nor can it be reduced to ill prisoners. This is a process of struggle.”

In his final remarks, Akay said that the problems experienced both inside and outside are part of the same whole. He renewed his call and said, “Those who are imprisoned are an expression of our social reality. They are also a truth of the struggle. This issue must be approached not only emotionally, but also from a political and social perspective.”



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