

# The essence and class character of the “Opening”: What do we oppose and why?

## DIP (Revolutionary Workers’ Party)

*This declaration of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party (DIP) (Turkey) regarding what the despotic regime calls “Turkey without terrorism” process was published on the 25th of June, 2025. This so-called opening process was named by the Kurdish movement as the “Peace and Democratic Society” process, but DIP defines it as a colonialist “oil opening” under the auspices of colonial capital and imperialism. Since then, a group of PKK fighters burned their weapons in a symbolic ceremony, and a parliamentary commission aiming to varnish the process, part of a PR campaign run by the despotic regime, convened on August 5th. DIP painstakingly follows these developments, and will go on warning Turkish and Kurdish working classes and toiler masses.*

The process initiated by Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the MHP (Nationalist Action Party), the foremost fascist party in Turkey and the president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s ally, in his parliamentary speech and carried forward by Abdullah Öcalan’s, i.e. the party’s imprisoned historic leader’s call for dissolution and disarmament

ment has entered a new phase with the PKK's Extraordinary 12<sup>th</sup> Congress decision to dissolve the party and end the armed struggle. This process is described by the state as a "Turkey without terrorism," and by the PKK and Öcalan as an initiative for "a peaceful and democratic society." Neither characterization reflects the true nature of the process. On the contrary, both serve to conceal and obscure its real essence. From the very beginning, the Revolutionary Workers' Party (DIP) in Turkey has stated that this process is neither about terrorism nor peace. At its core, it is driven by the colonialist bourgeoisie's interests and their expansionist policies/dreams under the protection of imperialism, opening the door to new wars. Behind the PKK's decision to dissolve its organizational structure and end its armed struggle lies an orientation toward aligning all components of the Kurdish movement with these interests and policies. It is these interests and policies that determine the entire process and will continue to do so in the future.

Therefore, it is incorrect to label the current developments as a "peace process" or a "Kurdish opening" implying that the aim is a resolution to the Kurdish question. It is far more accurate to interpret and characterize the initiatives stretching back to the 1990s, ultimately, as "oil openings." Throughout this article, we will try to explain why this designation is more appropriate. Hence, when we refer to the current political developments as a "process" or "opening," we understand the underlying content not as a "solution," but as a pursuit of "oil." Opposition to this process is not about advocating for military solutions to the Kurdish question or being against peace. Rather, it is about taking a stand against the interests and expansionist policies of the colonialist bourgeoisie. These policies are contrary to the interests of workers, laborers, and the poor from all nations and lands. The relationship of this process to peace and democracy is limited to using these concepts as masks to cover up reactionary, expansionist, and imperialist aims.

On one hand, the state side presents the "Turkey without terrorism" process as a state policy, bringing together the government and opposition fronts along with the entire bourgeois political actors into a unified position. On the other hand, the Kurdish movement assigns its allies, primarily leftist movements, the mission of supporting and advancing the process according to its own demands. Initially, an atmosphere was created as if, unlike previous opening processes, everything had been pre-arranged and settled, and unless there was resistance from within or external intervention, the completion of the process was virtually guaranteed. However, it quickly became apparent that the reality was anything but. The state, in its official statements, demands unconditional dissolution of the PKK. Although the PKK held its 12<sup>th</sup> Congress and decided on dissolution and ending the armed struggle, the resolution text includes conditions such as having Öcalan lead the process, and pragmatically, the only concrete decision was formulated in a way that leaves their

hands free: “We have ended the activities carried out under the name PKK.”

It is evident that Bahçeli has not been able to convince or engage Erdoğan and the AKP as well as the factions within the military establishment aligned with the semi-military regime with the same level of success. The Ministry of Defense declares that “operations continue without pause to reduce the PKK’s operational capacity to zero,” and there are assessments from the PKK that armed clashes are ongoing. While the state expects practical steps toward disarmament, PKK statements emphasize that this can only be achieved under Öcalan’s direct leadership. The judiciary package presented to parliament by the AKP came in a very limited form, prompting a sharp reaction from the DEM Party, which stated that “the mountain labored and failed to bring forth even a mouse.” Expected legal reforms that could ensure the release of numerous political prisoners, the removal of the state-assigned trustees from the municipalities initially ruled by the DEM Party, or placing Öcalan under house arrest (likely still on İmralı Island, where his current prison is located) have either not been implemented or are proceeding at a snail’s pace, while the despotic regime continues its oppressive and arbitrary practices unabated. The form of despotic regime is clearly pursuing a hostage negotiation strategy.

Statements by high-ranking PKK leaders such as Bese Hozat, Duran Kalkan, and Murat Karayılan appearing in the press demand that the state must take steps, especially regarding Öcalan’s freedom, for the dissolution and disarmament process to advance. These statements not only express demands but also emphasize that the PKK’s technological and combat capabilities have increased in recent times. In particular, Bese Hozat claims that “only leader Apo [an shorthand for the name Abdullah] can take the weapons away from the hands of the fighters”, while implying in the same statement that if the PKK continues the war, it could receive support from the U.S. and Israel. With the escalation of the Israel-Iran war, the tendency to delay the disarmament process and “evaluate options” depending on the course of the war is increasingly being voiced by various actors.

Shifting our gaze towards the socialist movement, the left that has long merged into the Kurdish movement has passively embedded itself into the process through the DEM Party. With a stagist understanding, those leftists who place solving the Kurdish problem and democratization above any class struggle have unconditionally supported the process by internalizing the illusion that it aims to solve the Kurdish issue and bring peace. Uncannily, even leftist factions with social-chauvinist tendencies converge with these groups in supporting the process. The left, having practically dissolved itself within the Kurdish movement, reaches this conclusion under the illusion that the process will solve the Kurdish question, while social-chauvinists hope that the Kurdish movement will be liquidated. They believe that the main obstacle to reaching the working class and laboring masses will be re-

moved in this way.

Both orientations are patently wrong. Above all, Turkish socialists bear internationalist responsibility toward the oppressed Kurdish people. Regardless of any secret or open negotiation processes, Kurdish rights must be defended unconditionally within the framework Lenin laid out: full equality of nations and languages. Even if the Kurdish movement, for whatever reason or as a result of certain bargains, gives up on its legitimate demands, Turkish socialists must embrace and unconditionally defend the demands of the oppressed Kurdish workers, laborers, and poor peasants. On the other hand, socialists can and should have their own conditions based on the interests of workers and laborers from all nations. In the context of an open war centered on U.S. and Israeli aggression in West Asia (the Middle East), discussing concepts like peace or disarmament without addressing Turkey's NATO membership and its hosting of imperialist/Zionist military bases such as Incirlik and Kürecik is either naive or a consciously opportunist stance.

None can ask or expect unconditional support from socialists, who have no interest other than those of the working class and the oppressed. They cannot be held responsible for obstructing or undermining the process. If the process, already hanging by a thread, is to be disrupted or collapsed, it will be due to conflicts and rivalries among the colonialist bourgeoisie, imperialism, and their local collaborators. There can be no realistic peace project that does not involve the removal of imperialist bases and soldiers from our region, including genocidal killing machines like Zionist Israel. Of course, Turkish socialists have as their primary duty to defend the rights of the Kurdish people while also prioritizing the uncompromising struggle for Turkey's withdrawal from NATO and the closure of imperialist bases. Of course, a consistent internationalism requires critiquing the Kurdish movement's positions accordingly, and clearly condemning any orientation that becomes a tool of imperialist or Zionist plans over the Kurdish people under the guise of "peace," "democratic society," and so on.

### **Above all, secret diplomacy must be rejected!**

The process is being carried out entirely through secret diplomacy. The state, using the rhetoric of "Turkey without terrorism," talks of unconditional dissolution and disarmament of the PKK without any negotiations. Öcalan's statements and the DEM Party delegations visiting İmralı, where Öcalan is kept, also align with this narrative. Even the PKK Congress resolution makes no reference to any negotiations or bargaining process. Yet, official and unofficial delegations are constantly shuttling between the parties. It is also a public secret that this traffic began long before Bahçeli initiated the opening in the fall. Despite this, the persistent denial of "any negotiations" has only one meaning: to conceal the content of the talks from

Turkish and Kurdish toilers. The results of secret diplomacy are being presented to us abruptly, as if independent of any bargaining. For example, although it falls far short of the Kurdish movement’s expectations, the new parole regulation in the 10<sup>th</sup> judicial package presented to the parliament clearly appears to be part of a hostage negotiation. Likewise, it is obvious that a bargain over municipality trustees is ongoing. Secret diplomacy creates such a mystical aura that people begin to expect democratic reforms and legal changes even in the absence of any promises from the state. However, such expectations are illusory and serve only to create inertia among the working people.

Any actor positioning itself in relation to this process, if it considers the interests of Turkish and Kurdish workers and poor people, must above all reject secret diplomacy. Not only the state but also various components of the Kurdish movement argue that, because conditions are delicate and previous initiatives were sabotaged, secret diplomacy is necessary to ensure a healthy process and to prevent manipulation. We see that some leftist/socialist organizations also consider secret diplomacy natural and necessary, and refrain from criticizing it. Yet, rejection of secret diplomacy is a historic principle of the socialist movement. Secret diplomacy is not a means of preventing manipulation of a political process. On the contrary, it is the very foundation for illegitimate and malevolent interventions and manipulations that must be hidden from the masses because they are contrary to their interests.

### **The aim of the opening is neither the resolution of the Kurdish issue nor democratization**

It is common to link the resolution of the Kurdish issue to Turkey’s democratization. Of course, if the Kurds are to lean towards a voluntary union as an equal and free people, concrete requirements have to be fulfilled. But the aim and objective of the current process is not to resolve the Kurdish question. Öcalan, in his first statement, declared that the Kurdish issue was largely resolved, citing vague concepts like “the end of identity denial and progress in freedom of expression.” Yet, at the time of this statement, made in February 2025, prisons were full of people jailed precisely for exercising freedom of expression. Moreover, following the arrest of Ekrem İmamoğlu, the main challenger of Erdoğan for presidency and the current mayor of Istanbul, on March 19, the despotic regime further stepped up repression, and prisons became ever more crowded. In this very period, the DEM Party delegation meeting with Erdoğan described the encounter as:

“Extremely positive, constructive, productive, and hopeful for the future... As of today, we are more hopeful than we were yesterday, and we are honored to share this with our nation.”

No one knows what was discussed or what promises gave the delegation such hope. Clearly, there is a contradiction between the regime's repressive actions and these hopeful statements. "Secret diplomacy" is used to create the illusion that these contradictions will somehow be resolved over time in favor of democracy and freedoms.

It is extremely important to remember how the earlier opening process collapsed in 2015. The AKP side blamed the declaration of Selahattin Demirtaş, who was then the leader of the DEM Party's predecessor but is now imprisoned, that went as "we will not let you become president" for the process breaking down. Over time, the Kurdish movement implicitly accepted this thesis, and discussions emerged over whether that statement was a tactical mistake. At the heart of the matter is this question: Will the Kurdish movement conduct the opening with the current regime or with a prospective future government? At that time, minutes from meetings show that Öcalan had expressed willingness to support Erdoğan's presidency. Demirtaş's "we will not let you become president" meant choosing to conduct the opening with forces opposed to the AKP and likely to come to power. This stance resonated with the Kurdish movement's base and proved realistic, as seen in the June 2015 elections when Erdoğan's AKP lost its parliamentary majority. After Demirtaş's statement, the AKP aligned with factions in the military associated with those brought before the court as part of Ergenekon-Balyoz trials that once aimed to purge the state apparatus and the military from forces hostile to Erdoğan, and this rapprochement solidified into a political alliance with the MHP. The opening gave way to war, and the snap November 1 elections restored the AKP to single-party rule, fundamentally changing the balance of power. Following the July 15, 2016 coup attempt, the semi-military regime suffocated the political line represented by Demirtaş's declaration.

As the 2024 local elections approached, Demirtaş made several moves indicating his new stance more closely aligned with Öcalan. Nevertheless, the political position he abandoned continued to be held up by DEM under the guise of the "urban consensus", which came to be an unofficial alliance between the DEM Party and the CHP on municipal level. Demirtaş's introduction of his wife Başak Demirtaş as a strong candidate for Istanbul clearly represented a divergence from the "urban consensus," manifesting a third-way political line. However, during the local elections, the "urban consensus" policy dominated, resulting in the AKP experiencing the most significant electoral defeat in its history. The CHP managed to capture major metropolitan municipalities and emerged as the leading party. Throughout this period, the DEM Party secured significant positions in various municipalities, most notably in Esenyurt, as well as within the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

and other municipal councils and organizational structures. From the viewpoint of the front of the despotic regime, which clearly worked on the opening initiative well before 2024, the “urban consensus” policy appeared as an updated iteration of the previous “we will not let you become president” stance.

### **An oppressive and arbitrary regime is not contradictory to the opening process, it is a part of it and integral to it**

Certainly, there are some differences. Erdoğan is now “the president.” For Erdoğan and the AKP, this new status introduced opportunities to diversify their alliance strategies through a relaxation or normalization phase. However, Bahçeli and one wing of the semi-military regime have obstructed these strategies with their initiatives. Operations and trustee appointments to the municipalities controlled by the opposition, spanning from Esenyurt Municipality to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality systematically destroyed the bridges formed around both the CHP-DEM Party “urban consensus” and the AKP-CHP relaxation/normalization axis. Despite oppressive and arbitrary methods that weaponized the judiciary and police, both CHP and the DEM party maintained separate positions of “support.” For instance, in his recent statements, Demirtaş explicitly adopted terms such as “strengthening the internal front” and “our surname is Turkey,” aligning with full support for the ruling party while simultaneously demanding an end to arbitrary practices. According to Demirtaş, oppressive practices do not serve the purpose of strengthening the internal front or enhancing the sense of justice. His statements implicitly reveal that democratization is not necessarily integral or required within the current process. Demirtaş’s “full support” stance primarily stems from geopolitical developments in West Asia and efforts toward defining a shared internal and external political trajectory. It became so clear that an alliance-based political approach had replaced the previous “peace negotiations” model that Demirtaş felt compelled to include a disclaimer at the end of his statement, asserting that none of his points are meant to obstruct polite, democratic opposition internally.

Thus, the deepening authoritarianism is not contradictory to Bahçeli initiated “opening”; rather, it is a necessary component and will continue accordingly. For example, within the framework of the 10<sup>th</sup> judicial reform package, the release of numerous prisoners convicted in PKK-related cases is being discussed. Concurrently, the AKP is attempting to include clauses in the same package that simplify the justification of arrests for participating in demonstrations, fundamentally a part of freedom of expression. This contradiction is consistent rather than anomalous. Similarly, the advancement of the “opening” could lead to situations where someone like İmamoğlu would face prolonged incarceration instead of gaining conditional release. Likewise, Kurdish movement members voicing skepticism and criticism,

or exploring alternative political avenues, are highly likely to confront oppressive measures rather than enjoy genuine freedom of expression.

A similar dynamic unfolded after the 2019 local elections when Erdoğan, having lost Istanbul to İmamoğlu, promoted concepts such as “cooling the hot iron” and a “Turkey alliance.” This pursuit abruptly ended symbolically when Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the CHP leader at the time, was physically attacked during a military funeral in Çubuk, Ankara. Subsequently, Erdoğan refrained from employing the “Turkey alliance” rhetoric. Nationalist fervor, driven by the fascist party, further inflamed tensions. The current era’s symbolic moment was the slap received by Özgür Özel, the current CHP leader, at the funeral of DEM party MP and İmralı negotiation committee member Sırrı Süreyya Önder. This assault clearly targeted the CHP-DEM party axis, represented through the “urban consensus,” which had become a substantial alternative to the government after the recent local elections. Despite the front of the despotic regime’s vocal praise for the late Önder, the CHP leader Özel was starkly excluded from this picture. A week later, Erdoğan underscored his message by asserting that the “CHP must normalize” and advising them to return to the national agenda. Until the CHP fully abandons the “urban consensus” and relinquishes the İmamoğlu case, aligning itself completely within the dictated framework, it will remain under pressure.

Following the 2023 and 2024 general and local elections, the MHP, whose central political position was significantly shaken and whose influence within police and judiciary had waned, seems to have regained initiative through the Öcalan “opening.” Within this initiative, Bahçeli is now being portrayed as a democratic hero, with supporters lining up to express gratitude. Yet, following the attack on Özel, which could easily have proven fatal, Bahçeli showed a clearly hostile stance by referring vaguely to “the leader of a political institution subjected to a physical attack,” without naming Özel directly, even while feigning sympathy. This hostility reflects Bahçeli’s true political position. CHP and Özel have not become targets due to opposition to Bahçeli’s initiated process; in fact, they have consistently supported it. İmamoğlu and the CHP have maintained similar stances. The CHP and its leadership are targeted not because they oppose the process, but because they present themselves as potential alternative partners for the Kurdish movement, instead of the front of the despotic regime. Therefore, as long as the CHP does not conform to Erdoğan’s demand for “normalization,” oppressive and arbitrary measures that employ the judiciary, police, and military, will persist. Again, the pressure of authoritarianism is not contradictory to the current process but integral to it.

## The trap of a new constitution

The trap of keeping the dreams of democratization alive through “New Constitution” debates once again stands before us. Naturally, the “New Constitution” agenda is suffering from a serious credibility crisis due to the despotic front’s oppressive and arbitrary practices that completely disregard the current constitution. In order to overcome this problem, the MHP came forward with a proposal for a 100-member commission comprising representatives from all 16 political parties in parliament. It was only natural, and it happened as expected, that this proposal was met with suspicion by Erdoğan and the AKP wing, which wants to keep the initiative entirely in its own hands. On the other hand, it is clear that the 100-person commission will be nothing more than a masquerade meant to legitimize the “New Constitution” debate, and that in the end, the arithmetic of the parliament, and far more importantly, the clout of armed forces within the semi-military regime, will be decisive. To think otherwise would be naive. However, due to entrenched illusions about bourgeois democracy and the mirage of the “one-man regime” led simply through the whims of Erdoğan, the positive reactions coming from some socialists suggest that the MHP’s masquerade will indeed find buyers. It is evident that we will witness the start of discussions even on the left concerning the “New Constitution” process, and we will hear proposals for alternative constitutions. Yet the correct policy is not to join the “New Constitution” discussion from the left, but to expose the class interests behind this agenda and to reject the imposition of the “New Constitution” as a political agenda altogether.

The notion that the “New Constitution” agenda is focused on re-electing Erdoğan for a third term and that everything else is subordinate to this goal is completely mistaken. On the very contrary. The “New Constitution” agenda is determined by the expansionist interests of the colonialist bourgeoisie and the requirements of the opening process conducted in line with these interests. The Revolutionary Workers’ Party had already clearly identified this in its 7<sup>th</sup> Congress held in 2023:

“The essential strategic direction in the constitutional debate lies in the expansionist interests of monopoly capital. These interests necessitate going beyond the policy of integration into the imperialist world system while remaining within national borders, a policy symbolized by the official ideology’s slogan ‘peace at home, peace in the world.’ This new foreign policy tendency has gradually taken shape since the aftermath of the September 12 [1980] coup and has manifested itself in the debates about the Second Republic. In the AKP years, this debate has been marketed under the code name of the ‘civil constitution.’ This orientation requires the formulation of the Constitution in a way that allows for the official, not just de facto, expansion of Turkey’s national borders.” (*DIP 7th Congress resolution: The bourgeois republic is collapsing! Forward for the workers’ republic!*)

It is known that for Erdoğan to be able to run again for a third term, a constitutional amendment is required. If no such amendment is made, a snap election decision must be passed by at least 360 of parliament's 600 deputies. It is not possible for opposition parties to gather 360 deputies. On the other hand, it appears that the AKP and MHP, which together hold 320 seats, would need to bring the DEM Party into the fold with 56 deputies. In a scenario without the DEM Party, the New Path group (the joint group of Future, DEVA, and Felicity parties) has 26, the New Welfare Party 4, HÜDA-PAR 4, and the DSP 1 deputies, leaving the total at 355. It is plainly clear that Erdoğan is not in favor of a real snap election scenario. A fake snap election formula, held close to the regular election date for the sole purpose of enabling Erdoğan to run again, would require securing the necessary number of deputies and motivating the parties that would provide them, which is a difficult task. Therefore, this option is also highly risky. If we also consider the fact that Bahçeli has, on several occasions, stated that holding elections on time is a consensus within the governing alliance, and that there has been no objection to this from the AKP side, it becomes apparent that the main scenario may be based on a constitutional amendment to be made before the elections.

Given the current parliamentary arithmetic, it can be seen that the governing alliance and the DEM Party would easily reach the 360 votes needed for a referendum on a constitutional amendment parallel to the opening process. If the New Path group joins, the issue could even be settled with over 400 votes, eliminating the need for a referendum altogether. Although it has often been stated in the past that even if 400 MPs were found for a new constitution, a referendum would still be held, it now appears that, given the risks of that path, the MHP is preparing an alternative platform for to give this move the required legitimacy through its proposal for a 100-member commission comprising representatives from the 16 parties in parliament. Although the MHP seems determined to maintain the initiative it has taken throughout the process, it is equally clear that no scenario to which Erdoğan and the AKP do not consent can become reality. On the other hand, apart from the "AKP-CHP grand coalition" option, Erdoğan appears unlikely to stray from the paths offered by the MHP in order to maintain his power. The "AKP-CHP grand coalition" is the dream of the big bourgeoisie in Turkey and might offer Erdoğan a way out, but Erdoğan knows better than anyone that taking that path requires more than parliamentary arithmetic, most importantly the fine-tuning of the internal balance between armed factions within the semi-military regime. Therefore, the New Constitution agenda is not subject to Erdoğan's re-election; rather, Erdoğan's continued rule is subject to the New Constitution agenda. Thus, despite all his doubts regarding the process initiated by Bahçeli, and despite being pressured in the opposite direction by centers within the semi-military regime that oppose this process,

Erdoğan is nonetheless moving forward in relative coordination. At some stage, the emergence of a concrete New Constitution text in parliament will depend not on the course of the debates, but on the practical progress of the opening process, chief among them the PKK’s concrete laying down of arms.

The only concrete draft text proposal regarding the New Constitution, which has been kept on the agenda to varying degrees for years (albeit not disclosed to the public), has been prepared by the MHP. Recently, the New Constitution debate has been warmed up through a preliminary discussion around the first four articles. After the initial turmoil caused by Binali Yıldırım’s (once Erdoğan’s Prime Minister before the switch from the parliamentary to the presidential rule) move to open the first four articles to discussion, a general consensus formed that those articles would remain unchanged and unamendable. However, this debate is also full of illusions. Because what matters in a constitution is not how something is written, but who uses which article for what purpose. This holds true not only for the government but also for the people. For instance, the right to unionize or the right to hold meetings and demonstration marches as written in the Constitution can be used by workers, laborers, and youth as sources of legitimacy in their struggles for rights. The government, however, focuses on the “except for” clauses of the same articles to restrict these rights. If the opening process initiated by Bahçeli is being linked to a constitutional debate, then there must be aspects of the current constitution that fall short in terms of the goals and objectives of this process. That shortcoming, of course, is not democracy!

### **The bargain over the right to hope and the constitution of the semi-military regime**

Since Bahçeli launched the Öcalan opening, we have frequently encountered statements in the Kurdish movement and on the left beginning with phrases like “even the MHP” or “even Bahçeli,” presenting the MHP/Bahçeli initiative as some kind of threshold within the framework of democratization. Alongside extreme interpretations attributing Bahçeli’s immense turnaround to his role as a wise statesman, there are also more cautious approaches suggesting that conditions and the struggle of the Kurdish people forced this transformation. Neither corresponds to the reality. Bahçeli began praising Öcalan as a political leader even though a short while ago the former symbolically throwing hangman’s noose at the end of his speech, calling for Öcalan’s execution, and he reached the point of almost inviting the DEM Party into the governing alliance when he used to issue ultimatums calling for the closure of the HDP. It is necessary to explain why, while making these turns, Bahçeli has not shifted even an inch in his position regarding the Constitutional Court, which is directly connected to these agendas.

It is known that the MHP has explicitly targeted the Constitutional Court for dragging its feet in the HDP closure case and for its rights violation rulings concerning Selahattin Demirtaş, Osman Kavala, and Can Atalay, all of whom currently imprisoned. In the context of the new constitution debates, the MHP brings the status of the Constitutional Court to the agenda with the framing of “it must either be shut down or restructured.” The actual focus of the debate, which began with the high-pitched call to “shut it down,” is to abolish the right of individual application and limit the Constitutional Court to the function of the High Court of Justice. If the current opening process were taking place in a framework of democratization, attempting to block the legal path opened by individual application to the Constitutional Court in countless cases of violations of fundamental rights and freedoms would represent an absolute contradiction. But there is no contradiction here either. The political content of the opening process and the MHP’s negative stance toward the Constitutional Court are in full alignment. This alignment becomes clear when one considers the MHP and Bahçeli’s key role within the semi-military regime. In the years when the AKP rose to single-party power with the approval of the military following the February 28, 1997 process when the military intervened to topple the government, the Constitutional Court became the symbol of “military tutelage” over civilian politics. The Court played a decisive role in blocking the AKP’s political moves that touched on some of the army’s red lines, thanks to its authority to oversee whether laws, presidential decrees, and the parliamentary rules of procedure conformed to the Constitution in form and substance. The “individual application,” however, had the opposite effect in practice. This time, political decisions imposed on the judiciary by pressure and directives under the semi-military regime were being overturned by the Constitutional Court, which in the context of individual application had become, in effect, the Turkey branch of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), and made rulings based on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and ECtHR case law.

Bahçeli’s sensational proposal in the speech where he launched the recent opening process, suggesting that Öcalan come to parliament and speak in the DEM Party group, is well known. This proposal instantly made Bahçeli the main actor of the process, and the primary counterpart to Öcalan recognized by the Kurdish movement as the chief negotiator. The “right to hope” that Bahçeli referred to in that speech also holds critical significance here. Bahçeli practically said, that he held the key to the right to hope for Öcalan. The main basis of Bahçeli’s claim that he holds the key lies in his and his party’s close relationship with the wing of the semi-military regime expected to react to a potential opening. Because of this relationship, the idea that “if there is to be an opening, it can only happen through Bahçeli” came to the fore. This idea was also clearly expressed years ago by Sırrı Süreyya

Önder. However, the key is not only in Bahçeli’s hands. After Abdullah Öcalan completed 25 years in prison on February 15, 2024, the right to hope has already arisen under the ECHR and ECtHR case law. Öcalan’s lawyers have applied to the Constitutional Court to have this right recognized. The decision the Court will issue in response to this individual application is more or less predictable and, under normal conditions, must be in favor of granting Öcalan the right to hope. Indeed, in February 2024, Professor İzzet Özgenç, a criminal law scholar who played a role in drafting the Turkish Penal Code and is known for his closeness to Erdoğan despite his oppositional statements, issued warnings in this direction and emphasized that because the necessary legal regulations were not made in time, Öcalan’s right to hope had effectively become a matter of political bargaining.

Now the issue concerns bargaining power. Let us imagine for a moment that the Constitutional Court grants Öcalan the right to hope. In that case, it is clear that for the Kurdish movement, an alternative channel would open outside of Bahçeli’s mediation and influence. This would reduce Bahçeli’s bargaining power, weaken his key role, and cause him to lose the initiative he holds with great difficulty within the semi-military regime. For example, if the Kurdish movement held such a Constitutional Court decision in hand, it would very well have the opportunity to say, “First lift the trustee appointments,” or “Implement the right to hope.” That is not the case now. Because the MHP/Bahçeli and a wing of the semi-military regime have rendered the Constitutional Court passive through the Court of Cassation, which they have brought under their influence. The Constitutional Court’s ruling on the violation of rights concerning Can Atalay, who is imprisoned in the Gezi trial, is not being implemented “in practice” under the conditions of the semi-military regime. In this way, Bahçeli, relying on the semi-military regime, presents himself as the only realistic alternative for conducting the process that includes Öcalan benefiting from the right to hope. However, this position is still “de facto.” The fact that Bahçeli’s key position is de facto, i.e., not guaranteed, is a manifestation of the semi-military regime’s own “de facto” nature. For this de facto situation to be formalized, the individual application function of the Constitutional Court, which operates as a sort of EU tutelage mechanism over the semi-military regime, must be abolished in the new constitution. Mehmet Uçum, one of the key representatives of the semi-military regime and an advisor to Erdoğan, has taken this tendency to its logical conclusion and advocates for the abolition of Article 90 of the Constitution, which makes international treaties legally binding above laws and the Constitution itself.

Far from us, the expectation of democracy from an imperialist center like the European Union. However, in this specific case, the aim is to eliminate the Constitutional Court’s power, grounded in the ECHR and ECtHR case law, to prevent the arbitrary violation of fundamental rights and freedoms. It is clear that this runs

contrary to the interests of the working people. The Constitutional Court not only issues rulings on Demirtaş, Kavala, or Atalay, but it has also ruled against strike bans, indicating that its current position functions as a kind of an acquisition for the working class as well. This acquisition did not come about through the so-called democratic sensitivity of European imperialist capital. It was built through the blood and sacrifice of the European working class. It was the Soviet Union, through the fear of socialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that forced European imperialist capital to step back. Therefore, in the context of the Constitutional Court, it is clear that the Bahçeli-Uçum axis represents an entirely reactionary alternative. It is also clear that the opening process, far from democratizing, has been integrated with the goal of reinforcing and constitutionally securing the semi-military regime.

### **Spilling Kurds' blood while praising them, spilling the Muslims' blood by saying "Allah"...**

Constitutional debates are also heavily focused on the definition of citizenship. The constitutional recognition of Kurdish identity is on the agenda as an important topic. If the issue were to end the denial of Kurdish identity and to respond to the Kurdish people's demands for equality, there would be countless steps that could be taken even without any constitutional amendment or without mentioning the word "Kurd" in the Constitution. Not only we don't see such steps being taken, but we are also witnessing the reversal of steps taken in the past regarding the public use of Kurdish language. For instance, when DEM Party MP Gülistan Koçyiğit used the phrase "Cejna zimanê kurdî pîroz be" ("Happy Kurdish Language Day") from the parliamentary podium, her microphone was turned off by the MHP's deputy speaker. For now, everyone stays where they were. But the issue is this: the interests of the colonialist bourgeoisie require the constitutional recognition of Kurdish identity. This necessity stems from the perspective of expansion through the protection of Kurds beyond the border. The denialist Turkish nationalism rooted in the "kart kurt" narrative (a nationalist myth that denies the historic roots of the Kurdish people, alleging that the name "Kurd" is a relatively recent invention coming from the sound of walking on snow) now contradicts with the interests of the Turkish colonialist bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the idea of replacing "Turk" with "citizen of Turkey" (Türkiyeli) has been gradually abandoned over the years due to widespread resistance and backlash. The current version of the Second Republic project from the Özal era is searching for a redefinition of Turkish identity that includes Kurds.

This redefinition can very well be made by adding an expression to the preamble of the new Constitution, without changing the existing definition of citizenship. One example: "The identity of the Turkish nation, built and revived to a great extent through Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood, deserves being the symbol of

democratic dignity, honour, and liberty in the new century.” This quotation is from Devlet Bahçeli’s 2025 New Year’s message. A close reading of the same message also reveals an intense emphasis on a sectarian Sunni Islamic unity. Indeed, we know that in the MHP’s previous constitutional proposal, the preamble included the expression “We, the Turkish Nation, brought into being by the grace of Allah, by the spirit of brotherhood, and by love of the homeland.” The colonialist bourgeoisie’s expansionist ambitions also require a strong Sunni Islamic reference in order to justify protection over Kurds beyond the borders. Just as “kart kurt” nationalism is now seen as an obstacle, so too is “secularism” based on the principle of separating religion from the state. They see religion as the glue for a Turkish-Kurdish alliance. Secularism prevents that glue from holding. But we must also say this: the colonialist bourgeoisie may be giving up on denying Kurdish identity, but it is not giving up on the superiority of Turks over Kurds. Sunni Islamic brotherhood, in its intellectual and political background, does not mean the equality and fraternity of peoples; rather, it proclaims the superiority of the tribe that holds the right of the caliphate over the rest of the ummah.

The obstacle of secularism, too, must be overcome with a new definition of secularism that allows religion to thoroughly permeate the internal and foreign policies of the state. Therefore, in the coming period, we will see the concept of secularism also begin to be publicly debated. Those who defend Kemalist bourgeois secularism will be portrayed as heretics who oppose the inclusion of the word “Allah” in the Constitution. The expansionist interests of the colonialist bourgeoisie will be hidden behind the veil of religion, and consent and support will be extracted from the working masses for a constitutional move that is class-wise reactionary.

### **How will the new constitution become a weapon in the hands of the colonialist bourgeoisie?**

What concrete relationship might embarking on the making of a new constitution have with the expansionist interests of the colonialist bourgeoisie? Put differently, how can a constitutional article offer a political and diplomatic weapon to the colonialist bourgeoisie? The answers to these questions may lie in the independence referendum held by the Barzani administration on September 25, 2017. In this referendum, the Kurdish people voted 93% in favor of independence, but the central government of Iraq, with the support of Turkey and Iran and the backing of the United States, carried out a military intervention, shelving the declaration of independence. In the six years since, the conditions and alignments have shifted. The statement in the resolution of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress of the PKK which reads “Recent developments in the Middle East as part of the Third World War make the reorganisation of Turkish-Kurdish relations inevitable” points to these changing conditions

and alignments. In this context, should the Kurdistan Regional Government declare independence based on that referendum, the likely response from the central Iraqi government and Iran would again be an opposition. However, a new Turkey that has redefined the Turkish identity in its constitution to include Kurdish identity may intervene in the opposite direction, not only as the protector of the Turkmen minority in the region but now also as the legitimate guardian of the Kurdish majority. And what about the Lausanne Treaty, which drew the borders between Turkey and Iraq? That's precisely why Lausanne has been turned into a subject of debate by the government, years before the references in the PKK congress to the 1924 Constitution and Lausanne! We are now facing a mechanism by which Kurdish integration into Turkey, a Turkey that has constitutionally recognised Kurdish identity, can be added to the independence decision of the Iraqi Kurds. Of course, with the support of the United States and the United Kingdom, who are sure to welcome such a development against Iran and its influence in Iraq, and with the approval of Israel as well!

Whether things develop in this direction or not will be seen in time. Conditions and alignments are changing, and nothing is settled. Everything can and likely will change again. But what we must never forget is that the entire process we are going through is marked by the expansionist interests of the colonialist bourgeoisie. Therefore, just as the "opening" does not require democratisation, steps toward recognising Kurdish identity do not necessarily serve Turkish-Kurdish equality. On the contrary, the mention of the word "Kurd" in the Constitution will not prevent the colonialist bourgeoisie from once again supporting the bloodiest methods to subjugate the Kurds, should its interests demand it. Writing "by the grace of Allah" in the Constitution will also not prevent those who will embark on expansionist adventures in West Asia under this Constitution from shedding Muslim blood hand-in-hand with Christian imperialists and Jewish Zionists. Never forget! The irrevocable provisions of the Constitution states that Turkey is a "democratic, secular, social state governed by the rule of law"! Of course, we stand for the full equality of Turks and Kurds, of Turkish and Kurdish languages, but we are entirely opposed to all intentions and initiatives that would lead to the fratricide of peoples.

### **Alewite blood in the Opening**

The idea of Turkish and Kurdish peoples' brotherhood and equality, grounded in the notion of the equality and fraternity of all peoples and finding its most consistent expression in internationalism, possesses a high moral power and legitimacy. The struggles waged in this direction are likewise legitimate. Precisely for this reason, this just cause can be abused to camouflage malicious initiatives, just as the U.S. imperialism defends its bloodiest acts in the name of democracy and human rights. Therefore, we must be extremely vigilant. When warning against a planned

Turkish-Kurdish alliance under imperialist protection meant to wage war against other peoples, we are not merely projecting for the future. What has happened in Syria serves as an indication, even a model, for the moves the Turkish bourgeoisie plans to make toward Mosul and Kirkuk. At a time when the Third World War is being talked about and Western Asia is ablaze in wars, it is, to put it mildly, naive to think that any armed formation, official or unofficial, will disarm through diplomatic processes.

We must not confuse scenarios prepared to placate and persuade the public with reality. The main issue in the current process is not disarmament but the redirection of the barrels. When evaluated from this angle, the frequent references to the disarmament of the YPG, alongside the PKK, in Syria are also unrealistic, especially given that the YPG is a force backed, protected, and armed by the United States, and relied upon for the success of the process. It does not appear that this issue can be resolved through the YPG’s disarmament in Syria. The agreement made between HTS and the SDF under the supervision of American helicopters and soldiers, and accepted by Turkey, defines not a disarmament process but an integration process. In this sense, arms have not been laid down in Syria; rather, the barrels have been redirected toward Iran and its allies. The timing of this agreement is also highly critical. At a moment when HTS and its affiliated gangs were engaged in massacres of Alewites, an American helicopter picked up Mazloum Abdi and brought him to Damascus. The agreement made between Mazloum Abdi and Ahmad al-Sharaa did not provide a practical solution to any problem. However, Article 6 of the agreement defined the massacre of Alewites by sectarian takfiri gangs as “a fight against remnants of the regime and elements threatening the country’s security and unity,” and formalised SDF’s pledge to support Damascus in this so-called struggle. In practice, then, the agreement served only to resolve the legitimacy crisis that al-Sharaa and HTS faced in the eyes of the imperialist West due to the Alewite massacre. Therefore, when we examine the process through the Syrian example, it does not rest, contrary to what is claimed, on a morally strong and legitimate foundation like the fraternity of peoples. On the contrary, it bears the blood and stain of a crime against humanity, the systematic covering up of the Alewite massacre by HTS in western Syria.

### **American patronage in the process: The Mattis Plan and the NATO corridor**

The main actor of the process, Devlet Bahçeli, has shown a notably relaxed and flexible attitude concerning the status of PYD/YPG in Syria. In one of his statements, Bahçeli said: “Whether and how the possible transfers and transitions from the dissolved PKK to the PYD/YPG will be monitored and coordinated in a simul-

taneous and synchronized manner... should be addressed separately.” Alongside other items addressed as if they will be resolved with time, this statement reveals that a condition long declared as a red line by the state is being abandoned. Particularly among nationalist circles critical of the process, there were those who picked up on this statement and criticised it as bizarre. Some did not pay much attention to it or interpreted it as a sign of Bahçeli’s sincerity in the opening process. For us, however, this statement is neither bizarre nor sincere...

We have long emphasized that the U.S. has been developing scenarios based on the contradiction between PYD and PKK, scenarios that aim to liquidate the PKK and bring forth the PYD, which is entirely under the protection of the U.S.. This scenario, which we refer to as the Mattis Plan, was publicly disclosed by Turkey’s then-Minister of National Defense Nurettin Canikli in 2018. Canikli revealed that then-U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis had told him, “We can separate the YPG from the PKK and make it fight the PKK.” The notion that the U.S. is fully opposed to Turkey’s military interventions in Syria, that the Turkish Armed Forces carried out operations to disrupt the terror corridor despite the U.S., and that the U.S. unconditionally supported the PKK, and even the PYD, against NATO ally Turkey is a myth fabricated by nationalists to wrap their chauvinist politics in an anti-imperialist guise. Let’s set aside everything else and just look at the facts. The central authority in Syria has passed into the hands of HTS, a takfiri-sectarian force backed by the U.S. and Britain and approved by Israel. Meanwhile, the country’s northern border is controlled by a NATO army, Turkey, and the Syrian National Army under its protection, along with PYD/YPG forces under U.S. protection.

After years of “terror corridor” rhetoric, what we now face in Syria is in fact a NATO corridor stretching from the Mediterranean to the Iraqi border. The most recent opening plays a critical role in extending this corridor to the Iranian border. It is impossible to comprehend this process by buying into the nationalist myth that the Iraqi Kurds are entirely under U.S. control. The priority of U.S. policy in Iraq has been NATO ally Turkey. The U.S. has placed bounties on the heads of the PKK’s top three leaders, \$5 million for Murat Karayılan, \$4 million for Cemil Bayık, and \$3 million for Duran Kalkan. The fact that, when the NATO-Russia war began in Ukraine, critical, even accusatory statements toward NATO emerged from within the Kurdish movement, is also noteworthy. Of course, these occasional outbursts do not alter the fact that the PKK has long lacked a consistent anti-imperialist line. For years, the PKK has pursued a programmatic policy of compromise and cooperation with imperialism. However, in the eyes of the U.S., the PYD and PKK are distinct enough for the U.S. to pursue a policy of setting one against the other. Those within the Kurdish movement who have declared the dissolution of the organization and the end of armed struggle are precisely the wing that the U.S. has placed bounties

on, and are precisely those who Mattis planned to make the PYD destroy. If this wing is eliminated, the U.S.’s ability to extend the NATO corridor to Iran under Turkish protection will increase. When the “obstacle” to alignment in U.S.-Turkey Iraq policy is removed, the conditions that forced the U.S. to side with NATO ally Turkey over the Kurds it once protected, such as in Barzani’s 2017 independence referendum, and the conditions that bring Turkey, Iraq’s central government and Iran closer will also change.

## **The Israel-Iran War as a testing ground**

The war that began with Israel’s military aggression against Iran directly impacts the opening process. Statements from both the state and the Kurdish movement indicate that this war is seen as a testing ground for the Turkish-Kurdish alliance. Bahçeli says, “Israel’s political and strategic aim is to encircle the Anatolian geography and sabotage the goal of a terror-free Turkey on behalf of its masters,” while two key figures of the Kurdish movement, Öcalan and Demirtaş, have made parallel statements. It is known that Öcalan told the delegation visiting İmralı (the island in the Marmara Sea where he is kept as a prisoner), Sırrı Süreyya Önder and Pervin Buldan, that they could be killed by the U.S. and Israel. Most recently, Cengiz Çandar, DEM Party MP from Diyarbakır, declared in an interview: “Turkey’s greatest fortune is that Abdullah Öcalan is antiIsrael.” Selahattin Demirtaş’s latest remarks warning those within the Kurdish movement who consider aligning with the U.S./Israel by saying “imperialism gives nothing without taking a thousand” and his accusation of adventurism regarding them, can be added to these.

Is the opening process truly anti-U.S. or antiIsrael in content? Regarding the U.S., no such opposition exists. As established earlier, the Second-Republic project, both in the Özal era and in its current version, is fundamentally U.S.driven. The Israel dimension, however, is nuanced. Israel’s contradiction with the opening is relative. Turkey’s colonial bourgeoisie’s expansionist ambitions in Syria and Iraq, and more broadly in West Asia and the Islamic world, are primarily in contest with Iran. Thus, the Turkish-Kurdish alliance based on the colonial bourgeoisie’s interests is oriented more against Iran than Israel. It is inconceivable that Israel, which is at war with Iran, would be absolutely opposed to such alignment. Indeed, despite much antiIsrael rhetoric, the political practices contradict a genuine anti-Israel stance. The Turkish state verbally condemns Israel’s attacks while providing logistical support through the Incirlik and Kürecik bases, trading military goods and oil with Israel, and the propaganda division of the despotic regime works overtime to portray Iran as defenseless against Israel while intensifying sectarian rhetoric to antagonise Iran. In the political stance and practical positions of the Turkish state, the balance clearly favours Israel.

A similar situation exists within the Kurdish movement. Although Demirtaş criticizes pro-Israel tendencies, these tendencies do exist and are strong. The contradictions and unilateral pressures of the opening process drive some to seek alternatives, and Israel regularly encourages this through patronage. Yet a coherent anti-Israel stance opposing this remains hard to find in the Kurdish movement. Öcalan, celebrated by Çandar as anti-Israel, praises Israel as a global hegemon and disparages those fighting it in Gaza, in the perspective text he sent to the PKK's 12<sup>th</sup> Congress. Demirtaş begins his so-called warnings against imperialism by criticizing Iran. The KCK Executive Council publishes a "Declaration Against the Assaults of Israel", but condemns the war, not Israel, in it. Most tellingly, PJAK, the Iranian wing of the KCK, refuses to take sides, accuses Iran of starting the war, and equates Israel and Iran for killing civilians, without mentioning Gaza. Its vow to "be ready for any intervention" against attacks on Kurds is framed as self-defense. But there is no evidence PJAK won't repeat Barzani and Talabani's opportunism and collaborationism during the U.S. invasion of Iraq, this time in Iran.

Historically, Israel's Zionism sees all non-Arab West Asian nations as potential strategic allies. After the Nakba, Turkey was the first Muslim state to recognise Israel, followed by Iran under the Shah. Only after the 1979 revolution Iran became hostile to Israel. Despite occasional tensions, Turkey remains Israel's ally as a NATO member. Its struggle for influence in the Islamic world causes friction, but not conflict, with Israel. Meanwhile, Israel fears post-Iran regional vacuums being filled by Turkey and the emergence of a Sunni axis to challenge Israel after dismantling the Shiite resistance. This is the basis of Israel's opposition. Israel's stance toward Syria's HTS regime and its cooperation with Turkey is illustrative. HTS, has never fired a bullet on Israel, even while it was advancing on Damascus and was simultaneously occupying other parts of Syria. Al Sharaa pledges to protect Israeli strategic interests and praises Zionism's patron Trump, yet Israel bombs Syria to prevent HTS from restoring Assadera military capacity, and encourages Druze and Kurds to detach from Damascus.

Israel prefers NATO-member Turkey and Azerbaijan becoming a Zionist base in the Caucasus on one side, while U.S.-backed PYD, Northern Iraqi Kurdish parties, and PJAK do so on the other, to fight Iran. Israel's simultaneous support for Ümit Özdağ's Zafer Party in Turkey (which the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of DIP defines as Israeli Turanism) and anti-opening Kurdish tendencies fits this logic. PJAK calls for self-rule not only for Kurds, but for all ethnic groups (Azeris, Baluchs, etc.). Despite PJAK referring to Öcalan, Iran's Azeris are expected to act under Turanist, not confederalist, motives. If a multiethnic self-rule mobilization in Iran arises, its ideological glue will likely be Zionism, not Öcalan's confederalism.

Therefore, if the opening process were truly anti-Israel, the Israel-Iran war would

reveal it. Genuine opponents of Israel, even if not pro-Iran, would work toward its defeat. In autumn 2024, Turkey’s parliament held a confidential session, not over Iran, but a possible Israel conflict. Imagine a state that claims a country is a threat, yet provides it with logistical, commercial, intelligence, and military support during war. Anyone would think that such rulers were either traitors or fools, or secretly cooperating with the state that they are doing a secret session about. That is Turkey’s situation. The anti-Israel rhetoric and talk of “Turkey is next following Iran” merely pack the reactionary, expansionist oil opening in a defensive wrapping. A sincere stance would mean withdrawal from NATO, closure of Incirlik and Kürecik bases, and halting military, trade, and intelligence support to Israel. Everything else is just propaganda.

Unfortunately, Demirtaş’s statement—“From Edirne to Hakkari, 86 million turning into a people’s army; we will defend our common homeland at all costs”, rings hollow without concrete antiimperialist and anti-Zionist demands. If it’s about defending the common homeland, it must be specified against whom: the U.S. and Israel. The enemy must be clearly named. As long as Turkey remains in NATO, as long as the colonial bourgeoisie pursues expansion under U.S. protection, and as long as Sunni Islamic fraternity replaces peoples’ brotherhood, the result won’t be a peoples’ army but, at best, Hamidiye Regiments (Cavalry regiments formed at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century to suppress Armenian demands for self-determination and political rights, infamous for participating in several massacres).

## **Anti-imperialism and internationalism are an indivisible whole! The solution has to be revolutionary!**

We see that the theme of a Third World War, cited in the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress resolution of the PKK, is being frequently echoed by both Hakan Fidan and Devlet Bahçeli. Yet we recognized this long before them and convened an Extraordinary Congress of the Revolutionary Workers’ Party (DİP) in 2016 precisely on this basis. That Extraordinary Congress declared: “The Third World War has taken on the form of a danger that is immediate, concrete, and tangibly intense.” It then drew the line of struggle as follows: “Against war and barbarism: world revolution and socialism.” It concluded: “The only way to defeat the great wars, which are products of the historical decline of capitalism and the reactionization of the bourgeoisie, is revolution.” When the threat of the Third World War became even more concrete with the imperialist war instigated by NATO in Ukraine against Russia, revolutionary Marxism did not waver for a moment in asserting that the road to peace passes through anti-imperialism: “A lasting world peace is not possible without forcing imperialism to its knees through defeats on the military front and final blows via revolutions. World peace is a question of world revolution!” (DİP 7<sup>th</sup> Congress reso-

lution: World war will not be stopped by imperialism's goodwill, but by its defeat! Humanity will be saved by the International!) The reason we remind and repeat all this is that if you are talking about the possibility of a Third World War, it is imperative that you take a clear position, along with declaring whose side you are on. Any stance against war must be combined with being on the side against imperialism.

But, every time the despotic front speaks of a Third World War, it is followed by a threat analysis, and invariably, by a tendency to identify opportunities arising from that analysis. That is precisely why the despotic front is jubilant at the prospect of Trump returning to power in the U.S. They are euphoric for praying at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, by seizing on the contradictions between imperialism and Russia in Syria. Of course, they don't say they're embarking on a campaign under imperialist patronage. Instead, they speak of consolidating the "national front" and peddle fantasies of a "Century of Turkey." To add moral legitimacy to this marketing campaign, they also wrap it in the packaging of a "war with Israel." Through their policies, they are tearing the people apart. Even their preference for the translated English term "home front" instead of the Turkish "rear front" is indicative of this. Because while their claim of a war against imperialism and Zionism abroad is an empty boast, the despotism front is in fact waging a real war at home, against the working masses. That is why, when they speak of an "internal front," they are in fact accelerating Turkey's collapse, and far from fighting Israel, they meticulously avoid touching Zionism's strategic interests. They continue to ship goods and oil to Zionism's genocide. They align with British imperialism and position themselves under Trump's wing against Iran, playing out the imperialist-Zionist game. And the so-called "opening process" they have initiated is but a piece of this game.

The Kurdish movement, too, is keeping in step with this game. In their stance toward imperialism, they do not follow the example of Kemal Pir but that of Mazlum Abdi. The PKK's congress resolution invokes the words of Deniz Gezmiş and his comrades at the gallows, assigning a supporting role to Turkey's socialist forces. Yet even in quoting these words, they omit the cry of "Down with imperialism!" In what they themselves call a historic statement, "The current developments in the Middle East within the context of the Third World War make it inevitable to restructure Kurdish-Turkish relations", not once is the concept of imperialism mentioned. In an environment where Öcalan expresses gratitude to Devlet Bahçeli at every turn, where this gratitude has become an integral part for every speech of any DEM Party representative, and where wishes for long life are extended to the leader of the historical party of fascism, Hüseyin's cry of "Down with fascism!" on the gallows is nowhere to be found. On May 6 of this year, not only the opposition but even elements of the government commemorated the three martyrs, yet no one stood up to shout, as Yusuf did from the gallows: "We serve our people, you serve America!"

We, on the other hand, analyse the current process with the Marxist method, determine our position through the concrete analysis of the concrete situation, and on the basis of class struggle. We take as our duty the words uttered by Deniz, Yusuf, and Hüseyin as they walked to their deaths. We oppose the dragging of poor, working-class Turkish and Kurdish youth into expansionist adventures under the guise of peace. We reject the mudslinging aimed at socialism to legitimize others’ political orientations. We do not accept the claim that the struggle of the working class and the oppressed for power is outdated. As revolutionaries of this land, we are committed to full equality between Kurds and Turks, between the Kurdish and Turkish languages, to the brotherhood of peoples, and to internationalism.

Consistent anti-imperialism and internationalism form an indivisible whole. When that unity is broken, the Kurdish movement’s approach, under the guise of criticising the nation-state or “real” socialism, to sever ties with both class struggle and anti-imperialism begins to align with the colonial Turkish bourgeoisie and its nationalism. Those seeking alliances with colonial bourgeoisies for a supposed “solution” meet with the regional plans of imperialism. The internationalist and anti-imperialist stance, however, has long been subjected to accusations of separatism by the ruling classes and to fierce ideological and political attacks from some tendencies within the Kurdish movement. Yet any politics that defends the equality of the Kurdish people, and reflects the shared social, economic, and political interests of Kurdish and Turkish workers and toilers, must be both internationalist and anti-imperialist. This is the foundation of our assessment and position toward the current process. The current developments in West Asia under the shadow of a potential Third World War demand that Kurdish-Turkish relations be restructured on an anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, revolutionary, and internationalist basis, within the framework of fraternity among all the peoples of West Asia. While genocide continues in Gaza, while ethnic and sectarian cleansing persists in Syria, and while the entire region is being driven into fratricidal war through the united efforts of imperialists, colonialists, and Zionists, the solution lies in purging West Asia of imperialist bases and soldiers, eradicating the genocidal entity known as Israel, defeating the reactionary, colonial, and collaborationist regimes, and advancing with a revolutionary program toward a Socialist Federation of West Asia and North Africa.

*25 June 2025*



### **RedMed and Christian Rakovsky Centre on the move!**

RedMed (short for Red Mediterranean) was, until recently, a web site that published news, opinion, commentary and political declarations from around the Mediterranean Sea, the Balkans, the Middle East, the Black Sea region, Transcaucasia, and the broader Eurasian region. It has now been transformed, as of the beginning of 2020, into a centre for propagating socialist thinking, carrying commentary and political statements and publishing various journals from the Mediterranean region all the way to Russia and the former Soviet Union.

RedMed used to work hand in hand with the Balkan Socialist Centre Christian Rakovsky to establish links between socialists and revolutionaries from these regions. However, parallel to the expansion of RedMed, the Christian Rakovsky Centre also broadened its remit. Over time three Russian organisations became members of the Christian Rakovsky Centre: the OKP (United Communist Party), the RPK (Russian Party of Communists), and the Association "Soviet Union", in addition to the original members, two political parties of two Mediterranean countries, EEK (Workers Revolutionary Party) of Greece and DIP (Revolutionary Workers Party) of Turkey. Thereupon the centre changed its name to the International Socialist Centre Christian Rakovsky.

RedMed is now publishing on a bimonthly basis both the Communist of Leningrad, journal brought out for quite some time in Russian by the RPK, and Soviet Renaissance, a new online journal in Russian prepared by the Association "Soviet Union". This is in addition to its already established commentary and political statements on world affairs in many different languages, first and foremost in English, but also French, Italian, Greek, Turkish, Russian, Farsi and Arabic.

RedMed welcomes letters, comments, news about struggles, debates and material in different languages. We would appreciate very much if people would volunteer translating the different articles and declarations that we publish in the web site into their native tongue.

Let us join hands to bring down the yoke of imperialism and capitalism in Europe, in Asia, in the Middle East and North Africa, and across the world.



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