

The Spirit of Unity and Solidarity



On the role of the Kurdish liberation movement in the international struggle for democratization



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Introduction:

With each day that passes it becomes clearer that the results of the upcoming presidential elections in Turkey will be decisive for the future of the country. The vote on the 14th May is a “vote of fate”, as it is called by many, for both the revolutionary-democratic forces as well as for the forces behind the fascist regime consisting of Erdogan’s Islamist AKP and the Nationalist Movement Party MHP . The election takes place 100 years after the foundation of the country in a time when the republic faces its perhaps largest crisis so far. The war of extermination against the revolutionary movement in Kurdistan and its allied democratic forces waged in the past 8 years has bled out the economy of the country, and an expansionist and aggressive politics of occupation in the region as well as the open support for jihadist forces such as the Islamic State and Al-Qaidahave led Turkey into a deadend regarding their foreign policy. While both incapable to distance itself from the Western bloc under the leadership of the USA due to economic and military dependencies and simultaneously ogling with the Eurasian bloc with the Russian Federation, Turkey stand between the fronts, can neither advance nor retreat, and risks a further decline. The terrible earthquake that haunted vast regions of North and West Kurdistan as well as regions in the West of Syria and Turkey at the beginning of February laid open all the deficits and showed the entire world what the current state of Erdogan’s regime is. The more than 50’000 official deaths (some say that more than 100’000 died) were not the direct result of an inevitable natural catastrophe, but are primarily the result of a building industry which has been in cahoots with those in power since decades and is corrupt, leading to insufficient standards regarding materials and oversight and unscrupulous bungles, as well as an absolutely insufficient preparation for catastrophes. Until today people are struggling for their survival in the hit areas and are attempting to save their existence under the rubble on their very own. As a reaction to the destruction in vast areas of Kurdistan and the foreseeable humanitarian disaster, Cemal Bayik, the co-representative of the political umbrella organization of the Kurdish liberation movement, the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), declared a unilateral halt on military operations and that the guerrilla would limit itself to acts of self-defense if attacked. Despite ongoing Turkish attacks against bases

of the guerrilla in South Kurdistan as well as against liberated areas of Northern and Eastern Syria, the Kurdish liberation movement has declared to uphold this halt of military operations until after the upcoming presidential elections. Less than a month before the elections, it remains difficult to foresee what result will be brought about on May 14th. The Kurdish liberation movement has repeatedly declared that a vote alone will not defeat fascism and that it is possible that the regime of Erdogan will attempt to hold on to power with all means necessary. The situation in Turkey is highly dynamic and the outcome of the elections as well as the events surrounding May 14th will influence the entire region of the Middle East both directly and indirectly. It is therefore all the more important for revolutionary forces to follow, analyze, and assess the situation and all developments to be able to draw the correct consequences. The interview with Cemil Bayik at hand is a very valuable testimony that allows us a detailed insight into the background of the ongoing struggle for power in Turkey and the region, and with remarkable clarity it sketches a revolutionary perspective that goes far beyond the upcoming election. Bayik forcefully underlines the importance of Kurdistan's revolution for the democratization of Turkey and the region as well as what the far-reaching importance of these proceedings could be for the global revolutionary-democratic movement. He highlights how the situation in Turkey is connected to the global power struggles between imperialists. For these reasons, this document is also a very valuable reading for the revolutionary movement in the capitalist centers.

Interview:

1. How do you assess the current geopolitical and political situation from your perspective?

Undoubtedly, there are many problems, contradictions and conflicts arising from the international hegemonic system in different geographies of the world today. It should be noted immediately that it is capitalist modernity that creates, sustains and perpetuates all these problems, contradictions and conflicts. In capitalist modernity, everything is for excessive profit and more capital. All economic policies are formulated accordingly. There is nothing the hegemonic system will not do for excessive profit. The basic characteristic of capitalist modernity is that it does not like stability. It prefers constant problems, contradictions and crises, conflicts and wars. It tries to build its interests on these. In fact, the First and Second World Wars are the result of this characteristic of capitalist modernity, which is really gluttonous and insatiable. The process of monopolisation in capitalism, excessive militarism, the search for and sharing of markets led to the First and Second World Wars. It is said that 88 million people lost their lives in these two wars of world division, and a total of approximately 250 million people in the wars of the 21st century. This alone clearly shows all the evils of capitalist modernity, that there is nothing it will not do for excessive profit, and the level of moral decay and erosion. As I mentioned at the beginning, both the internal contradictions and problems of the ruling system and the peoples' struggles for democracy and freedom continue in many parts of the world. In general, although the causes and nature of the contradictions and problems are different, it is a clear reality that we live in a world of war. Today, the Russia-Ukraine war of the dominant system led by the USA, the USA-China problems or contradictions, the Pacific problems with the dominant system, in short, unnamed or named wars and problems continue. It is well known how important the geopolitical position of Ukraine is for the USA and Europe. That is why the USA and Europe see the war in Ukraine as their own war and support it tremendously. This is also the reason why Russia does not want to lose Ukraine due to its geopolitical position, and is fighting the war with all its might. Although China, known as the sleeping giant, seems to be an alternative, it is

obvious that it seriously disturbs the USA as a power within the system. Accordingly, it is correct to see the problems in the Pacific as internal problems of the hegemonic-dominant system. What all this shows us is that capitalist modernity is really in a deep dilemma. It is under a great dilemma, crisis and burden. It is trying to develop methods of search and struggle to eliminate these and to lighten its burden. With the ideological and cultural tools called soft power, it gives a form of struggle, or rather a form of war that paralyses and affects people mentally, spiritually and vitally. But besides all these, it is certain that the Middle East is the real geography where the heart and pulse of the hegemonic system beats. In this sense, it would certainly not be wrong to state that after the First and Second World War, a new type of war, which we call the Third World War, continues in the Middle East. It should be noted that the Middle East has not yet experienced its Renaissance, and that it is 200 years behind the historical process experienced by European societies and their consequent level of democratisation. This situation is undoubtedly not a result of the choice or will of the peoples of the Middle East. I think it would be a correct approach in dialectical integrity to start with Napoleon and summarise the situation and to continue in this way. As it is known, when Napoleon was defeated in the wars in Egypt and Russia, England took over the system. This was now a new situation for Europe. With fanatical nationalism in the name of nation states, the peoples of Europe fought the 6-Year War, 7-Year¹ War and 30-Year War, almost at each other's throats. They destroyed each other. It is indisputable that Britain played an important role in this. The same Britain (and the system in general) led to even greater disasters for the peoples of the Middle East. The seeds of nationalism were tried to be sown in the Middle East in a very bad way. While Britain was spreading nationalism, the real socialism of the time was not in a position to provide much effectiveness in the name of socialism instead of nationalism. Thus, the Middle East, with its underground and above-ground riches, was like a virgin land that was very appetising for capitalist modernity. Therefore, if the Middle East was the heart of the world, its pulse would also beat in the Middle East. The Kurdistan-Middle East dialectic is as important as the Middle East-World dialectic.

¹ War of 1756-63 between the powers of Europe for hegemony.

In fact, the heart of the Middle East beats in Kurdistan and its pulse beats in Kurdistan. This is a historical reality. As I have stated many times, Kurds and Kurdistan were sacrificed to the interests of the new nation-states that emerged after the First World War, and were left, so to speak, without owners and orphans. What I want to mention here is the Cairo Conference². The Cairo Conference is also an ingenuity of Britain. The aim of the Cairo Conference was to leave the Kurdish question unsolved, keep the nation states and kingdoms in the Middle East alive, or rather to bring them into conflict with each other, and for the hegemonic system to establish, maintain and organise its interests on this basis. This is still continuing. When we analyse this equation correctly and understand its dialectic correctly, we can see that humanity will not be at peace until the Middle East is democratised. The real democratisation of Europe will only be possible through the democratisation of the Middle East and this will make a great contribution to democracy, freedom, peace and tranquility in the world. The fundamental problem is the problem of overcoming nation states. One should not just say nation state. As I have mentioned, during the establishment of nation states in Europe, the peoples fought neck and neck and nation states were seen and worshipped as if God had descended from the sky to the ground. It is known that Louis XVI went to the guillotine for the sake of the nation state. Louis XVI died by guillotine to establish a nation state. Fascist dictator Saddam Hussein, on the other hand, resisted and struggled to protect and maintain the nation state. He was also executed for this reason. What I want to say here is that it is not possible for nation states to undergo change and transformation on their own, to make democratic initiatives, there is no example of this, and anything like that would be contrary to the mindset and spirit of the nation state. Therefore, only through the awareness of democracy and freedom that will develop in society will nation states be overcome. In history, sometimes some geographies and places have played a role in determining the direction of development of humanity in general and of those geographies and places in particular.

²Cairo Conference of 1921 at which British politicians discussed policy in the Mandate territories of Palestine and Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq).

As it is known, at the beginning of the 20th century, when the revolutionaries of the time were expecting a revolution in Europe, the revolution did not take place in Europe but in Russia. The strategic impact of the October Revolution on Asia, the Middle East and Europe lasted for almost a century. The French Revolution also played such a role for Europe in its time. Now the Middle East is a candidate to play such a role for democratisation and freedom for the world. However, as I mentioned, nation states must be overcome. It is certain that the solution of the Kurdish question will play a major role in this. For this reason, I say that just as the Middle East has a decisive and important place for Europe to achieve a real democracy and for humanity in general, the solution of the Kurdish question and the democratic and free status of the Kurds is just as important for the democratisation and freedom of the Middle East. That is why this new type of war, which we call the Third World War, is being fought in the Middle East. The difference of the Third World War from the First and Second World Wars is that it continues for a long time with different methods and multiple parties. If we put a name to it, the situation and the ongoing war in the Middle East since the collapse of real socialism is in fact a Third World War. The centre of this war is undoubtedly Kurdistan. The reason why I say Kurdistan is that Kurdistan, which is divided into four parts, has direct problems, relations and contradictions with four different nation states. This means that the Kurds' attainment of a democratic and free status means the dissolution and erosion of these four nation states, in other words, their democratisation. This means that the democratisation of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria in the Middle East is actually the democratisation of the Middle East. This was the reason why I referred to the Cairo Conference a moment ago. The Cairo Conference meant that the Kurdish problem should not be solved and the Middle East should be in a state of conflict and war; this was its aim. When we reverse this equation, this is what we will come across: A solved Kurdish problem means a democratised Middle East. This is the reason why capitalist modernity and nation-statist forces intervene so much in the Middle East and put so much pressure on the Kurdish problem, aggravating the problems, putting them in deadlocks and dead ends. I will not say that this is a misfortune for the Kurds, it is another matter to define it as a chance. It is also a great dis-

advantage for the Middle East. I am talking about the position of the Turkish state. The Turkish state seems to be really indispensable for the USA and Europe. First of all, it is a big market. Its geopolitical position between Asia and Europe is strategic. It also has such an influence on the Middle East. In addition to all this, it is also a member of NATO. These provide the Turkish state with enormous advantages and conveniences. It is known that AKP fascism came to power with the BOP³ (Greater Middle East Project) project. What we call advantages is certainly not the democratisation of Turkey, the solution of the Kurdish question and its reflections on the Middle East. I am talking about the opposite. No state has the advantage of having forces in other countries beyond its borders and intervening in problems militarily as much as the Turkish state. From Libya to Iraq and Syria, it maintains forces everywhere, intervenes in the internal problems of countries, attacks them and even occupies and annexes their territories. The Turkish nation-state would undoubtedly not be able to act so recklessly if it were not for its geopolitical position, if it were not almost the only secular state in the Middle East and if it were not a member of NATO. For these reasons, the forces of capitalist modernity tolerate the Turkish state too much, and the Turkish state uses this very well, almost playing the role of a spoilt member of NATO. Especially the AKP fascist state does this without recognising any international law and measure. As part of the Russia-Ukraine war and the problems in the Middle East, in order to extract more concessions against the Kurds, that is, to get more support from the USA, EU and NATO, it sometimes gives the impression of allying with Russia. Sometimes it follows the opposite policy and tries to extract concessions from Russia. These are of course not principled, moral and political situations. They call it Eastern cunning, so to speak. Although it seems to be within the system in a place like the Middle East, how successful it can be in these policies based on the USA and Europe on the one hand and Russia on the other is a matter of evaluation.

³ The Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi or Greater Middle East Project, implemented by the US since 2004, aims to transform the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa in order to open these regions to global markets and bring them up to the standards of Western democracy.

However, it is clear that the AKP fascist state is experiencing a deep economic collapse and decay. Considering that there is nothing as destructive as economic collapse, moral degeneration, political problems and dilemmas cannot be overcome. This is why the AKP fascist state is implementing unprincipled, relative and conjunctural policies with zigzags to save the day. As a result, if the cause of all these problems is the unresolved Kurdish question, it is clear that only with the solved Kurdish question will all these problems be solved.

2. How did the current process affect the fascist Turkish Republic? What is the current situation and what are the effects of the earthquake?

It should be noted that the colonialist-genocidal Turkish state is experiencing the most critical and even a turning point in all its processes. It is certain that the unresolved Kurdish question and undemocratised Turkey play a decisive role in this. The colonial Turkish state has never been sensitive to democracy in its centuries-old history. On the contrary, the colonialist-genocidal Turkish Republic has used all the power and means of the state to suppress and destroy movements demanding democracy and freedom and the Kurdish question at all costs. One can only imagine what kind of oppression, violence and persecution the state with such a mentality would inflict on all those who demand democracy and freedom, let alone pave the way for the democratisation of society. The Turkish state has indeed been based on protecting itself like a complete armour, neither tolerating any criticism and thought in the sense of opposition and alternative, nor allowing any social activism and reaction. This tradition is very strong in the history of the Turkish state and its rulers. Even in the Ottoman period, it is known that the sultan killed 17 grand viziers in one night. The same culture and tradition continues to exist now in a more conscious and organised form. The name of this is the colonialist-genocidal Turkish nation state. For them, the survival of the state is above everything else. This is even more so when the problem is those who struggle for democracy and freedom, the Kurdish problem and the Kurdish Freedom Struggle, which has not been solved in the past and the Armenians in the present, with inconceivable

vable false propaganda, demagoguery and agitation. In other words, the current economic and political crisis and bottleneck in which the Turkish state finds itself has such a historical background and tradition. It is permissible to spend all the means of the state, all the labour and material values of the society for the survival of the state in their own words. Society has always been made to believe this, educated and psychologised accordingly. In the century-long history of the Turkish Republic, no party has been in power for 20 years without interruption like the AKP. AKP has been in power for 20 years without interruption. Of course, it can be easily stated that it is not AKP's raising and improving the living and democratic standards of the society, but the role and mission that capitalist modernity has given and assigned to AKP in the Middle East is very important, even decisive. The forces of capitalist modernity have developed the political Islam terminology for this purpose, and the task has been assigned to AKP. The Greater Middle East Project was intended to be implemented through AKP and the Muslim Brotherhood. Based on this, AKP tried to consolidate and strengthen its power. However, the attempt to carry out the GMEP with the help of the AKP and the Muslim Brotherhood has not succeeded. This is because the AKP itself was ideologically close to movements with a more radical Islamic identity. Later on, it was seen that many radical groups, such as ISIS and Nusra gang groups, which are enemies of humanity and unprecedented in history, were associated with the AKP. The AKP has supported, trained, financed and used them first and foremost against the Kurds, but also in Syria, Libya, Armenia, etc. Later, in France, Germany and other countries of Europe, many people lost their lives in the actions carried out by ISIS and Nusra gang members supported and financed by AKP fascism. In summary, what I want to say is this; AKP could not fulfil its task of developing political Islam in the Middle East because it approached ideologically beyond the BOP project and developed deeper and multifaceted relations with ISIS and Nusra gangs. Especially by supporting ISIS and Nusra, it has been a partner in many massacres in Kurdistan and the Middle East and has fallen into a problematic and contradictory situation with many peoples and states. Except for a few states like Qatar, there is no state in the Middle East that the fascist AKP state does not have problems with today. It is experiencing contradictions and

problems with almost all states in the region. With all the peoples and cultures in the Middle East, this state has always had problems anyways. It has always been in conflict and problematic with all peoples and cultures. However, the colonialist-genocidal AKP state has persisted in these policies. It is experiencing a problematic and contradictory situation not only with the peoples of the Middle East and neighbouring states, but also with the USA and Europe. Besides, instead of democratising Turkey and solving the Kurdish question, it has taken the instability of the Middle East and the denial of the Kurds as its basis. It is meaningful that Erdoğan said „Kobani has fallen and will fall“ on the days when ISIS was massacring Kurds. He has occupied one third of Syria's territory and even attempted to annex it, just so that neighbouring Syria would not be democratised and the Kurds in Rojava would not be free. Not content with this, it has forced millions of Syrians to migrate to Turkey, fed tens of thousands of fascist gang groups and risked huge material expenditures. All this has undoubtedly had a great impact on the politics and economy of the Turkish state. Leader Apo⁴ states that „the dissolution and destruction of the economy is the real cause of the dissolution and destruction of the entire social sphere, morality and politics“. I think this is most valid for the current situation in Turkey under the rule of the AKP-MHP⁵ fascist government. For the first time in its history, Turkey's economy has entered into a very deep and multifaceted crisis at this level. Inflation has never been as high as it is today. The cost of living is no longer bearable. Unemployment is already at the top of all problems, imports have increased ten times more than exports. The same situation is also experienced in the political sphere. AKP fascism has organised interest groups and barons in its 20 years in power. All kinds of corruption and bribery have been considered permissible. It is a complete robbery order. Since it was extremely stuck and unsolvable, it was forced to review its relations with some states in the Middle East, the USA and Europe in order to see if it could fix something, even at the cost of some concessions. This is the situation in which the AKP-MHP fascist state is now in.

⁴ Abdullah Öcalan

⁵ The „Nationalist Movement Party“ is a far-right party, it has been in Erdoğan's governing coalition since 2018.

It is precisely in such a difficult and critical period that Turkey and the Kurdish regions experienced a truly shocking and terrifying earthquake, the earthquake of the century. In this earthquake, tens of thousands of people were forced or compelled to migrate from the Kurdish regions to the metropolises of Turkey and Europe as a policy of genocide. Millions of people were affected by the earthquake, many provinces, districts and villages were almost levelled to the ground and hundreds of thousands were left homeless. It is certain that the number of people who lost their lives is hidden by the state.

Even though they themselves say 45 thousand, it is rumoured in the society that the number is around 150 thousand. It is said that the forces of capitalist modernity have „emptied the earth below and polluted the earth above.“ I absolutely agree with this. It is natural to think that earthquakes, etc. are undoubtedly linked to nuclear tests carried out every day in the depths of an ocean or in a corner of our geography. These may be triggering factors. But it is generally known that events such as earthquakes are natural events that cannot be prevented. Earthquakes cannot be prevented, but their destruction can be minimised. There are examples of this in the world. Japan is an earthquake country. Even in earthquakes of 7 or 8 magnitude, it is known that people either do not lose their lives or very few deaths occur. The AKP government has not made any preparations against disasters such as earthquakes. On the contrary, it has left settlements to destruction and people to death with policies such as zoning amnesty etc. it has issued throughout Turkey, especially in earthquake zones. With the zoning law, immoral policies such as sharing and parcelling cities and villages have been implemented. Although the taxes collected from the people on the grounds of precaution against earthquakes were in the tens of billions, this money was never spent for the people who suffered in the earthquake. More precisely, no one is aware of the existence of such money and no one is asking for an account. But it is known that this money was used in the war against the Kurdistan guerrilla. It is inconceivable that all these developments would not have a shaking effect on the politics of Turkey and the AKP-MHP fascist government at the level of the earthquake. The AKP-MHP fascist government did not change the election calendar after the earthquake. The elections will be held on 14 May 2023, they

have decided so. Because if the elections are postponed, it is not possible for the AKP-MHP fascist government to overcome the accumulated political, economic and social problems. Because they have mobilised all the budget, capital and means of the state with a 5-month planning as an election investment. They know very well that time will not be enough for the results of this. For this reason, they have seen it more suitable for their interests to go to the elections by explaining what they have done and what they want to do with a great propaganda agitation. The result is that from now on, Turkey will be called pre-earthquake and post-earthquake. So nothing will be the same as before. I believe that everything of this exploitative and robbery order, the mentality that wants to eliminate the Kurdish will and existence and destroy the Kurdish Freedom Movement will remain under the rubble.

3. What kind of a task does the current situation impose on revolutionaries in Turkey and in the earthquake zone in particular?

Extraordinary situations may not always create revolutions. If revolutionaries do not understand the time of change and transformation well and do not fully fulfil their duties and responsibilities to lead society, such processes can sometimes produce counter-revolutions. It is already clear that a counterrevolution mentality is in power. Society has no economic, social, political or cultural problems that have been solved. Women's freedom and the Kurdish problem, especially the women's problem, have not been solved. Wherever we look, Turkey is currently full of problems and contradictions on all sides. If these are well evaluated and the revolutionary, democratic common will of the society is revealed, not AKP-MHP fascism, no power can stand against this will. It is clear that the struggle must be carried on in many ways as well as creatively. Indeed, the society and peoples of Turkey yearn for democracy and freedom. There are now more than enough conditions to respond to this. The problem again comes back to the vanguard forces. Especially the role of women and youth is extremely important here. It is the duty of the vanguard to raise the awareness of the society, to transform its reaction and anger into action. It is like there is no one who is not disturbed by the fascist regime, who is not oppressed and persecuted,

who does not have anger and reaction. A handful of capital and power supporters are only satisfied with their situation. It is important to mobilise the 90% of the society who are unhappy and dissatisfied. As I have stated, it is a requirement of the character of this process to develop radical popular serhildans, including economic, political, military, legal, illegal, legal and democratic methods of struggle. The task that history and the process we are going through imposes on revolutionaries, socialists and all groups who are dissatisfied with this fascist regime is to raise the struggle with a spirit of full mobilisation. The Kurdish people are already waging an uninterrupted struggle, resisting with a sacrificial spirit, even at great cost, and shaking the regime. But there are also those who are persecuted by the fascist AKP-MHP regime ethnically and culturally as well as religiously. If Alevis, Assyrians and Ezidis really want to live their beliefs freely and democratically, they should be in a great struggle against AKP-MHP fascism. The Labour and Freedom Bloc must include all these segments and fulfil its pioneering role in this regard. As I mentioned above, Turkey has now entered into an election process. This election is unlike the previous elections. As I mentioned above, the mentality of the century-old republic is embodied in the form of Ergenekon⁶, the Eurasia camp⁷ and Erdoğan's personality. Therefore, to make Erdoğan lose the election equals to realise a break in the mentality of the Turkish state. It is clear that this will have a very important political impact on the future of the society and peoples of Turkey. It is also important that all segments of society who cannot save themselves from being beaten by the state and who desire a democratic society and future instead of a fascist and dictatorial state unite at this point. Especially for this reason, the presidential election is likely to be very problematic and tough. Socialists, revolutionaries, patriots and patriots should not take a dismissive approach to this election. Everyone must play an active role in the election process as a ground for struggle. Raising the consciousness of the society, mobilising it, gaining morale and motivation develops more in processes such as elections. The acquisition of socialist, revolutionary and democratic values requires this.

⁶ nationalist underground organisation

⁷ a faction within the Turkish state that wants to strengthen Turkey's role as a Eurasian power and thus its ties with Russia and China, among others.

It is right to take on the electoral process with a very broad perspective. No social segment, no belief and cultural group should be left unorganised and alone. We must act with a democratic spirit of struggle in which they are all included and their will is represented. I believe that the Labour and Freedom Bloc, of which HDP is a part, will play an important role in this regard. The Labour and Freedom Bloc must be organised all over Turkey, taking into account the aspirations and demands of each social segment, and in this sense a real Kurdish-Turkish alliance must be achieved for democratic Turkey and the solution of the Kurdish question. Our peoples, revolutionary and democratic organisations, institutions and individuals displayed a very valuable example of unity and solidarity during the earthquake. This means that extraordinary situations also develop extraordinary discourses and attitudes. No difficulty and barrier could stand against revolutionary and democratic sensitivity and responsibility. Hundreds of non-governmental organisations, groups and individuals all over Turkey and Kurdistan acted as if they had been mobilised and flocked to the earthquake zones. This is a very valuable sense of responsibility. They have tried to respond to people who have never seen each other, who do not know each other, who are not relatives or peers, by taking great difficulties and hardships into consideration. Everyone tried to respond to the needs of the victims of the earthquake by contributing whatever they could from their hands and homes. This sense of responsibility has created a very valuable relationship and organising network between our people and our peoples. In the natural course of the process, communal style organisations emerged and a fully organised movement style developed. Here, I must once again emphasise the role and pioneering efforts of women in this regard. With a truly incredible sacrifice, she has pioneered the development of this spirit of unity and solidarity. It is indisputable that the earthquake caused great damage. But it is also certain that it had such great moral gains. I must also remember Amed⁸ in the example of communal organisation and solidarity. Amed played a central role in ensuring its organisation. And of course, above all, I have to state that this great solidarity and sense of responsibility shown by our peoples is above and ahead of everything else.

⁸ Kurdish town in Bakur, Turkey. Turkish Diyarbakır.

The high example of solidarity shown by our peoples living in Europe is also very valuable. They mobilised in time and tried to respond to the suffering and needs of our people in the earthquake by bringing together all their means. The spirit of communal organisation, unity and solidarity that emerged and developed during the earthquake is capable of everything. In the natural process of the struggle and in this extraordinary process we are in, it is certain that much will be gained when we act with the same spirit of unity and solidarity. Many states in many parts of the world have made important contributions to the colonialist, fascist AKP state during the earthquake process. We are certainly not in a position to criticise this. No matter for what purpose and why they did it, the important thing is to reduce the loss of life in the earthquake, to bring the wounded back to health as soon as possible and to meet the needs of the victims. Yet the AKP state has prevented even this. The state monopolised many aids and used them wherever it wanted. Even the Red Crescent, which exists with the money of the society, has sold even the living materials prepared for such days. But what I really want to mention here is this; this is also a call to the revolutionary, socialist, patriotic people and organisations of the world, as well as nongovernmental organisations. You may not be able to provide as much aid and contributions as the international states provide to the Turkish state. However, your moral feelings, humanitarian and friendly approaches should have been at a higher level due to your democratic values. Moreover, this should always be the case not only in the case of disasters such as earthquakes, but also in the struggle for democracy and freedom, unity and solidarity between peoples, communities and cultures.

4. What does the ceasefire mean?

First of all, I believe that we should use the concepts/terms correctly. You ask for a ceasefire, but we have declared our decision as a decision of inaction, not a ceasefire. The cities and villages of Turkey and Kurdistan suffered a great destruction in the earthquake. In the face of such a great earthquake, which occurs maybe once in a century, or maybe once in a few centuries, we, as the leadership of our movement, felt the need to evaluate the situation. As it is known, the Turkish state is actually waging

a comprehensive and continuous war of genocide, the centre of which is İmralı⁹. Despite this, as I stated in my statement to the press, we have approached the problem in a truly humanitarian, conscientious and moral manner. In such a process, we announced that the guerrilla will not take any action unless we are attacked, and that we have decided to take the decision of complete inaction in the metropolises of Turkey and in all cities. Otherwise, in the preceding months and years, various groups, organisations and personalities, sometimes openly and sometimes indirectly, who had relations with many states or states, were not only demanding us to take a ceasefire decision, they were almost imposing it. Of course, we have always tried to make sense of such attempts. But since we know the strategy and concept of the AKP-MHP fascist state to liquidate our movement and break the will of the Kurdish people, we believed that a unilateral ceasefire decision would not be right. I repeat; this decision, which we have taken purely due to our humanitarian, conscientious and moral responsibility, is really different from the unilateral ceasefire decisions we have implemented many times before. Perhaps I should also mention the following paradox or inconsistency here. Those who had insistently suggested a ceasefire to us have so far shown an indifferent and insensitive attitude, as if they had never made such a suggestion. Of course, this is their own business. But I know that our decision of inaction has an important place in the European and world press and that it is being discussed. I also know that the AKP-MHP fascism will never make any positive discourse or take any positive step, even a small one, in the name of the solution of the Kurdish question and the democratisation of Turkey. Therefore, our decision of inaction has nothing to do with the possibility that the AKP-MHP state might show the slightest flexibility. I have tried to summarise how the AKP was kept in power for 20 years, on what bases and dynamics, and for what needs and projects. During these long years, important developments and changes have taken place in Turkey. Eurasia, Ergenekon and the pseudo-Islamic identity of the AKP have become partners and have taken over the state with all its institutions.

⁹The prison island where Adullah Öcalan has been imprisoned since 1999.

They have even liquidated classical Kemalism, and it is evident how they have implemented an exterminationist and aggressive policy against democratic forces and the Kurdish Freedom Movement. In other words, it would not be wrong to say that the name of the current state is AKP. In order to win the elections, the AKP state will certainly resort to all kinds of tricks and bullying, using all the means and power of the state. I am talking about a state tendency that is so monopolised that it finds personality in Ergenekon and the Eurasian clique. Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] talks about the existence of the Kurdish problem and the unsolved Kurdish problem as follows: „... It is more realistic to talk about the Kurdish deadlock rather than the Kurdish problem. Just as Alexander’s resolution of the Gordian knot, even with the sword, made possible the conquest of all Asia, the resolution of the Kurdish knot will make possible the democratic conquest of all societies, especially in the Middle East, and the chance to live free.“ As Leader Apo said, the solution of the Kurdish question has a great meaning and value for the democratisation of Turkey and the Middle East. In this regard, Leader Apo said: „As I have always said, the Kurds can play a role similar to the one they played at the dawn of civilisation, this time on the basis of democratic civilisation“. The difficulties as well as the importance of our struggle stem from this. In our 50-year history of struggle, we have always won by taking resistance as a basis with the right perspective and paradigm, and I have no doubt that we will win from now on by resisting with Leader Apo’s Democratic Nation paradigm.

CEMİL BAYIK

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Other brochure of the «Widerstandsvernetzung»:

August 15th, 2022 – 38 Years of Armed Struggle of the PKK in
Kurdistan

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