

Petition against the frame-up of the Socialist Laborers Party in Turkey

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The Socialist Laborers Party (SLP) in Turkey has launched a petition against the frame-up operation in which 19 of its members, including its chairwoman, were arrested on December 13.

They were charged with membership of a fabricated “terrorist organization” called “Trotskyists, 4th Left Construction (Bolshevik-Trotsky).” Three of the detainees were placed under house arrest on Tuesday, while the others were released under judicial supervision.

According to the case files, the arrested members have been physically followed for four years, and phone calls, social media accounts and financial records of party members have been examined by the police. Legal party activities such as “visits to workers’ strikes, women’s activities, summer camps, interviews” were shown as “criminal evidence.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* and the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu, notwithstanding their political differences with the SLP, oppose this sham police operation and support the petition. The case based on fabricated charges must be dropped and those under house arrest must be released. This should be part of the demand for the release of all political prisoners.

David North, Chairman of the International Editorial Board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, explained the principled approach of the WSWs on the Turkish state crackdown and the petition on X/Twitter, stating:

The Socialist Laborers Party in Turkey (Sosyalist Emekçiler Partisi) has been subjected to an attack on its democratic rights by the Erdogan government. Notwithstanding its political differences with this organization, the World Socialist Web Site calls on all its readers

to sign the Sosyalist Emekçiler Partisi’s petition and demand the immediate end to the persecution of its members.

As the Turkish police attempt to associate a legal left-wing party with “terrorism”, the political and media establishment in Turkey and allied NATO powers seek to rehabilitate and establish diplomatic ties with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a genuine terrorist organization that has seized power in Syria.

Noting the increased repression in Turkey by the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an, the petition states that “the operation and trial process launched against the Socialist Laborers’ Party (SEP), based on accusations of an imaginary terrorist organization, ‘Trotskyists 4th Left Construction (Bolshevik-Trotsky),’ is not only an attack on this party but also a serious threat to all democratic rights and freedoms.”

As stated in the petition, no one except the police knows the name or existence of this fictitious “terrorist organization,” whose existence allegedly predates the NATO-backed military coup of 1980. The danger posed by this frame-up is explained in the petition as follows: “The police can fabricate new imaginary terrorist organizations at will and use similar conspiracies against other actors of the democratic opposition.”

It went on to say that “The criminalization of a legal political party through lawlessness, lies, and manipulation is not only an attack on that party but also an assault on the democratic rights of society as a whole,” before adding: “Attacks on trade unionists, journalists, political parties, democratic mass organizations, lawyers, and municipalities governed by

opposition parties must end!”

The frame-up of the Socialist Laborers Party is part of the escalating police state repression in Turkey.

The Kurdish nationalist Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM)—several of whose elected mayors were dismissed and replaced by trustees—announced that 3,128 of its members were detained and 409 of them arrested last year.

While the government jailed for months dozens of people who tried to celebrate May Day in Istanbul’s Taksim Square, scores of pro-Palestinian demonstrators were detained or arrested for protesting Turkey’s continued trade with and oil shipments to Israel amid the genocide in Gaza.

This wave of repression came after Erdoğan called for “strengthening the internal front” under conditions of deepening war in the Middle East and the intensification of the class struggle. On the same day as the operation against the Socialist Laborers Party, Erdoğan tried to de facto ban a strike by metalworkers under the pretext of a “threat to national security.” A few days later, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan visited Damascus, embracing HTS leader al-Jolani.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu also issued a statement on the petition on X/Twitter, stating:

We express our support for the petition against the frame-up operation against the Socialist Laborers Party and call on all those who defend basic democratic rights to oppose such operations and demand the release of all political prisoners.

This struggle must be based on and addressed to the working class, independent of all parties of the capitalist establishment, on the basis of an international socialist program.

The statement also underlined that the escalating war abroad means class war and the elimination of basic democratic rights at home, explaining that this is a common agenda of the ruling classes around the world.

The SEG emphasized that this especially exposes the reactionary character of NATO member and allied regimes claiming to be democratic, pointing out that the Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotyuk, founder and

leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), has been imprisoned since April 25:

The case of Bogdan Syrotyuk, the Ukrainian Trotskyist imprisoned on frame-up charges since April 25, is the most striking example of it. Comrade Bogdan, who opposes both NATO and the Ukrainian regime as well as the Putin regime in Russia, and who stands for the socialist unity of the Ukrainian, Russian and international working class against the war, is imprisoned on charges of “treason” for writing for the *World Socialist Web Site*.

On this occasion, we once again call attention to the global campaign for Bogdan’s freedom launched by the International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* and urge you to support it at wsws.org/freebogdan.



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