



KURD-CHR

CENTRE KURDE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

URGENT APPEAL OF THE PEOPLES' EQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY PARTY (DEM PARTY)

CONCERNING THE UNLAWFUL VERDICTS IN THE KOBANÊ CASE

17 MAY 2024

In October 2014, as the so-called "Islamic State" (ISIS) was about to take over the city of Kobanê, massive democratic demonstrations broke out around the world, including in many Turkish cities. During these demonstrations, 46 civilians, including 34 members and supporters of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), were killed by pro-ISIS groups, with the provocation of the Turkish security forces.

Despite the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)¹, which made it clear that the HDP could not be held responsible for the violence, the Turkish authorities persisted with the legal proceedings launched against the executive members of the HDP, including co-chairs Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş. The defendants refuted all the allegations, but the court continued the trials under obvious political influence. Judicial irregularities were evident from the outset, when the initial judge was found to be a member of a criminal organisation, and were blatant throughout the trial. The court unfairly convicted many HDP politicians on the basis of baseless allegations.

The unfounded sentences handed down by the 22nd High Criminal Court in Ankara on 16 May 2024 are as follows (duration of imprisonment in brackets):

- 1) MR. SELAHATTİN DEMİRTAŞ - Lawyer, HDP co-president (42 years and 6 months)
- 2) MS. FİGEN YÜKSEKDAĞ - HDP co-president (30 years 3 months)
- 3) MR. ALP ALTINÖRS - member of the Executive Board of HDP (22 years and 6 months)
- 4) MR. NAZMİ GÜR - HDP deputy co-president for foreign affairs and member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe - PACE (22 years and 6 months)

¹ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22tabview%22:%5B%22notice%22%2C%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-207326%22%5D%7D>



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- 5) MR. ZEKİ ÇELİK - member of the Executive Board of HDP (22 years and 6 months)
- 6) MS. ZEYNEP KARAMAN - member of the Executive Board of HDP (22 years and 6 months)
- 7) MS. PERVİN ODUNCU - member of the Executive Board of HDP (22 years and 6 months)
- 8) MS. GÜNAY KUBİLAY - President of the Executive Board of HDP (20 years and 6 months)
- 9) MR. İSMAİL ŞENGÜL - member of the Executive Board of HDP (20 years and 6 months)
- 10) MS. DİLEK YAĞLI - member of the Executive Board of HDP (20 years of imprisonment)
- 11) MR. BÜLENT PARMAKSIZ - member of the Executive Board of HDP (18 years)
- 12) MR. ALİ ÜRKÜT - member of the Executive Board of HDP (17 years)
- 13) MR. CİHAN ERDAL - member of the Executive Board of HDP (16 years)
- 14) MS. GÜLTAN KIŞANAK - Mayor of the Metropolitan Municipality of Diyarbakir (12 years)
- 15) MS. SEBAHAT TUNCEL - former Member of Parliament and executive member of the women's assembly of the HDP (12 years)
- 16) MS. ZEYNEP ÖLBECİ - member of the Executive Board of HDP (11 years and 6 months)
- 17) MR. AHMET TÜRK - Mayor of the Metropolitan Municipality of Mardin (10 years)
- 18) MS. EMİNE AYNA - former Member of Parliament and executive member of the women's assembly of the HDP (10 years)
- 19) MS. AYLA AKAT ATA - former Member of Parliament and executive member of the women's assembly of the HDP (9 years and 9 months)
- 20) MS. AYNUR AŞAN - member of the HDP assembly (9 years)
- 21) MS. AYŞE YAĞCI - member of the HDP assembly (9 years)
- 22) MS. MERYEM ADIBELLİ - member of the Executive Board of HDP (9 years)
- 23) MR. MESUT BAĞCIK - member of the HDP assembly (9 years)
- 24) MR. NEZİR ÇAKAN - member of the Executive Board of HDP (9 years)



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The decisions taken by the court concerning HDP politicians are in direct contradiction with the decision of the ECHR and the Turkish constitution. These verdicts are unlawful for our party and our people. We urgently call on all individuals and organisations that defend human rights and fundamental democratic values to denounce these illegal decisions and to uphold the verdict of the ECHR.

Ebru Günay & Berdan Öztürk (av.berdanozturk@gmail.com), Co-presidents of the foreign affairs commission of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) international@demparti.org.tr



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Appendix

Some articles on the web about the case:

<https://humanrightscommission.house.gov/defending-freedom-project/Countries/Turkey/Selahattin-Demirta%C8%99>

<https://yetkinreport.com/en/2024/05/16/42-years-prison-sentence-for-demirtas-in-kobani-case/>

<https://www.lefigaro.fr/international/turquie-le-leader-kurde-selahattin-demirtas-deja-incarcere-a-ete-condamne-a-42-ans-de-prison-20240517>

https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2024/05/16/turquie-le-chef-de-file-kurde-selahattin-demirtas-condamne-a-42-ans-de-prison_6233672_3210.html

International NGOs also expressed concern:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/05/16/turkiye-kurdish-politicians-convicted-unjust-mass-trial>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/03/turkey-failure-to-free-osman-kavala-and-selahattin-demirtas-makes-mockery-of-erdogans-human-rights-action-plan/>