

WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY



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INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN of **TİP**



ERDOGAN'S HOPELESS WAR AGAINST SOCIAL MEDIA!



On 29th of July Erdogan's government passed a new law on regulating social media. The new regulations do not imply a total ban or shut down, but it gives an absolute right to the government to impose any rule over the social media companies through Turkish jurisdiction. President Erdogan and his ruling party AKP, having already taken control over 85 % of Turkey's traditional media channels, is behind the legislation, arguing that it was needed to "protect citizens from cybercrime and slander". However, it is part of a broader effort to control the flow of information in the country. The new social media regulation is a part of a series of futile effort that Erdogan tried and failed many times before this last law.

First, the "new law on social media regulations" does not aim to totally ban or close the social media networks. Government's new law aims to

enforce social media companies to open legal offices in Turkey under Turkish law. That means government wants them to act under Turkish law financially, legally and of course politically. Since the law enforcement institutions are under absolute control of the government, this new regulation means a total control of the social media by the government through political control of the Turkish courts. In other words, the new regulations do not imply a total ban or shut down, however, it gives an absolute right to the government to impose any rule over the social media companies though Turkish jurisdiction. If the social media companies with over 1.000.000 (one million) subscribers do not agree conditions of the new law they will face a 5-step confinement (restrictions), and fine:



5 Steps of Confinement

If social/digital media networks do not open legal offices in Turkey under Turkish jurisdiction, first they will be fined to 10 million Turkish lira (about 1.2 million Euro), if they continue to do so after one month the fine will raise to 30 million lira (about 3.6 million euros). If they still do not agree with the new law the 3rd step of government (via Turkish courts) would be banning Turkish companies to give advertisement to those social media networks. Fourth degree of the penalty would be 50% lowering the bandwidth of those social media channels and finally in the fifth step 90% of social media's access bandwidth would be limited. So technically they will not be "closed" but access to them would be extremely low quality and extremely slow. Not a close down but almost one.

What is Erdogan's aim?

He is losing support in the country and especially among the young people. He believes if he could control the social media, he could win people's support back. A strategy didn't work in any country. Yet, he wants to try it. He has the Iranian and Chinese examples and hopes to win this futile war over social media.

Government Trolls lost their financial bases!

Twitter's latest decision to delete some pro-government Turkish accounts also triggered this social media control campaign. In 2019 June when Erdogan lost all the municipal election in almost all big cities he also lost financial base for the support the pro-government social media trolls. Erdogan's mayors were paying salaries to thousands of social media fake account holders. Last year they lost this opportunity. What is more important than losing his fake account is losing people's support. Especially the generation z. or the millennials.

Many public surveys show that Erdogan has dramatically been losing popularity even among the conservative youth/millennials. It is a reality that even in the most conservative towns in Turkey people are following oppositional accounts or K-Pop stars or watching Netflix etc. Erdogan believes all those channels and networks are propagating a non-conservative, non-Islamic lifestyle. This is the most important reason why he likes to control the ideological sphere through controlling social media.

Social media is a space for women working class, youth voices!

This law is again a form of authoritarian drift on the part of the government, which gradually want to control the press and the media and silence all forms of political protest. Authoritarianism goes hand in hand with a propaganda machine. He controls the 85 % of the traditional media. But his influence in the social media is quite low. He likes to do same thing that he did to traditional media: Buying them, if expensive then controlling them.

The new law causes more tension and more discontent. People in Turkey, especially young generation, consider social media is the only channel that they could make their voices heard. Social media is a space for women, working class, youth voices!

People believe and know that if the social media controlled by the government, they could not inform other people about human rights violations, crimes against women, children and animals. Those are subject in many cases social media campaign forced the courts and government to do something. People, especially youth think that the new regulation will leave them voiceless.

People will use VPN and other tools to tackle with the new regulations but also more and more protests are underway.



TENSION IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: FOR WHAT PURPOSE



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For the past few years Eastern Mediterranean has witnessed a competition for control zones and energy resources by Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, Libya, and other countries in the region over the search for hydro-carbon deposits. However, the countries are not the only actors. Through major companies such as TPAO, Exxon Mobil, Total, Eni, Kogas, BG and Delek, the capitalists are also in the equation.

The tension, which arose after the apportion of areas east and south of Cyprus and Turkey's claims on some areas, are now escalating west of the island and south of Meis and Rhodes islands. The two Navtex transmissions, one in which Turkey announced they will survey with the Oruc Reis vessel in July but revoked on Merkel's request, and the second sent a few days ago with the same message, have once again escalated the tensions over the sea.

In the background of the current situation, there are two separate agreements; one between Turkey and Libya Government of National Accord over the jurisdiction limitations in the Eastern Mediterranean and another signed as a retaliation between Greece and Egypt in a similar context.

The issue is about which countries can carry on surveying, mining and processing underwater deposits. In more tangible terms, which of these countries' exclusive economic zone do these areas belong to?

The AKP-MHP collaboration presents their case on the Eastern Mediterranean dispute to the public as a national cause with the "blue country" motto, but the dispute has nothing to do with sovereignty or territorial waters. The agreements between Turkey-Libya GNA and Greece-Egypt



are about EEZ designations rather than territorial seas.

"Blue country" discourse has no relation to the context of the controversial agreements. This chauvinist discourse serves as a convenient tool for the government to conceal the true purpose of the agreements with Libya, to fuel nationalist sentiments among the public in order to avoid provoking reactions in case of a war in the region, and gather support from some parts of the opposition with such nationalist sentiments.

Another excuse for the Eastern Mediterranean surveys is "to meet the energy demands of Turkey". But this also does not reflect the reality in some respects.

First is the fact that Turkey does not require as much energy as claimed. Data points out that we do not need to produce more energy than we do, or to grasp for new resources.

Data from the end of 2019 suggest that power plants in Turkey are only used in half capacity. Increasing the capacity can meet energy demands until 2026 without the need of new resources.

Second is that even if there were such a need, experts suggest that Eastern Mediterranean does not harbor such extensive energy resources, that extracting said resources would be too expensive and not worth such investment and expenditure.



A vital point overlooked amidst these debates is, whether there is a need or not, at the end of the day using these energy resources will inevitably harm nature and humanity. The hydro-carbon and natural gas resources in Eastern Mediterranean are fossil fuels, and the fundamental reason behind the climate crisis, one of the greatest environmental issues we face today, is the rapidly increasing carbon emissions as a result of fossil fuel consumption due to capitalist activities.

Then the question now is why does AKP choose to spend so much at the expense of nature and humanity, and to risk causing political tensions and active conflict?

It appears that the tensions that risk bringing us to the brink of war are not for homeland defense, public energy needs or for the sake of nature. The steps taken in the last month only serve the expansionist policies, the lust for economic and political gains on the sea and the desire to have a say on the region and on the internal policies of other nations.

We have witnessed the government trying to take advantage of every gap it can find along the Middle-East - Eastern Mediterranean line and adopt policies supporting Islamism in different countries (such as Libya today) due to its own Islamist agenda. It is certain that we have raised our voice today in order not to fall into a deep hole in the west, as we did in Middle East in the last couple of years, due to wrong foreign policies of AKP under the name "strategic depth".



WE WARN AKP! WE WILL DEFEND THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION TO LIVE!

The Palace Regime of Erdogan, attacking the Istanbul Convention that was opened for signature in 2011 and was the first signed by Turkey, and on August 1, 2014 begin to be applied. The reason for the attack is clear: their "holy" family is "harmed". It is as if the remission of killer and rapist men, and the killing of 185 women only in 2020, do not harm the society!

Let the women be beaten, raped, silenced, do not let them complain, let LGBTI + are invisible, be killed by burning! Let your family and your values sink under the ground!

The Istanbul Convention basically has 4 main objectives:

- a. Protecting women from all forms of violence, combating violence against women and domestic violence, preventing and prosecuting violence.
- b. To promote the equality of women and men by empowering women to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.
- c. To protect the victims of violence,
- d. To ensure coordination between all institutions and organizations to struggle against violence, to provide coordination

The effort to separate the family from the public sphere, from the sphere of struggle aims to isolate women. The power is trying to eliminate the state's obligations against violence against women and to close the issue between "husband and wife". However, the Istanbul Convention puts the private space under control. That's why, the Convention bothers them. However, the disappearance of the state's obligation means that more



women are killed, women who are victims of violence and LGBTI + are insecure, they cannot find shelter for themselves.

There is no doubt that AKP, Erdoğan or radical Islamist groups want to create a country where women are silenced. This is not only the policy of AKP, it is also very appropriate for the the interests of capitalists. This is how they keep the minimum wage under poverty line, deepen exploitation. Women's misery deeply rooted in the very basic class character of AKP regime. Thus, our struggle proposes a comprehensive plan to stop femicides. We build a battleground around concrete demands; it will weaken both AKP government and capitalist aggression.

As women and LGBTI +'s, we do not want the family of inequality, violence and poverty that rise above exploitation. We filled the streets when they wanted to get the girls married to their rapists, when they tried to ban abortion, when they tried to block the streets of Taksim to women. Both children, women and LGBTI + enemies are trying to implement the anti-women and LGBTI+ policies. So now we will defend the Istanbul Convention, our right to life, our freedom, and the freedom of children to the fullest. Istanbul Convention is not the maximum demand of our party, we want the absolute equality, freedom, and revolution!

Your holy family will sink, women and LGBTI + will live!
Implement the Istanbul Convention!
Istanbul Convention Keeps Us Alive!



NEWS FROM THE PARTY



Haber Global a TV channel invite a fascist who were involved in a massacre of TIP militants in Bahçelievler massacre 42 years ago. Therefore, we as party made a demonstration in front of the channel

In the anniversary of Suruç Massacre in 20th of July, the TIP youth participated into the protest. In that protest, many people including our comrades were detained with torture. After 48 hours detention, they were released.



With the involvement of deputy chairman Barış Atay, our new branch and our cultural center in Hatay Samandağ has been opened.

In the first anniversary of IDA Mountain resistance against the destruction of nature for the sake of the profit of the capitalists, there were press conferences, activities, and protests in various cities. In the region, the police attacked to the ecology activists including our comrades.





NEWS FROM THE PARTY



TIP İstanbul held a press conference in front of Zorlu Holding to protest Vestel, which did not take measures against the Covid-19 epidemic and caused the employee to die.

In İzmir, to protest the price rise of transportation, we held a press conference in front of the Izmir Municipality



Despite the increasing number of cases in the factory, we boycott Boyner, which is not quarantined, continues to force workers to work!

In various cities, the women filled the streets against the withdrawal demand of the government from the Istanbul Convention by saying "We do not give up our rights"





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