

# WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY



## INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN of TİP

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In memory of Metin Çulhaoğlu (1947-2022)

# AS THE COMPASS ONCE AGAIN POINTS WESTWARD

Considering the current tendencies in international relations, the following can be foreseen about Turkey in the near future: Following its occasionally exaggerated, but ultimately factual “independent conduct,” it seems that Turkey will try to re-enter the US/NATO axis and seek to tighten the loosened gap with it.

With a careful reading, one can notice that what is meant here is not a tendency of a single government but of Turkey in general. In other words, this tendency will prevail no matter if the current regime continues or the so-called “table of six” of the opposition replaces it. The regime in Turkey will interpret the new opportunity granted to the US/NATO axis by the Russo-Ukrainian war to force its allies into line, as well as the fact that Financial

Times named Erdogan “indispensable” despite everything, as a situation that demands requiring.

Considered as the new candidate to power, the table of six, too, makes sure that its spokespeople take every opportunity to emphasize NATO’s significance for democracy and freedom.

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At this point, one may as well ask how will the AKP regime accommodate its most essential agenda of reshaping politics and society “on a religious basis” with its need to (re)align with the US/NATO/Europe axis?

We do not think that this poses as crucial a question as one might expect.

To expect the Western countries and their political and military organizations to oppose such anti-secular actions as the ones in Turkey just by principle, following their own history and accomplishments, would be an utterly baseless expectation. To put it simpler: Every hundred thousand refugees that Turkey keeps within its borders and away from Europe would buy Turkey an amendment for two articles of the civil law... Increasing the ten-unit political distance with Russia to twelve units would buy Turkey reorganization of the education system into gender-based separation, so to speak...

Eventually, one should not think that closing the gap would bring about a major decrease in anti-secularism.

Relations with Greece, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean, Cyprus... These issues are all (although hard to solve) relatively easy to manage.

More significant are those with Syria and Russia as well as the "Kurdish question."

As the approach to the US/NATO axis continues, there will be attempts to resolve these issues.

"Cutting loose from the West," "shoving off Europe," "Eurasian preference" etc. have always been meaningless gestures; today they are even more so.

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If the tendency we have tried to summarize above is correct, then what can we say about its implications for the left?

Here we will talk first about a threat, and then about a baseless expectation.

The threat: The disruptive effects of a liberal circle in Turkey on the left is still felt. After its degradation, this liberal circle has adopted a "Hacivat"-like approach begging to be "entertained." The circle believes to have found its "entertainment" in the escalation of political dichotomy that emerged in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis. Just as it does today, this circle will continue to promote NATO in the new era, and even more fervently so. Without a doubt, this promotion will be done in the name of "democracy" and "freedoms," with the liberals pushing the values they once found "positivistic," "orientalist," or "West-centric" in front of the left and hypocritically demanding: "Now, pick your side."

The baseless expectation: It is undeniable that the success of the left wave in the 60s in Turkey owed a great deal to its anti-imperialist and anti-NATO stance. But it should also be admitted that this was mainly a reaction against the pro-NATO hysteria of the 50s and relied heavily on phenomena such as the Cyprus issue or military bases. Besides taking a determined and decisive stance against the issues that imperialism and its organizations will impose on Turkey, it does not seem likely that under the current conditions, a new rise in the left in Turkey can be based primarily on an anti-NATO and anti-imperialist stance.

**METİN ÇULHAOĞLU** • 12 July 2022







# THE LABOUR AND FREEDOM ALLIANCE SETS OFF!

The Labour and Freedom Alliance announced on September 24th that it set off at the grand public meeting at the Haliç Congress Centre. The delegates of the political parties and institutions gave their speeches at the public meeting which was organised with great participation from workers, labourers, women and the youth.

## The Programme Framework of the Labour and Freedom Alliance

The urgent duties of the next term is to halt the devastation caused by the Peoples' Alliance in many fields from the economy to the politics, to end the one-man regime, to better the work-ing and living conditions of the people and to facilitate a change and transformation based on democratic rights and liberties.

The strengthening and unwavering continuation of the mutual and united struggle of forces on the side of labour, peace and democracy is of vital importance for the facilitation of this change and transformation. This union and struggle has to be a defining and vigorous force of the up-coming period. The expectations and the demands of the people is as such.

The mutual struggle to be made and the strong and determined attitude to be espoused will be a march

with steps taken for the realisation of the urgent economic demands of the people and for democratisation.

The elections, which will be a destination frequented by this march, pose a critical importance for Turkey.

Upholding the struggle of labour and democracy by not pinning all hopes on the ballot boxes, but also not by ignoring them, and motivating the people to making gains out of the elections and taking all necessary precautions for the safety of said elections are unignorable responsibilities.

The alliance, for which our aim is to accomplish the urgent economic and political goals in this extraordinary period, is the alliance of all exploited and oppressed masses. It is the alliance and the solidarity of the workers, the labourers, the poor, the women, the youth and the defenders of the nature and human rights. It is a foundation for a united, strong and determined struggle.

### **An Economic Order Suitable For Humane Working and Living Conditions**

The programme and the actions of the current government rely on a political understanding and practices which prioritise the interests of the imperialism, the capitalist class and the nepotic companies and holdings of their own. This unrightful and illegal system of government contracts which emboldens their own cohorts needs to be legally reviewed.

The economic and social deprivation experienced by the workers and labourers, by the farmers, by the peasants and small business owners, by the oppressed echelons of the society, caused by the adhered politics of exploitation and oppression has become the principal problem of the people. Taking tangible steps to solve problems such as the high costs of living, low wages, un-employment, poverty, making a living, housing etc. and improving the living and working conditions of workers, labourers and the oppressed masses of the people is the paramount issue for everyone today.

Based on this fact, it is imperative that policies which will make the comprador and international capital foot the heavy bill of the economic crisis and the multi-faceted social devastation and to end the precarity and lack of future prospects experienced by the workers.

### **In this context;**

Following an economic programme which will put an end to the price hikes, raises the wages above the hunger and poverty lines to a level of humane living, bans dismissals, increases employment, removes the taxes collected from the fundamental consumables, which taxes the low-income bracket little and the high-income bracket high and which will end poverty, is the greatest social necessity.

Using the budget funds not for building palaces, waging wars, enriching fellow travellers or the payment of external debts but for the economic welfare of the people and direct income support policies are the first steps of this programme.

Providing fundamental necessities such as power, gas, water and internet connection to people whose monthly incomes are below the poverty line free of charge under a 'programme of social rights', completely forgiving all student loans and solving the problems of workers who cannot retire due to their number of registered days and the public workers, principally teachers, whose assignments are not made, are urgent issues.

Improving the living conditions of pensioners, forgiving the debts of poor peasants and supporting small business owners are amongst things first to be done.

In order to provide qualified, free and public services especially in the fields of energy, transportation, healthcare and education, urgent steps need to be taken for nationalisation of institutions which are made under the purview of workers and labourers.

Policies which will end the poverty of women and enable them to be equal and active in all fields of economic life are a must.

It must be forbidden to use the labour of children and youth below the age of 18 as paid labour.

The "Readmission Agreement - EU-Turkey Deal" needs to be cancelled. A peaceful environment in the region must be created for migrants who wish to return, and the status of refugee must be granted for those who wish to live together and the conditions to do so must be enacted.

## A DEMOCRACY BUILT ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE

The one-man regime established under the name of Presidential System of Governance has rendered democratic rights and liberties unwieldable; has institutionalised arbitrariness, tyranny, lawlessness and injustice; has deepened the exploitation, oppression and the deadlock experienced by the country and her peoples and has made fascistic practices a part of daily life.

Therefore, changing all institutions, mechanisms and webs of dependence which uphold and feed this one-man regime is one of our chief purposes. Abolition of the election threshold, guaranteeing the security of democratic rights and political freedoms to their fullest extent and forming a non-partisan and independent judiciary are all urgent needs.

Our aim is the establishment of a democracy which relies on the genuine sovereignty of the people, is built on the pillars of democratic, free and egalitarian principles.

### In this context;

Establishing strong participation mechanisms for the people to decentralised and local, democratic governance which, in select fields, rely on the transfer of funds and power from central authorities, the transfer of authority to local peoples' assemblies and to delegates elected by people, ending the regime of government trustees,

Securing the rights for complete and unfettered union organisations for all worker and labour-ers, all kinds of (rights, solidarity, political and general) strike and collective bargaining rights, limiting the daily working hours to 7 and banning lock-outs,

Building the foundations of secularism which will encompass democracy, demands for equal citizenship rights and the freedom of faith and belief for all believers and non-believers, securing the rights of equal citizenship of Alawites,

Adopting the rights to an equal citizenship based on respect to different cultures, identities, beliefs and ways of life as a fundamental principle,

Mitigating the losses of rights caused by decreed laws,

ending all sorts of discrimination in public positions and assignments are urgent steps which need to be taken for a democratic order which is built on the sovereignty of the people.

Policies which are on the side of peace both in the country, in the region and in the world, aiming for long term international cooperation are an urgent necessity. For this, the interests of the peoples' need to be taken as a basis instead of the interests of the imperialist powers and their collaborators. Abandoning expansionist policies which rely on military shows of force against other countries, principally towards our neighbours, and conducting a principled and peaceful international policy built on equal rights are fundamental to a genuine sovereignty of the people.

## A PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION FOR THE KURDISH ISSUE

One of the most deeply rooted issues Turkey needs to solve is the Kurdish issue. A constructive policy which will take the considerations and concerns of all societal sections for a democratic solution and peace is essential.

Instead of policies of denial and oppression, steps need to be taken for a democratic and peaceful solution for the Kurdish issue, which is directly connected to and intertwined with democratisation. It is self-evident that the options for dialogue and negotiation are historically imperative and contemporary instead of the war policies, armament, and conflict methods.

Taking the initiative to establish and strengthen a foundation of dialogue and solution and attaining a future for the entire society through means of democratic negotiations; and carrying out the necessary regulations to enshrine all universal rights to identity, with the right to mother tongue being principal, carry a great importance.

## JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FOR WOMEN

It is imperative that all guarantees are provided to enable the freedom and equality of women in all fields of social life. A sweeping struggle against the systematic male-on-female violence rooted in the patriarchal mentality and practices and against femicides is essential.



Reactivating and re-applying the Istanbul Convention and removing all the political, administrative, economic and cultural obstacles against the gender equality for women and LGBTI+ are urgent first steps which need to be taken.

### **EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FOR THE YOUTH, THE DISABLED AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS**

All economic, social and political obstacles, especially in the fields of education and culture, have to be removed so that the youth may live their lives with respect to their choices, freely express themselves and live in liberation.

Education on all echelons must be free, scientific, taught in the respective native language and democratic. Supporting the youth economically and their greater involvement in administration of all fields will enable creative and progressive ideas to become more strongly defining in the society.

Children are subjects of society having their own rights. We must deem it so and fight against all sorts of discrimination which they may face.

Disabled citizens exceeding the number of 10 million people live in our country. Disability can-not be reduced to a medical, bodily definition. It is of vital importance to create social awareness and enable the disabled to take full advantage of all public services as equal citizens and to create the required regulations for them to do so.

### **THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURE, THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Capitalism will cut down the tree if it cannot sell its shade. The current government which has caused neoliberal policies to deepen in the country is selling out all our natural assets to capital. A state of emergency must be declared for the climate crisis; and all projects which cause immense natural and environmental degradation for the sake of profits and gains, which damage the forests, fertile soils, water streams and the ecological balance, which have become the centres of crimes committed against the nature.

In all policies, principally in energy, transportation, urbanisation and agriculture, an approach centred on the protection of the nature is both urgent and mandatory. The right of every living being to live in a healthy ecosystem must be guaranteed with effective laws.

The looting of historical and cultural heritage must be stopped.

### **OUR CALL**

Our call is to every institution, establishment and political party and to every single citizen who cares about the bright and democratic future of Turkey. Let us take responsibility together. In the second century of the Republic, let us freely and democratically rebuild the country which has turned into a blaze of fire, through common demands and common struggle.

The peoples of Turkey are not condemned to discrimination, hate speech, polarisation and mainstream politics stuck between the Peoples' Alliance and the Nation Alliance.

We can establish a social order sovereign by the people in which the values of labour, peace, freedom and democracy are paramount. Achieving this is possible with the transformative force of the oppressed and exploited masses of the people.

We invite everyone to a common and united struggle based on this message and understanding!

Together we shall prevail.

### **THE LABOUR AND FREEDOM ALLIANCE EHP-EMEP-HDP-SMF-TİP-TÖP**





# IT IS A MURDER, **NOT AN ACCIDENT;** AND A MASSACRE, **NOT A DISASTER!**



On 14th of October, 41 of our worker brothers lost their lives at the Bartın Amasra TTK Coal Mine, and several of them were severely injured due to explosion. We extend our condolences and wish patience to the families of our fellow workers who lost their lives, and a speedy recovery to the injured ones.

Both our pain and our anger are immense. Those saying the explosion in Amasra is a work accident or disaster, and those demanding us not to politicize this incident, are the enemies of the working class of Turkey.

The massacre was caused by a firedamp explosion, resulting from the increased methane gas in the environment reacting with the air.

In its report for 2019, the Court of Accounts foresaw that the massacre was coming. The report stated that "the production depth reaching minus 300 meters may cause sudden gas discharge and firedamp explosion, and the high gas content in the mineral veins worked increases

the risk." We have found out that the workers working in the mine have been worried about the risks in question for a long time, but they had to enter the mine because of fear for their livelihood.

An investigation should be initiated immediately against those responsible, ignoring the report of the Court of Accounts and disregarding the lives of the workers.

The first person responsible for this is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who just 5 months ago dared to instruct the Court of Accounts "not to look for our flaws."

Neither the mine workers nor our fellow labourers, many of whom get injured, sick, or killed every day, are not on their own.

In order not to die while working and to live, we have no choice but to overthrow this wretched order!

**Workers' Party of Turkey**



## NEWS FROM THE PARTY

We are deeply saddened by the passing of our comrade **Metin Çulhaoğlu**, the intellectual vanguard of our movement and a member of the TİP Party Council, who made invaluable contributions to Marxism in Turkey, and devoted his life to the struggle for revolution and socialism.

**We promise to carry his legacy to revolution!**



August '22



August '22

Party Chairperson Erkan Baş, Party Council members, and the accompanying Gebze District Organisation visited the Asen Metal and Pulver Chemical workers at the sites of their strikes.

We will overcome the obstacles placed before the labour movement by struggle, and we will not let the bosses steal away the rights of workers.

We held the first of our TİP District Representatives meetings in Istanbul as part of our election preparations.

We will not leave our people without an option in the ballots or the streets. We will save the country from the AKP Regime through the workers' struggle.



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## NEWS FROM THE PARTY

With TİP as a constituent, the Labour and Freedom Alliance declared its foundation with a spectacular Public Meeting at the Haliç Congress Centre. The meeting drew large participation from workers, labourers, women, and the youth, and speeches were made by the representatives of the member parties and the organisations.



September '22



Speaking at the gathering, TİP Chairperson Erkan Baş said: "They say that the workers, the youth, the women, the Kurds, and the Alawites of Turkey can only watch. We are not here to watch history unfold but to re-write it ourselves."

Independence Path party delegation from Cyprus visited our Party in Ankara. We thank our friends for the visit, during which we discussed the course of labour struggles, the Cyprus issue, and the upcoming elections.



September '22



October '22


We took to the streets across Turkey for Mahsa Amini, killed by the morality police of Iran's Mullah Regime for "not veiling herself in accordance with the law."





# WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY

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