THE END OF DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY AND THE NEW DICTATORSHIP

INFORMATION FILE ON ARRESTED MPs OF PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC PARTY – HDP

Index:

- Summary about the latest situation
- Joint Defense Statement of Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) MPs
- Profiles and Messages from the Arrested MP’s
- Balance-sheet For Attacks on Elected Representatives and Municipalities
- Turkish State’s Cross Border Attacks into Rojava Go Up Seven-fold in One Year
On the 3rd of November, the purge of President Erdogan against our party has reached another peak: our Co-Chairs Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yüksekdag, along with ten further Members of Parliament (MP) of our party, namely Nursel Aydoğan, İdris Baluken, Leyla Birlik, Ferhat Encü, Selma İrmak, Sirri Süreyya Önder, Ziya Pir, Imam Tascier, Gülser Yıldırım and Abdullah Zeydan have been detained across Turkey. Demirtas, Yüksekdag, Aydoğan, Baluken, Birlik, Encü, İrmak, Zeydan, Nihat Akdoğan and Yıldırım have been arrested by court order and sent to prison. Pir, Önder and Tascier have been released on probation. More arrests are to be expected. Within the scope of the operation, police also raided the HDP headquarters in Turkish capital Ankara and attacked the HDP deputies and members inside. Police later blocked all the roads leading to the building with barricades. Even the party members and deputies are not allowed access to the building amid intense measures and mobilization by police forces in large numbers.

The goal of these measures is to shut down the third largest party in parliament. This is a dark day not only for our party but for all of Turkey and the region as it means the end of democracy in Turkey.

Ever since our party reached a historic victory during the national elections of June 7, 2015, when we succeeded to enter parliament despite the undemocratic 10% threshold, President Erdogan has singled out our party as the main target of his authoritarian policies. The reason is our principled opposition against his goal to introduce a presidential system in Turkey. Our seats in parliament are the biggest obstacles to the necessary constitutional changes. Thus, he simply ordered new elections in November 2015. Despite a series of violent assaults by “unknown perpetrators” on our party members and infrastructure, we managed once again to surpass the threshold on November 5, 2015 and won 59 seats in Parliament. Since he could not re-order elections another time, President Erdogan initiated the lifting of the immunity of our MPs in May 2016. As he could not prevent us from entering Parliament, he now orders us into prison.

Thousands of members, executives, elected mayors and city council members affiliated with the HDP and/or our sister party DBP have already been sent to prison on groundless charges since our electoral victory in June 2015. The co-chair and former MP Sebahat Tuncel are amongst the arrested. Yet the coup attempt on July 15, 2016 and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency has been the welcome opportunity for President Erdogan to eliminate all opposition. There is no freedom of expression and no freedom of press, no academic freedom, and no fair and independent judicial system any more. With government decrees gaining the power of law, over 170 media outlets critical of Erdogan have been banned. More than 130 journalists are in prison, including world-renowned authors and intellectuals. Most recently, two Kurdish news agencies and several Kurdish dailies were closed down and the chief-editor, columnists and journalists of the daily Cumhuriyet have been detained. More than 80,000 people have been detained since July 15, and about half of them are in prison now.
On October 30, Ms. Gülen Kisanak and Mr. Firat Anli, elected co-mayors of Diyarbakır from our party, were arrested and sent to prison. A district governor from Ankara was appointed to run the municipality. With this, the number of Kurdish municipalities run by bureaucrats appointed by the central government increased to 28. About 30 democratically elected Kurdish mayors are now in prison, and about 70 of them were dismissed by the central government.

We strongly condemn the arrests of our Co-Chairs Selahattin Demirtas, Figen Yüksekdağ as well as our MPs and demand their immediate release. The manufactured charges against them and all other party members must be dropped. History has shown over and over again that any power based on brute force is outlived by the struggle for justice and freedom. We will not surrender to these dictatorial policies and call upon our friends around the world to stand in solidarity in our struggle to prevent Erdogan to steer the country into a civil war and further despotism.

Joint Defense Statement of Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) MPs

The Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) that I represent received over six million votes in 7 June 2015 general elections, passing the 10% election threshold and winning 80 seats in the Parliament. Our democratic ballot box victory ended the single-party rule of Justice and Development Party (AKP), and prevented it from drafting a new Constitution on its own. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who aims to establish his “one-man rule” in the country and who have not hesitated to resort to all kinds of illegalities to fulfil this aim, did not respect this election result. He prevented the formation of any coalition government and called for a snap election. Meanwhile, Mr Erdogan also ended the almost three-year-long peace process (with the Kurdish movement), having seen it not fitting to serve his interests and to enlarge his electoral base, and dragged the country into an enflamed conflict process.

This conflict environment created among our citizen’s due concerns about security. Amidst this climate of shock and fear, snap elections were held under conditions that were far from being fair and free. The AKP won the elections on 1 November 2015 and formed a single-party government again.

After hearing the June 7 election results, Mr Erdogan staged in great panic and haste a political coup in the country by superseding the Parliament and the Government, by taking the judiciary under control to a great extent and by monopolizing the media. He went so far as to publicly announce having seized the state by declaring himself not being bound by the Constitution, by declaring the de facto change of the regime, and by declaring that he did not recognize the decisions of the Constitutional Court.

Mr Erdogan himself faces serious allegations of being involved in numerous criminal activities while holding the Office of the Prime Ministry, including bribery, theft, money laundering, conducting the gold trade with Iran in contravention of international embargo, and supplying terrorist operatives in Syria with arms. He has so far been successful in obstructing investigation of these allegations with the pressure and control that he established over the judiciary.

Mr Erdogan is aware that the only way to effectively cover-up his crimes is to monopolize all powers in his hands. It is evident that he will not refrain from doing anything short of crazy to this end. He has soaked the country in blood, and has succeeded in inflaming nationalist and chauvinist feelings and
racial hate discourse in public by sending coffins to all four corners of the country. Mr Erdoğan is getting closer to his personal goals step by step with the support of popular masses whom he had lured into loyalty to serve him with the lie, “the homeland is under the threat of partition.”

HDP is the only obstacle before Mr Erdoğan to attain his goal; that is, to establish a dictatorship under the guise of a presidential system. Our party’s passing the election threshold for a second time in the general elections of 1 November and entering the parliament by winning 59 seats prevented Mr Erdoğan from gaining the majority necessary to change the Constitution relying on the AKP legislators alone. That is why he has been endeavoring for another possible snap or interim election that might secure parliamentary majority composed of at least 367 AKP MPs loyal to him. 1

Our party HDP brings together representatives of all different etno-linguistic and religious groups that make up Turkey’s multicultural, multilingual, multi-religious societal fabric. We represent Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Turkmen, Assyrians, Ezidis, and many other ethnic groups, who believe that it is possible to live together in equality and justice. We believe that the only way to sustain this coexistence is a pluralist democracy backed by strong local democracy and autonomy.

Our party HDP fully embraces women’s struggle for freedom and liberty. Guaranteeing women’s equal participation in politics, our party has so far achieved the highest representation of female MPs in Turkey’s parliamentary politics. The lifting of immunities of all of our party’s female MPs is a threat for all women in Turkey and an assault on their struggle.

We oppose all forms of violence and believe in the power of dialogue and negotiation in solving all problems. Mr Erdoğan, who aims to consolidate a fascist rule of one man, one language, and one sect, perceives this stance of the HDP also as an ideological “threat.”

It is for these reasons that Mr Erdoğan has targeted the HDP ever since it entered politics. After repeatedly failing to prevent our party’s electoral success despite all sorts of tricks, injustices, attacks, and bombings, Mr Erdoğan forced the lifting our parliamentary immunities by sidestepping the constitution and the parliamentary bylaws. As someone whose own independence and impartiality are heavily debated in public, he is now trying to persecute us in so-called trials.

The AKP Government that lifted our immunities has bestowed an immunity shield upon the military without losing any time, in an attempt to elude imminent judicial processes concerning the crimes committed by the army in Kurdish cities especially during the last one year. The Army that was provided with the immunity shield on 14 July 2016 made a Coup Attempt on 15 July 2016. Since the 7th of June 2015, the AKP Government with its push for a policy of conflict escalation and its exclusion of democratic politics by putting in effect policies of war since has strengthened the hand of the coupists who went so wild as to bombard the Parliament. Even though the failed coup attempt presented an opportunity to achieve over-arching social peace through a settlement on the basis of democratic principles, Erdoğan and the AKP Government decided to move into a state of emergency regime and began to govern the whole country through Decrees with Power of Law issued by the Cabinet. Whereas it was necessary to utilize this failed coup attempt in favor of democracy, it was used to move into the process of another coup. Appointment of trustees to elected municipalities and the suspension of thousands of teachers are the most concrete indicators of the construction of a new coup regime by means of these Decrees with Power of Law. Erdoğan and AKP whose war policies put into action before 7 June elections laid the groundwork for a coup, have created the conditions for the process that led all the way to the 15 July coup attempt. The policies that have been implemented after 15 July and the anti-democratic concept which appears to have been put into action keep consolidating the grounds for a civil war. Even though the only way out of this chaos is to strengthen democratic politics and put

1 A parliamentary majority of 367 votes is needed to make any amendments in the Constitution.
an end to military/civilian regimes of political tutelage, practices that will take the country back tens of years in time show us painfully that this is not the path chosen.

We are the elected representatives of people. We do not represent ourselves, but the people who elected us. Right now, I am standing before you as a member of the parliament entitled to legislative immunity. I cannot allow disrespect be done to the electoral will of my people and this identity that I represent.

I have no qualms about accounting for my deeds before a fair and impartial tribunal. I did nothing that I cannot account for. Yet I shall never accept being the subject of a political prosecution which seeks to stand at attention before Power at this time when the credibility of the judiciary in our country has sunk to the bottom. I carry no suspicion and disrespect for you as a person. Yet I refuse to be a puppet in this mocked prosecution which takes place only because Erdoğan, who himself has a heavily blotted political history, has ordered it.

I shall not answer any questions that you would ask me. I do not believe that you will conduct a fair trial by any means. It is already against the law that I am brought to here. A politician’s counterparts in the political arena are other politicians, and not members of the judiciary. As members of the judiciary, you yourselves should refuse to be a party in political games or plots. You are bound with universal and democratic principles of law as well as the international conventions that Turkey has signed and integrated into its Constitution.

We shall resolutely continue our political struggle until a pluralist democratic regime is established and peace and serenity is achieved in our country. We shall continue defending living together in equality against societal polarization and antagonism. We shall continue defending democratic political struggle against violence. We shall continue standing against monism by advocating pluralism, and against fascism by advocating democracy. We shall continue opposing sectarian and racist politics by defending freedom of religion and conscience. We shall continue opposing discrimination and hate speech by advocating equality. And of course we shall continue in our defense of equality and of all the rights that Kurdish people are entitled to because they are a people. We shall continue advocating for the Alevi community’s demand for equal citizenship rights, and for freedom of belief for all religious minorities. We shall continue our struggle for women’s equal participation in social, political and economic life. We shall continue our struggle to protect the environment and ecology against capitalist destruction. We shall continue defending labor from the greed of capital for more profits, and advocating for workers’ rights. Irrespective of whether we are in prison or in parliament, you will not be able to prevent us from struggling for these ideals.

We have no doubt that we will get rid of this fascist order that has been imposed on us and on our country for the sake of a presidential system. Sooner or later, our democratic struggle will prevail. This dilapidated regime of Mr Erdoğan is but going to change.

I have no demand or expectation from you. It is only my people who have elected me can question my political activities.
Profiles and Messages from the Arrested MP’s

Selahattin Demirtaş:

Co-Chair and MP representing Istanbul. Mr. Demirtaş was born in Diyarbakır, Turkey in 1973. He enrolled at Ankara University Law Faculty. After college, Demirtaş worked as a freelance lawyer for a time before becoming a member of the executive committee of the Diyarbakır Branch of the Human Rights Association (IHD). During his term as chair, the association focused heavily on the increasing unsolved political murders in Turkey. Demirtaş is among the founding members of the Turkish Human Rights Association (TIHV) and the Diyarbakır post of Amnesty International. He has 93 lawsuits issued by the prosecutors from 18 different provinces. In total, 486 years of imprisonment and two aggravated life imprisonments are indicted by the prosecutors.

Mr. Demirtaş’s message: Firstly, greetings and love to all friends. In these days where our country is pushed further into darkness, our illegal arrest only served to intensify the darkness. However, those that think that they can make us surrender to this darkness should remember that one piece of match or one candle is enough to lighten up this darkness. Whatever our location or conditions may be, we will continue to burn like a candle so that our people can live in peace in free days to come. Everyone should be part of the struggle for democracy and work towards our bright future. My morale and health are good. With love.

Figen Yüksekdağ:

Co-Chair of the HDP and MP representing Van. Ms. Yüksekdağ was born 1971 in Gölovası, Yumurtalık, Adana Province, into an ethnically Turkish farming family. She is the current coleader of the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) of Turkey as of 2014, serving alongside Selahattin Demirtaş. She was an independent parliamentary candidate for the Adana electoral district in the 2002 general election. She was involved in women’s rights movements for several years before becoming the editor of the Socialist Woman magazine. While serving on the board of the Atılüm newspaper, she was taken into custody in 2009 due to her political activity. She cofounded the Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) shortly after in 2010 and resigned as leader in 2014 to join the HDP. She has 21 lawsuits against her.

Ms. Yüksekdağ’s message: Despite everything, they cannot end our hopes and break our resistance. HDP is the only hope for freedom and democracy in Turkey, whether we are inside or outside prison. This is why they are scared. Nobody should be demoralized or put down their guard. Nobody should forget that this hatred and hostility is out of fear. Love and courage will win. With love and greetings.
Idris Baluken:

MP representing Diyarbakır. Mr. Baluken, born in 1976 in Bingöl, currently serves as a parliamentary group leader of the HDP since April 2014. He previously served as a parliamentary group leader for the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) from 2012. He graduated from Ankara University Faculty of Medicine. He worked as a doctor in Bingöl and Diyarbakır for many years. He has been involved in the administration of the Turkish Thoracic Society, the Turkish Medical Association and the Health and Social Service Workers Union Diyarbakır branch. He is married with two children. Joined several national and international academic studies.

Married with two children. He has 23 lawsuits.

Mr. Baluken’s message: Our people should keep their morale high, I salute our people that stand up for their honor. We are standing up for our honor too. Those that are supposed to be here are not us but those that have prepared this conspiracy. They are hiding where we are in order to marginalize us. This is the policy of kidnapping and taking hostages. Throughout history, this mentality has always been defeated. We will continue to preserve our stance and continue our struggle wherever we are. Greetings to our people.

Leyla Birlik:

MP representing Şırnak Province Born in Mardin/Derik in 1974. She was the chair of the City Council of Şırnak Province. She continues her oil painting works. Fluent in Kurdish and Turkish. Married with one child. She has 8 lawsuits.

Ms. Birlik’s message:

We will resist here, in prison, and outside. And we will certainly prevail.
Greetings.

Ferhat Encü:

MP representing Şırnak Province. Born in Şırnak/Uludere in 1985. Studied Mining Engineering at Çukurova University, Adana. He lost 34 relatives during the bombardment of Turkish air forces at Roboski Village on 28 December 2011. Fluent in Kurdish and Turkish. He has 17 lawsuits.

Mr. Encü’s message: This is a struggle, and thousands have fallen for this struggle. We are no different from them. This is a violent wave of attacks, but can be repelled with resistance. We are resisting here, and we will continue. Nobody should be unhappy, the honorable resistance of those that keep their hopes alive will prevail. Hope is also unifying, the honorable resistance of our people against fascism will prevail. Nobody can call themselves free in a country where our Co-Presidents are taken hostage. I send my greetings and love to our people.
Gülser Yıldırım:

MP representing Mardin Province. Born in 1963 in Mardin/Nusaybin. She became active in politics in 2000 as a member of the Women Branch of the HADEP (People’s Democracy Party). She was an executive member of Free Party, DEHAP, DTP and BDP. She was imprisoned in 2010 for four years due to her political activities. Fluent in Kurdish and Turkish. Married, mother of 4 children. She has 11 lawsuits.

Ms. Yıldırım’s message: No matter what the AKP dictatorship does, we will never give up from our struggle and the values were believe in. AKP’s inhumane policies show how right the struggle we have been waging against the AKP has been. I want our people to know that we are more determined. Greetings and love.

Nursel Aydoğan:

MP representing Diyarbakir. Born in 1958 in Bursa/Yenisehir. Studied Food Engineering at Hacettepe University in Ankara and then worked as Food Engineer for several years. She was the executive member of trade union SES before her election to the Parliament in 2011. She has 44 lawsuits.

Ms. Aydın’s message: Our arrests are part of the elimination of the HDP. They should not forget that the HDP is a party with a cause. Even if we are in prison, we will follow our cause and struggle. Nobody’s morale should be affected by our arrests; nobody should ever lose hope. No matter what the AKP decides to do, we will keep our morale high. We will grow our hope.

Selma Irmak:

MP representing Hakkari. Born in 1971 in Mardin/Kızıltepe and moved to Konya in 1978. She attended Konya Selçuk University for preschool teacher education but arrested for political reasons. She was imprisoned for 3 years and 9 months. She became an active member of the Democratic People Party (DEHAP) after she was released. She then became the executive board member of the Mesopotamian Cultural Centre and the Kurdish Institute of Istanbul. She returned back to Konya and elected as the chairperson for the Konya Branch of the DEHAP. She participated in the formation of the Democratic Society Party (DTP) and elected as general accountant of the DTP. She was elected to the parliament from Şırnak in 2011 and was a member of the foreign affairs commission of the Parliament. She was reelected to the Parliament from Hakkari both in the 7 June and 1 November 2015 elections. Fluent in Kurdish and Turkish. She has 22 lawsuits.

Ms. Irmak’s message: AKP’s coup has become apparent. This coup targets the democracy front and is sneakier than the 1980 coup. It is based on the fear of widespread opposition. Resistance will continue as our people resist out there and we resist in here. Prisons are our second homes. My special greetings to woman comrades. Women will be the AKP’s nightmare. Our people should stand up for their future. We call upon the people of Turkey and Kurdistan to resist. Greetings and love.
Nihat Akdogan:  
Representing Hakkari Province Born in 1980 in Hakkari. Studied Public Relations at Anadolu University. He was a member of the Party Assembly of the HDP before his election to the Parliament on 7 June 2015. He has 8 lawsuits.

Mr. Akdogan’s Message: The democracy will win and the end

TURKEY: The country where democracy, human rights, freedom and the rule of law has come to an end and replaced with battlefields, destruction and dungeons.

The Turkish Governments enmity of democracy and Kurds continues

BALANCE-SHEET FOR ATTACKS ON ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND MUNICIPALITIES

The AKP’s attacks continue at full speed. Alongside Peoples Democratic Party (HDP) co-chairs, MP’s and Democratic Regions Party (DBP) co-chair, the AKP-Erdogan have taken hostage, the co-chairs of 50 DBP municipalities and seized the will of 43 DBP councils.

The AKP-Erdogan regime has failed to implement what they want in Kurdistan until now, turning the ‘state of emergency’ into an opportunity, the attacks against the gains of the Kurdish people continue uninterrupted. In the 7 June 2015 elections, the AKP regime failed in Kurdistan, unable to get any MP’s elected in the region. This triggered the start of the AKP regimes war concept against the Kurdish people, through the isolation policy on the Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan.

The concept of denial and annihilation launched against Kurdish towns by AKP gangs was countered by the self-defence of Kurdish youth on the basis of resistance for self-administration. The AKP-Erdogan, with no compliance to rules of war, not only burnt and destroyed Kurdish towns but brought the towns Cizre, Sur, Nusaybin, Idil, Gever, Silvan and Sirnak to the ground with tanks and bombs. Only in Cizre, 103 civilians were burnt alive. Hundreds of people were massacred. 1.5 million people were forced to migrate during and after these massacres. The AKP regime then went on to implement its genocidal attacks against the Municipalities and councils of these towns, which are the gains of the Kurdish people.

46 CO-CHAIRS HAVE BEEN DISMISSED, 50 ARRESTED

The attacks against Kurdish politics and political representatives continue. In this context, the arrests include, amongst the HDP MP’s, co-chairs Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag, DBP co-chair Sebahat Tuncel, Free Women’s Congress (KJA) spokesperson Ayla Akat Ata, and Amed Municipality co-chairs Gulsen Kisanak and Firat Anli. Also, many more municipality and council co-chairs, Central Executive Board (MYK) and Party Council (PM) and party members have been arrested. Turkey has almost been turned into an open prison camp, with the immeasurable unlawful activity committed by the government. The denial and annihilation policies brought to life by the AKP in the Kurdish cities, towns and neighbourhoods are due to the popularity of Kurdish politics and the Kurdish struggle, represented by the latest elections.
There have been government trustees appointed, officially to 34 DBP held municipalities and de facto appointments to 4 DBP municipalities till date. In total, there has been a civil-coup against 50 DBP held municipalities. Turkey’s deepening chaos lead by the AKP/Palace is exemplified by the dismissal of 46 DBP co-chairs, the arrests of 50 municipality co-chairs, search warrants for 7 DBP municipality co-chairs. Also, 43 DBP municipality co-chairs were released after being arrested or detained, within to the scope of the case.

**MUNICIPALITIES WITH APPOINTED TRUSTEES AND THEIR VOTING RATES**

*Van, Mardin* Metropolitan municipalities, along with *Dersim* and *Siirt* municipalities and the 4 de facto municipalities, alongside *Amed* Metropolitan municipality make up the 43 municipalities seized by the government by appointed trustees.

*The voting rates for some seized DBP municipalities in the last elections:*

1. DBP votes, 55.89% for Batman municipality. Appointed Government trustee, Şeref Aksoy.
2. DBP votes, 66.83% for Hakkari municipality. Appointed Government trustee, assistant governor Coney Epçim.
3. DBP votes 48.43% for Diyadin municipality. Appointed Government trustee, assistant governor Mekan Çeviren.
4. DBP votes, 50.45% for Beşiri municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Mustafa Maslak.
5. DBP votes, 52.43% for Gercüş municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Ünal Koç.
7. DBP votes, 54.41% for Sur municipality. Appointed Government trustee, assistant governor Bilal Özkân.
8. DBP votes, 39.08% for Hınıs municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Bülent Ay.
10. DBP votes, 60.16% for Dargeçit municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor M. Yaşar Yeşiltaş.
11. DBP votes, 64.4% for Derik municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor M. Fatih Saltürk.
12. DBP votes, 61.71% for Mazıdağı municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Halit Benek.
13. DBP votes, 78.78% for Nusaybin municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Ergün Baysal.
14. DBP votes, 45.84% for Bulanık municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Ömer Şahin.
15. DBP votes, 52.37% for Erhu municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Murat Dayanç.
16. DBP votes, 52.58% for Suruç municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Tark Açığöz
17. DBP votes, 81.61% for Cizre municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Ahmet Adanur
18. DBP votes, 78.19% for Silopi municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Savaş Konak.
19. DBP votes, 78.9% for İdil municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Ersin Tepeli.
20. DBP votes, 50.91% for Edremit municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor İbrahim Özkân.
21. DBP votes, 49.43% for Erciş municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor M. Şirin Yaşar.
23. DBP votes, 71.62% for Özalp municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Serdar Karal.
24. DBP votes, 56.22% for İlköprü municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Mustafa Maslak.
25. DBP votes, 61.75% for Hoşhaber municipality. Appointed Government trustee, Assistant governor Bilgehan Karafil.
26. DBP votes, 45.8% for Hani municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Yusuf Turan.
27. DBP votes, 55.32% for Amed Metropolitan municipality. Appointed Government trustee, District governor Cumali Atilla.
28. DBP votes, 60.91% for Şırnak municipality. Appointed Government trustee, Assistant governor Turan Bedirhanoğlu.
29. DBP votes, 63.40% for Varto municipality. Appointed Government trustee, district governor Mehmet Nuri Çetin.
30. DBP votes, 35.12% for Bitlis Ahlat - Ovaköla Municipality.

This clearly shows that the AKP-Palace regime has hijacked the will of the people by, most recently, the seizure of the Siirt municipality, Mardin Metropolitan municipality, Van Metropolitan municipality and Dersim municipality, through appointing trustees, totalling a number of 43 DBP held municipalities being officially seized by the government and Viranşehir, Halfeti and Bozova municipalities being de facto seized by appointing district governors to take over administration.

**ARRESTED DBP MUNICIPALITY CO-CHAIRS**

1. Adile Kozay - Gever Municipality Deputy Co-Chair
2. Dilek Hatipoğlu - Hakkari Municipality Co-Chair
3. Nurullah Çiftçi - Hakkari Municipality Co-Chair
4. Sevil Rojbin Çetin - Edremit Municipality Co-Chair
5. Handan Bağcı - Van Özalp Municipality Co-Chair
6. Ali Çam - Iğdır Hoşhaber Municipality Co-Chair
7. Diba Keskin - Erciş Municipality Co-Chair
8. Rahmi Çelik - Bulanık Municipality Co-Chair
9. Burhan Kocaman - Elazığ Karakoçan Municipality Co-Chair
10. Cennet Ayık - Elazığ Karakoçan Municipality Co-Chair
11. Zeynep Şimşik - Dargeçit Municipality Co-Chair
12. Seyran Argan - Beytüşşebap Municipality Co-Chair
13. Abdurrahman Çağan - Erciş Municipality Co-Chair
14. Abdulkörim Erdem - Derik Municipality Co-Chair
15. Sabahat Çetinkaya - Derik Municipality Co-Chair
16. Hazal Aras - Diyarbakır Municipality Co-Chair
17. Kasm Ağgün - Iğdır Hoşhaber Municipality Co-Chair
18. Aygün Taşkıncı - Ergani Municipality Co-Chair
19. Figen Yaşar - Bulanık Municipality Co-Chair
20. Nazmi Çoşkun - Hakkari Municipality Deputy Co-Chair
21. Şerifettin Özlalp - Özlalp Municipality Co-Chair
22. Nevin Oyma - Idil Municipality Co-Chair
23. Tülay Karaca - Erzurum Tekman Municipality Co-Chair
24. Abdurahman Zorlu - Hani Municipality Co-Chair
25. Mehmet Muhdi Aslan - Idil Municipality Co-Chair
26. Zilan Aldatmaz - Van Saray Municipality Co-Chair
27. Gültan Kıranak - Amed Metropolitan Municipality Co-Chair
Since the beginning of the Rojava Revolution, the Turkish state has waged a war against Rojava through several proxies and now its attacks on the border are intensifying.

When the Rojava Revolution started on 19 July, 2012, certain gangs began to openly attack Rojava. The AKP collaborated at the highest level with organisations such as Ahral Al-Sham, Al-nusra and ISIS, in trying to suffocate the Rojava Revolution.

The Rojava Democratic Autonomous Administration has control of almost the entire 911-kilometre-long Turkey-Rojava border; only Jarablus and Rai fall outside its control. The Turkish state, discomforted by this development, is attacking the YPG from Sheba, which it is currently occupying.

The relationship between the AKP and the terrorist gangs first showed itself on 8 November, 2012, when they attacked Serekaniye. On this day, hundreds of gang members belonging to the FSA were sent into Serekaniye from the Turkish border in an attempt to overrun the city. Concurrently, the Syrian bombed the town with heavy artillery. Many gang members were killed as a result of the YPG’s resistance. In one week, 10 civilians were killed, about 70 were injured, 50 houses were destroyed and more than 11 thousand people were left displaced. Many documents seized in the clashes proved the relationship between the gangs and the AKP.

The attack against Kobane was from the same place

Many documents that showed the relationship between the Turkish state and ISIS were captured when ISIS began its attack against Kobani on 13 September, 2014. Information was leaked on how ISIS was using the Turkish border for reinforcements and logistical support and even photos of ISIS fighters posing with Turkish soldiers surfaced at the time.
The Turkish state could not accept the fact that ISIS was defeated in Kobani by the resistance of the YPG and thus played a significant role in the Kobani massacre on 25 June, 2015. In the attack, where the Turkish state allowed for fighters and bomb-laden vehicles to enter the city through its border, a total of 251 civilians were killed, of which 35 were children and 64 were women, and 267 were left injured.

**Efforts continuing in Gire Spi**

On 27 February of this year, ISIS conducted an attack against Gire Spi, Siluk and Mebruka in the hope of separating the cantons of Kobani and Cizire from each other. In this attack, 23 civilians and 43 YPG/YPJ fighters lost their lives while defending the towns. A total of 291 ISIS fighters were killed during the clashes and 6 were taken captive.

Four days prior to the attack against Gire Spi, the Turkish army carried out artillery attacks against YPG positions from across the border. The Turkish army also continued its artillery support on the day of the attack by ISIS. One YPG fighter was killed in the artillery attacks by the Turkish army and others were injured.

‘Both military and civilian positions targeted’

The Turkish state is both logistically supporting the gangs attacking Rojava and is also breaking international rules of engagement by bombarding YPG positions and civilian settlements from across the border.

The Turkish state animosity against the Kurds and Rojava is breaking all international laws. The Turkish state is attacking the civilians working on the fields along the border. In some places, the people are not even allowed to work the fields that are more than a kilometre from the border. The people are being shot at. They are even using thermal cameras to make sure that they do not miss.

**22 in 2015, 152 in 2015**

They massacred, built walls, dug trenches and cut trees…

In regular statements released by the press centre of the YPG, it was stated that the Turkish army attacked YPG positions from across the border on 22 different occasions. On 4 May, 2015, the Turkish army indiscriminately shot at people in the Raco town of Efrin. The houses of the villagers were damaged and the people were unable to go to their fields.

**152 times in the first 10 months of 2016…**

In 2016, the attacks of the Turkish army intensified against Rojava. The Turkish state attacked YPG positions and civilian settlement areas on many occasions throughout 2016.

- The Turkish state attacked YPG positions and civilian settlements on 152 occasions (Once in January, 9 times in February, 6 times in March, 14 times in April, 13 times in May, 17 times in June, 22 times in July, 17 times in August, 26 times in September, 17 times in October).
- In these attacks 2 civilians in February, 4 civilians in April, 2 civilians in May in Kobani, 1 child in June in Gire Spi, 4 civilians and 2 YPG fighters in August, 9 civilians in September and 2 civilians in October were killed.
- In these attacks 1 civilian in February, 4 civilians in April, 2 civilians in May in Kobani, 9 civilians in Gire Spi, 50 civilians and 2 YPG fighters in August, 61 civilians in September and 2 civilians in October were injured.

**Air space violated**
The AKP-led Turkish state did not just logistically support the gangs and shoot at civilians and YPG fighters. The AKP violated the airspace of the Rojava Democratic Autonomous Region’s airspace on numerous occasions with its drones, helicopters and soldiers.

- Throughout the Rojava Revolution the AKP has dug trenches and built walls within the borders of Rojava from the Endiwer village of Derik all the way to Efrin, cutting down trees and occupying the land of the people of Rojava.
- In an action organised by journalists from Rojava against the massacre in Nusaybin, Turkish soldiers were photographed and recorded violating the border on numerous occasions; these were released to the public.
- In the month of August, Turkish soldiers violated the border of Rojava on two occasions using military grade vehicles.
- On two other occasions, helicopters belonging to the Turkish army violated the border.
- On two other occasions, helicopters belonging to the Turkish army violated the border.
- An air bombardment was conducted in the canton of Efrin.
- In the month of September, Turkish soldiers crossed into the border of Rojava on 2 occasions and on 3 occasions, drones belonging to the Turkish army entered into Rojava airspace.

The operation is against Raqqa, however…

While making every effort to ensure that the YPG would not be a part of the operation to liberate Raqqa, the AKP’s attacks against Rojava in the 17 days since the start of the operation are as follows:

- On the 5th of November at 21:00, a drone was flown over the village of Tilseriye to the west of Kobani and at the same time YPG positions were fired at from the Turkish side of the border.
- On the 6th of November, YPG positions in the village of Ziraveke to the west of Kobane were fired at using heavy artillery from across the border.
- On the 7th of November, the Turkish army tried to take some gang members across the border into Rojava. At about 19:00 a group of 12 gang members were smuggled across in military grade vehicles belonging to the Turkish army into the village of Doda between Qamislo and Amude. While smuggling in the gang members, YPG positions were fired at from the Turkish military vehicle. The gang members retreated back to Turkey after facing fierce resistance from the YPG; two gang members were injured in the clashes. The second location where a group of gang members attempted to enter Rojava was to the west of Kobani. At 19:00 the gang members fell into an YPG controlled area and had to quickly retreat back into Turkey after heavy clashes broke out.
- On the 7th of November, the Turkish army attacked the villages of Gelbenav, Koran and Elsen of Gire Spi.
- On the 8th of November, the Turkish army attacked YPG positions in the villages of Dola Kel Heseneka and Cil Axa of Tirbespiye. The YPG retaliated to these attacks.
- On the 10th, 12th and 13th of November at 18:15, artillery was fired from a Turkish border military station into Cisir Hesarke region of the town of Raco. In the attacks on the 10th of November, one child and one member of the HPC-Jin were killed.
- On the 17th of November, 2 helicopters belonging to the Turkish army flew over the village of Merwaniye in the canton of Efrin.
- In the last week, the Turkish army has begun digging trenches in the villages of Eyn Diwarê, Kerdîmih, Hav Metre and Habil Hewa and, by doing so, has ruined a huge section of arable land. As a result of the trenches dug by the Turkish army along the River Tigris near the village of Eyn Diware, thousands of hectares of arable land is in danger of being flooded.