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Mass Protests Against Fascist Oppression in Turkey

The political situation in Turkey is once again escalating. The fraudulent revocation of the university degree of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, his subsequent arrest and suspension, as well as the imprisonment of numerous other CHP representatives, including the Mayor of Şişli, Resul Emrah Şahan, and the Mayor of Beylikdüzü, Mehmet Murat Çalık, represent an open challenge by the state against the people. The Governor of Istanbul effectively imposed a four-day state of emergency, followed by bans on demonstrations. It is also foreseeable that fascist trustees will be appointed to replace the arrested mayors.

The fact that the fascist chief regime does not hesitate to imprison democratically elected municipal administrators under false accusations and remove them from office is nothing new. In the past, numerous democratic mayors of the DEM Party and its predecessor, the HDP, were replaced by trustees. This fascist practice is part of the colonial policy in Northern Kurdistan but has long since expanded to the entire country. Now, it has affected a CHP politician, İmamoğlu, who defeated the AKP in the last municipal elections and was considered a potential presidential candidate for 2028.

The attacks on the CHP are a direct confrontation with the will of the people. However, they are also a sign of the weakness of the fascist regime, which seeks to secure its power through repression and manipulation. Over the last ten years, Turkey's presidential government system has evolved into a comprehensive fascist rule. The parliament has been largely disempowered, the judiciary brought under the control of the fascist chief Erdoğan, independent media dismantled, and political opponents persecuted. The media are strictly controlled, and the judiciary is used as a weapon against any resistance. Particularly, the Kurdish freedom movement, revolutionary and socialist organizations, and progressive

journalists have been subjected to massive fascist repression for years. Thousands of activists have been arrested, women's and youth organizations criminalized, and the few remaining political rights systematically curtailed. Through these measures, the fascist chief Erdoğan has secured a monopoly on power that encompasses not only the executive but also the legislative and judicial branches.

Especially after the municipal election defeat in Istanbul in 2019, the fascist agitation against the bourgeois CHP intensified. For a long time, the CHP attempted to accommodate the fascist regime, avoiding open collaboration with the DEM Party and other progressive movements, preventing mass mobilizations, and relying solely on elections as a political solution. However, recent developments once again prove that the fascist regime cannot be abolished through elections. The few instances in which the appointment of trustees was delayed were solely due to the massive resistance of the people.

The CHP bears significant responsibility for the establishment of the fascist chief regime. For years, it has made compromises, thereby contributing to the stabilization and restructuring of the fascist system and even paving the way for the lifting of parliamentary immunity and the arrest of HDP deputies. However, this strategy has failed. Now the question arises as to whether it will continue to stand in the way of popular resistance and degrade the current mass outrage into a mere party rally, where any resistance against state violence is labeled as provocation. Ekrem İmamoğlu has announced that he will "resist everywhere", a respectable stance. However, this resistance must be comprehensive, determined, and strong enough to counter the fascist chief regime with real power. Calls for strikes by militant labor unions and student occupations indicate the strong will for resistance within the mass movement.

Traditionally, the CHP distances itself from the self-organization of the masses. However, the growing antifascist anger within its own base is putting increasing pressure on the party leadership. The base must not only oppose any form of collaboration with the fascist regime within the CHP but also unite with other antifascist forces, including socialist movements and the Kurdish democratic national movement. A determined resistance from the base against all forms of fascist repression is crucial.

The anger of the people is growing, especially among young people and workers. Social and economic crises, increasing impoverishment, and fascist repression have pushed people to their limits. The government is intensifying its attacks out of fear of losing power. The arrest of İmamoğlu was the final straw. Despite assembly bans in various cities, people have been taking to the streets for days, even deep into the night. From the very first moments, the

police employed massive violence: tear gas, batons, and mass arrests. The fascist chief Erdoğan defames the resistance as "street terror," but the protests are not being quelled.

The youth, in particular, recognize that this regime offers no future prospects. Universities have become central sites of resistance. Students broke through police barriers, organized boycotts, and demonstrated their determination to resist the fascist state. The protests evoke memories of the Gezi uprising in 2013. The anger is not only directed at the arrest of İmamoğlu. People are taking to the streets because they reject the fascist presidential system. The struggle against trustees, mobilizations for March 8 and the Newroz festival, strikes and labor resistance, the determined struggle of the women's movement, the mass protests of the Alevi people against genocide in Syria, as well as the wave of outrage triggered by fascist aggression across wide segments of society, all these developments are signs of a potential unified antifascist general resistance.

The streets will determine whether these protests transform into a comprehensive antifascist popular uprising. Resistance must not be confined to the western metropolises; it must also expand in Northern Kurdistan, where the Kurdish people, following the call of People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan for peace and a democratic society, are entering a new phase of confrontation with the Turkish colonial state. When all the peoples of Turkey and Kurdistan resist united with their demands the fascist chief regime can be defeated.
