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COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND TURKEY

At the parliamentary session of the Council of Europe between May 7-11th, the question of Turkey occupied almost three whole days. First, the matter of the acceptance of the Turkish parliamentary delegation was taken up, then the developments in Turkey, the violations of human rights and the anti-democratic repressions were discussed.

Prior to the meeting, a delegation consisting of members of the political and judicial commissions of the Council visited Turkey, where they had the possibility to see the prisons, although in a very limited way naturally, and talk with some prisoners. Subsequently, they prepared reports to the meeting. Although in these reports, the holding of the local elections were stated as "a step towards democracy", tortures applied on prisoners and the difficult conditions of the jails occupied unavoidably an important place.

The meeting decided to accept the Turkish delegation to the Assembly with 91 votes in favour and 50 against. As 11 of the "yes" votes were cast by the Turkish delegates themselves, the real number of acceptance votes were 80. And a good many of these entertain hopes that remaining inside the Council can create more possibilities to apply pressure on Turkey for returning to democracy. Thus, the

resolution on Turkey, adopted afterwards with a large majority, speaks of the repressions and tortures in the country and asks the Turkish government to end the martial law practice, grant amnesty for political prisoners and the right to political parties, trade unions and organisations to work freely, to improve prison conditions, to stop pressures on political refugees and halt discharging them from Turkish citizenship.

During the Council meeting, representatives of many parties, trade unions and organisations now living abroad were present in Strasbourg to supply sound information to Council members. They had brought with them 127,719 signatures demanding freedom to political prisoners in Turkey and the Turkish Kurdistan. These signatures, collected through united action of the broadest Turkish forces in Europe became a powerful appeal to the Council members. Concrete verbal information was also given to them through the many meetings and press conferences held during the Assembly meeting, as well as many documents.

On May 8th, Turkish and Kurdish refugees organised a large demonstration in Strasbourg stressing the demand for general political amnesty.

PWO President Beria Onger, who was also a member of the delegation that went to Strasbourg, told of her impressions as follows:

"The Council members were impressed by our presence there. They listened to us and realised that we were telling the truths. They voiced in the Assembly the information they received from us. The signatures we took with us, exceeding a hundred thousand, were also very effective. We were there in the name of hundreds of thousands. It is very important that we went to the Council of Europe with the broadest possible representation - Turks and Kurds representing various political parties, trade unions and organisations. We all witnessed the force of united action. To continue and reinforce this unity is our most important duty."

A KURDISH WOMAN TELLS ABOUT KURTOĞLU TORTURE CENTRE

Diyarbakır, the largest city of the Turkish Kurdistan, is traditionally famous for its city walls dating from the middle ages, the Tigris river passing through it, its watermelons, and the braveness and hospitality of its people. However, after the September 12th coup it became known in a totally different way - for the inhuman conditions in its military prison and the unbelievable tortures conducted here.

Even the number of Kurdish patriots who died under torture at the notorious Kurtoğlu torture centre and the military prison is not known definitely. Obviously nobody could be totally fit physically after all these tortures. There are many women among the victims of torture. One of them, a young woman and the mother of three, accused of membership to the Revolutionary Popular Cultural Organisation (DHKD) has told us of her days at the Kurtoğlu centre:

"After September 12th, almost every week my house was raided to search my husband. Sometimes they also took me to the police station and kept there for several hours or days. As I had got used to this over the years, I expected the same procedure when they came to take me again one day. But this time from the police station I was put on a car and blindfolded. From the direction and the distance, I guessed that I was being taken to Kurtoğlu. After we descended from the car, as we were entering from a door, they said: "Watch out, the ceiling is low". As soon as I bowed my head, I received a kick in the back and went sprawling on the stone floor. With a few more kicks and knocks they took me up and shoved into a room. The officer sitting there, after checking my identification, said that they had prepared a statement for me and it would be to my benefit if I copied it in my own handwriting and signed it (they wanted me to write it down in my own hand so that I could not say afterwards that I had been forced to sign something I did not know of). They read me the statement. It said that I admitted to membership to the DHKD and the Socialist Party of the Turkish Kurdistan, confessed to participating in their various

activities and agreed to give in the names of 5 more people who were also members of these organisations. I said that this statement was not correct and I would not accept it. When they realised I was resolute, they took me to another room, beating all the way. This was the place I was to stay during my 8 days in Kurtoglu, except for the hours spent under torture. My eyes were opened only once during these days. It was forbidden for detainees to talk with each other. However from their breathing, coughs and while eating together from the same plate, I guessed that there were about 10 women in this cell. Obviously one of them was in a very bad situation. In fact the guard was coming often to see if she was dead. The soldier who brought me to the cell said before he went: "If you do not talk, you will soon be like her". After a while I heard the heavily wounded girl move toward me. She put her lips to my ear and whispered: "Whatever they do, do not talk. If you do, you can never leave this place". At this 'torture waiting room', the only furniture were narrow wooden banks. We had to sit on these day and night. Even extending one's legs was subject to permission. They permitted us to lie on the stone floor between 2 and 4 in the early morning. Detainees were given food twice a day. A very stale piece of bread in the mornings and an unfathomable mess of food late afternoon. One of our hands was released at meal times. Everybody ate together from the same pan. The first few days I ate only bread, I could not bear to eat the other meal. Water was also given twice - at meal times. In the morning and evening we were taken to the toilet. The next day they came again for me. I was taken to another room and asked again to accept the statement. When I refused they started to beat me. They were clutching my hair and knocking my head on the walls. Clumps of my hair were left in their hands. They did not come out again until one year later. Afterwards, they put first my legs through an automobile tyre, then bowed bowed my head and squeezed it also through the tyre, until my head was

between my legs. Then they started to beat the soles of my feet (falaka). Both the pain of the falaka and the difficulty of breathing made me faint after a while. I recovered in the 'waiting room'. I think it was the same day (one loses awareness of day and night there), that they took me to a room and standing behind me opened my eyes. I saw a man on a cross. He was being given electric shocks. His voice no longer sounded human. They told me that if I did not talk, I would be subjected to the same procedure. I continued to refuse the ready-made confession. Beating and falaka went on. Two days later I was also "crucified". First, while my feet were still on the floor, they tied my arms from the wrists up to the shoulders with straps on the cross. Then they hoisted the cross with a mechanism. I was thus left hanging, tied only from my arms. They started to give electricity. When I still did not talk, they poured water over me and then gave the shocks. The pain became unendurable. It was impossible to breath. I could not throw my head back while my body tensed, because they had put a special piece in the cross right behind one's neck to prevent it. I felt I could not stand it any longer and said I would do as they wished. However when I was taken down, I refused again. This made them very angry. Their commander said: "Tie her up again on the cross and leave her there for four hours". So I was crucified again. After a while I lost consciousness. (Later my arms and in particular the upper parts became all black and blue and for months the skin peeled over and over). After 8 days of torture, I still refused to write in my own hand the statement and to give any names, but accepted to sign it. When they saw that they could not make me accept anything more, they took me to the prison. I was thrown into a cell with 10 other women. There was only one bed here and we lay sidewise on this bed, our feet dangling down. Some of these women were in a much worse situation than I was. They had open wounds from the falaka on their feet and their toe nails had come off. They had pressed the hands of one on an electric plate and the inside of her hands was severely burnt. One young girl

had been raped".

The young woman we interviewed was having difficulty even to speak about these inhuman treatments. Although she had stopped smoking for some time, now she smoked two cigarettes, one after another.

However, in her eyes one could also note the justified pride of one who resisted these tortures without giving in to them. And with the same pride and happiness she concluded her words: "But all the women in the prison had a very high morale!"

SOLIDARITY

Norway

The Union of Norwegian Women sent a letter last April to the Norwegian government protesting the death of 12 prisoners in Diyarbakir and Mamak military prisons during a hunger strike against tortures and the fact that women and children in prison are also victims of the most barbarous treatment. The letter states that Norway, as a joint member of NATO, has great responsibility to see that human rights are respected in Turkey and torture - a crime against humanity - is stopped.

Canada

The Congress of Canadian Women sent letters to President Evren and Prime Minister Özal protesting the conviction and jailing of Reha İsvan. After expressing grave concern over this sentence, the letter goes on to say: "We would insist that you utilize your power of office to commute the sentence of this true Turkish patriot... Surely Turkey wishes to include itself among the democratic nations of the world. It will be impossible however for it make this claim, until Reha İsvan and other political prisoners are released from Turkey's jails." In another letter to the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the CCW asks him to "use the power of your position to take up the case of Reha İsvan with the appropriate Turkish

authorities". The letter states: "Given your party's and the Prime Minister's commitment to the easing of global tension and an end to nuclear proliferation, which is very much shared by our organisation, we are sure that the case of Reha İsvan will be of interest to your office", and stresses the fact that Canada cannot remain unconcerned with such a violation of human rights by another NATO member. CCW has also sent a solidarity message to Reha İsvan at the Metris Military Prison saying: "During your time of destitution, while so unjustly deprived of your freedom, please allow the hand of your sisters in Canada to be extended".

"APRIL 23RD - ONE IS FILLED WITH JOY" (?)

This is a song about April 23rd, the Turkish national sovereignty and children's holiday, which all school children know very well. There is no joy however on this holiday in a country oppressed by the darkness of fascism. Not much has been left of national sovereignty, nor do the children have anything to make merry about.

Thousands of children see the faces of their mothers or fathers for the first time through iron bars. This year, partly due to the approaching Council of Europe meeting, the junta announced that all prisoners would be permitted to see their children face to face. So on April 23rd prisons were filled with children. However, the prisoners who were resisting the unlawful obligation to wear uniforms were not given this possibility. The children protested this situation, asked the guards to show them their parents. The soldiers became angry and started to chase the children all over the prison. A small boy shouted while he was running: "I don't care, I don't care, show me my father!" Those who were able to meet their parents were asking with a very serious expression on their small faces: "Do you think there will be an amnesty?" For a real children's holiday, let us strengthen the campaign for general political amnesty!

FACTS AND FIGURES

In the beginning of May an agreement was signed concerning the production of F-16 bomber planes in Turkey. At first glance this seems to cover the production of 160 F-16 planes in Turkey in the coming years, but in actuality covers many fields from communications, agriculture, cigarettes, ship-building, railways and mining. The agreement which will pave the way for radical changes in the industry, agriculture and even foreign policy also brings a large increase in arms expenditures for Turkey. Let us now quote a few figures from present day Turkey:

- . According to the latest calculations, military expenditures of Turkey have increased 2.5 times during 1970-1984. This means an extra annual spending of 455 billion Turkish liras.
- . On the other hand the total amount of industrial investments in Turkey in 1983 reached 459 billion Turkish liras.
- . In 1983, Koç Holding, one of the largest Turkish monopolies made a profit of 33 billion Turkish liras which is the equivalent of the yearly incomes of 137 thousand workers' families (or 882 thousand persons).

Now the F-16 agreement will augment Turkey's annual arms spendings with a further 139 billion Turkish liras.

The parties to the agreement are on the one side big USA monopolies such as General Dynamics, ITT, Northern, General Electric, Philip Morris, Ford, and on the other the collaborating Turkish monopolies like Koç Holding, Sabancı, Profilo Holding, Yaşar Holding, etc. Thus in the next 10 years these transnational companies and their local collaborators will make new and enormous profits by plundering the resources of the country.

Furthermore, with this project, Turkey consents to refrain from new investments in heavy industries, but to give more weight to develop agriculture, light agro-industries, mining and tourism sectors. Thus, Turkey's dependence on imperialist countries is even more reinforced.