

## Democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey

FIDH, meeting at its 42<sup>nd</sup> Congress in Bogota, Colombia:

**Reiterating** its long-standing commitment to defending and promoting human rights, transitional justice, democratic principles and the rule of law, and to supporting peaceful resolutions of armed conflicts;

**Recalling** the essential role of civil society and human rights defenders in peacebuilding processes;

**Acknowledging** the serious human rights consequences of the conflict between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* - PKK) and Turkish security forces that has been ongoing in Turkey for the past 50 years;

**Deeply concerned** that by the high toll of wars and armed conflicts, including loss of life, hunger, destruction of homelands, torture, enforced disappearances and other serious international crimes;

**Recalling the serious human rights violations over the past 50 years in Turkey, many of –which were subject to decisions by the European Court of Human Rights and United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances and Against Torture, including;**

- Extra judicial killings of around ten thousand civilians;
- Enforced disappearances of around five thousand people in custody;
- Destruction and forced eviction of tens of thousands of villages by Turkish security forces in the Kurdish region;
- Systematic use of rape and torture against Kurdish people;
- Judicial harassment of civil society actors and opposition political parties;
- Closure of the human rights organisations by the government, as documented by FIDH, IHD and TIHV in their reports published in 2022 and 2023;
- Arbitrary detentions of elected officials from pro-Kurdish parties, including the co-chairs of HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party), Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag, members of Parliament and mayors;

**Welcoming** the recent negotiations between Ocalan and the Government during recent peace process and the PKK's decision to disband, marked by the disarmament ceremony held **on 11 July 2025** in the Kurdistan Federal Region where the PKK destroyed its weapons, and the call of Abdullah Ocalan for an end of the armed conflict and the beginning of a new struggle for a peaceful and democratic solution of the Kurdish Issue;

**Welcoming the assignment of IHD (Human Rights Association), TIHV (Turkey Human Rights Foundation) and OHD (Libertarian Lawyers' Association) as a human rights delegation for handing over the inventory of the destroyed weapons by a group of PKK militants, destroying their weapons by burning them during an open ceremony on 11 July 2025;**

**Demanding** that the mission of the aforementioned delegation be legally guaranteed;

**Welcoming** the 25 July 2025 letter from Nobel Peace Prize laureates Jody Williams and Shirin Ebadi on behalf of

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88 Nobel laureates, supporting the Peace and Democratic Society Process initiated by Abdullah Ocalan, who has been imprisoned on Imrali Island since 15 February 1999;

**Welcoming** the establishment of a special commission comprising 51 members of the Turkish Parliament from across political parties, tasked with proposing legal reforms in support of the peace process;

**Calls on the Government of Turkey to:**

- **Adopt** a new Constitution that formally recognises Kurdish identity and guarantees civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for the Kurdish people;
- **Reform legislation to ensure robust legal safeguards** for freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association;
- **Uphold** judicial independence and strengthen democratic oversight institutions;
- **Publicly recognise** the essential role of civil society and human rights defenders in upholding human rights and peace-building processes;
- **Release** all sick and political prisoners detained in connection with the unresolved Kurdish issue,
- **Reform** Turkish Criminal Law, particularly the Anti-Terrorism and Enforcement Law, to eliminate discriminatory practices and ensure equal treatment before the law and ensure the compability with the European Convention of Human Rights;
- **Promptly, effectively and fully implement** decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the Turkish Constitutional Court in accordance with the principles of the rule of law, legality, effective remedy and fair trial;
- **Release** detained Kurdish opposition politicians, members of Parliament, and mayors, human rights defenders, journalists and activists who have been detained because of their lawful activities in defence of human rights and democracy;
- **Recognise and support** civil society as a key actors in truth and reconciliation efforts, which are essential to lasting peace;
- **Establish a** truth commission, open state archives to independent scrutiny, and document victims' testimonies;
- **Recognise** women's essential role in peacebuilding, and **guarantee** their full and equal participation in the peace process;
- **Reinstate** democratically elected mayors in Kurdish municipalities and **end the practice of** replacing them with government-appointed government trustees, which undermines electoral rights, such as the right to vote, the right to free and fair elections and the right to political participation;

**Call on International and Regional Mechanisms to:**

- **Condemn all attacks and judicial harassments** targeting Kurdish politicians, activists and human rights defenders, and call for the release of those arbitrarily detained;
- **Express strong support** to the peace process, and promote coordinated engagement across national, regional and international mechanisms, in order to strengthen it;
- **Mobilise** UN Human Rights Committee and Council of Europe to closely monitor the situation and Turkey's compliance with international and regional human rights obligations, and follow up on their implementation;

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- **Call** upon the Committee of Ministries of the Council of Europe to follow up on the implementation of ECtHR judgments concerning freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and democratic election rights related to the Kurdish issue; .
- **Call** on the European Union and its member States to publicly support the peace process and to make clear that progress in human rights, democracy and the rule of law and genuine commitment to finding a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish Issue are a pre-requisite for deepening cooperation with Turkey across key policy areas, including trade, customs and visa liberalisation.