



PES Presidency declaration on the eighth anniversary of the establishment of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP)

Dear friends, dear comrades,

On the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the establishment of HDP (Halkların Demokratik Partisi), an esteemed associated member of the PES, once again we salute your democratic struggle for justice, freedom, and peace in Turkey.

The people of Turkey and the HDP have gone through extreme hardships over the last five years. President Erdoğan and his allies have been trying their best to destroy democratic institutions and the Rule of Law in the country and wiping out the democratic opposition under a *de facto* permanent emergency rule. The primary target of this ongoing repression has been the HDP, whose former co-chairs Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, deputies, mayors, and more than 5,000 administrators and members are still behind iron bars. Despite all this repression, the HDP has proven to be a very resilient and a powerful political force that can change the political landscape and dynamics in Turkey, as also evidenced in the local elections in March 2019. We view the HDP and the role it can play in bringing together the broader democratic opposition as a big hope for the democratic political future of Turkey.

As the Party of European Socialists (PES), which represents 33 full members, 12 associates, and 12 observer parties across Europe, we have been in constant dialogue and solidarity with the HDP; observing court hearings of HDP leaders, visiting Kurdish cities whose mayors were imprisoned, attending party congresses, or mobilising our member parties to support the HDP and the democratic opposition against rising authoritarianism in Turkey.

We are proud of and inspired by your resilience in the face of tyranny. We view your struggle as our own. And with our warmest regards to you and to your comrades behind bars, we promise to maintain our solidarity with you and with all other progressive forces in Turkey until victory.

PES Presidency
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