

# **Turkey - Statement on Ankara bombing: “Solidarity is today an especially urgent task”**

Wednesday 21 October 2015, by [Socialist Resistance \(Britain\)](#) (Date first published: 12 October 2015).

## **STATEMENT ON ANKARA BOMBINGS**

Socialist Resistance offers our deepest condolences to the relatives, friends and comrades of the 128 people killed in the shocking double bomb blast at the peace demonstration in Ankara on Saturday, and wishes all those injured a speedy recovery.

We fully support the aim of the organisers of the demonstration, namely to strengthen the peace movement, in opposition to those in the AKP government and the Turkish state who re-launched the war against the Kurdish movement and the left in July 2015, after the broad-based alliance around the HDP (People’s Democratic Party) successfully exceeded the 10% voting threshold in the June election and deprived President Erdogan of the super-majority which would have enabled him to change the constitution and take greater executive powers.

The Ankara atrocity is unfortunately the latest in a series of events in which the Kurdish movement and important socialist organisations have lost many determined and heroic activists, from the repression of Gezi in 2013 to the siege of Kobani in 2014, from the Suruç / Pirsûs massacre this summer, to the rising death toll since the AKP restarted the war against the Kurds in July.

We note that even though an hour or so before the bombings in Ankara, the PKK leadership had announced the immediate start of a period of ceasefire with actions limited to self-defence only, so that the 1 November election could take place in a reasonable atmosphere, the Turkish air force is presently continuing to bomb the guerrilla defence areas and martyrs’ cemeteries in Kurdistan Turkey and the Qandil mountains in Iraq, and people in the historic Sur area of Diyarbakir are still under police curfew.

We are encouraged that this brutal attack on many components of the labour movement and the Kurdish movement in Turkey has met with a strong and courageous response, including large protest demonstrations all over Turkey and in many cities in Europe yesterday, and a two-day general strike today and tomorrow in Turkey, called by the organisers of the Ankara peace rally, including the major DISK and KESK trade union federations, the HDP political party, and others.

We note that most informed commentators blame the AKP leadership and elements within the Turkish state for allowing or organising this atrocity in order to intimidate their opponents, with a view to reducing the HDP vote in the fresh elections scheduled for November 1 – called after the AKP allowed coalition negotiations with other parties to fail. The precise details of how the atrocity was organised and how it was permitted to take place in the centre of Ankara, the city with the strictest security in Turkey, needs to be investigated, and the Human Rights Association in Turkey has called for an independent inquiry into the event.

Further revelations about the precise nature of the AKP’s relationship with ISIS cells in Turkey and elsewhere will no doubt emerge in due course, and this will be important in terms of understanding the situation and seeking justice for those killed, injured or bereaved.

But the most important thing to grasp is that in recent years Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his supporters in the police and military have become increasingly unwilling to tolerate opposition, as shown by the violent repression of the Gezi protests in 2013 and the pogroms against Kurdish citizens and the sieges of several Kurdish cities, continuing up to now, following the deliberate closing down of the peace process with the Kurdish guerrilla movement in July.

Unite the Union has issued a solidarity statement after the Ankara bombing, as has new Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, and we call on all trade unions to consider what further solidarity they can offer to the democratic forces in Turkey such as DISK, KESK, HDP and others that campaign for workers' rights, women's rights, the rights of freedom of association and expression, and the rights of the Kurdish people and the rights of many oppressed minorities in Turkey. We call on socialist activists to do whatever they can to offer solidarity to the labour movement and the Kurdish movement in Turkey, now and in the future.

This is an especially urgent task in the light of the clear and swift trajectory towards deeper and more savage repression in Turkey, and particularly for activists in Britain and other EU member states, where governments normally give unstinting political, financial and military support to Turkey, a member of NATO, and usually pass over in silence the Turkish state's crushing of workers' rights, its refusal to face reality and to concede the right of self-determination to the Kurds, end the war with the PKK and abandon the AKP dream of resurrecting the Caliphate.

The latest information suggests that anger at Saturday's atrocity runs very deep in Turkey and far beyond the ranks of mass movement around the HDP and the activists of the labour movement; this episode could turn out to be a defining moment in the struggle against the reactionary policies of Erdogan and his allies in Turkey and abroad, stepping up the challenge to him - many demonstrations had slogans emphasising AKP responsibility for the bombing, and calling for resignation of ministers. International solidarity, including building links with the movement in Turkey and the diaspora at all levels will be very useful in supporting the efforts to defeat the whole utterly reactionary AKP project.

We should help expose the close connections between British and other European governments and the Turkish state, and we should aim to strengthen links with activists from Turkey by increasing our own and our friends' attendance at protest events and educational seminars here, for example, and by participating in trade union delegations and legal delegations to observe trials in Turkey[1].

**Socialist Resistance**, London October 12 2015

[1] Important statement from a Unison activist, including links to TU solidarity information, can be found here:

<http://peaceinkurdistancampaign.com/2015/10/12/pik-trade-union-officer-makes-calls-to-uk-unions-after-ankara-bombing/>

---