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As 2026 Begins: First Perspectives from Turkey and the World



Revolutionary strategy after the US attack

Kemal Okuyan - TKP General Secretary



The question may rightly be asked: which “US attack” is being referred to in the title? In truth, there is no single attack. We are speaking of an imperialist power that acts continuously, through uninterrupted maneuvers. No one can claim that earlier interventions carried out against other countries were less significant. We are speaking of bloody actions that have cost millions of lives. Indeed, the list is long.

Nevertheless, the attack carried out against Venezuela on 3rd of January—during which Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Adela Flores were abducted—deserves particular attention. This is not only because it is recent, but because it marks a new phase in which the US administration openly declares that it recognizes no rules or limits whatsoever in its interventions against other states.

Moreover, Venezuela differs from other countries recently subjected to US aggression or intervention in that it is governed by an administration that claims a commitment to “socialism” and that, over the course of nearly a quarter century, has resonated—to varying degrees—with nearly all “revolutionary” circles internationally. The significance of Venezuela for socialist Cuba, which has continued to resist the intensified imperialist blockade since the dissolution of the USSR, must also be taken into account.

I will not enter here into a debate on the character of the Venezuelan government. We are living through difficult times. In the struggle for socialism, principles serve as anchors that prevent disorientation while responding swiftly and creatively to new developments. This statement underscores not

only the need to avoid drifting off course, but also the vital necessity of responding rapidly and creatively to changing conditions.

The period we are living through confronts us with severe challenges. The invasion of Iraq presented one such challenge. There was nothing defensible about Saddam Hussein’s regime; nevertheless, when the US invasion came onto the agenda, the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) adopted a clear and firm position, opposing the occupation from beginning to end and rejecting Turkey’s participation in it. For the people living in Iraq, the dilemma was even more acute: they faced the danger of being crushed between a repressive regime and imperialist occupation.

Did we not encounter a similar problem in Syria? There was no reason for communists to line up behind the Ba’ath regime. At

the same time, ignoring the role of external powers in the Syrian civil war would have been sheer naïveté. From the outset, TKP opposed all foreign intervention in Syria—including that of Turkey's ruling classes—and rejected the false characterization of Assad's overthrow as a "revolution." At the same time, TKP avoided the shortcut of downplaying the severe conditions faced by workers and communists living under Ba'athist rule.

The Palestinian resistance posed another test for communists, particularly because its leadership, while not reducible to it, has an Islamist character. Despite strong anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist reflexes, some attempted to distance themselves from the resistance because of Hamas. From the very first hours, TKP engaged in a sharp political and ideological struggle, preventing Israel's powerful propaganda apparatus in Turkey from shaping the position of the left. We insisted, without any ifs or buts, that the Palestinian resistance must be supported.

The Kurdish issue presents a similar difficulty. On the one hand, a people subjected to injustice and repression; on the other, a bourgeois-nationalist outlook that legitimizes collaboration with the US and Israel in the name of "freedom," relying on ethnic fragmentation—one of imperialism's most convenient regional instruments.

Iran must, of course, also be added to this list.

Each of these examples is unique, and none is identical to the others. Yet in all of them, the contradiction between labor and capital—which communists always place at the center—is obscured by the immediate tensions and conflicts.

Put very crudely, in nearly all of these cases we are confronted with a tension between the struggle for freedom and democracy on the one hand, and opposition to imperialist intervention and occupation on the other.

Attempting to resolve this

tension through fixed formulas can render communists ineffective. The hesitation of a communist party that has buried its comrades after years in the dungeons of a brutal regime to confront an imperialist intervention aimed at overthrowing that regime in line with imperialist interests cannot be reduced to mere "emotional" weakness. What must be discussed first and foremost are strategic questions.

It must be understood that strategic vigilance and independence cannot be achieved only when the knife has reached the bone; they must be built throughout the process. For this reason, the first task for communists is to decisively break free from both the "freedom and democracy" paradigm and the "anti-US" paradigm. These must be rejected not only because they are counterposed to one another, but because both block the only genuine path forward.

In Turkey, a segment of the left—due to the priority it assigns to "freedom and democracy"—tends to view US or EU interventions in various countries with understanding, refrains from questioning Kurdish nationalist collaboration with the US and Israel, and even endorses imperialist aggression against Iran. For them, the primary problem is always "authoritarian regimes."

Another segment supports any government in conflict with the US in the name of "revolutionism," treats all class-based, ideological, or political criticism of such governments as service to US imperialism, claims that the decisive global fault line lies between US imperialism and a bloc led by China and Russia, and attempts to construct a new "reality" around highly dubious notions such as the "Global South."

It is obvious that communists do not have to choose between these two approaches. A useful starting point is to identify their common ground: both, despite their declared priorities, either ignore, postpone, or seek to soften the contradiction between labor and capital. In other words, both are based on class

conciliation.

The struggle for socialism must be conducted from a class standpoint, and it is equally imperative that this standpoint not be confined to a specific moment but prevail across the entire process. The groundwork for an alternative to these two approaches must be laid well before crises deepen and polarization accelerates.

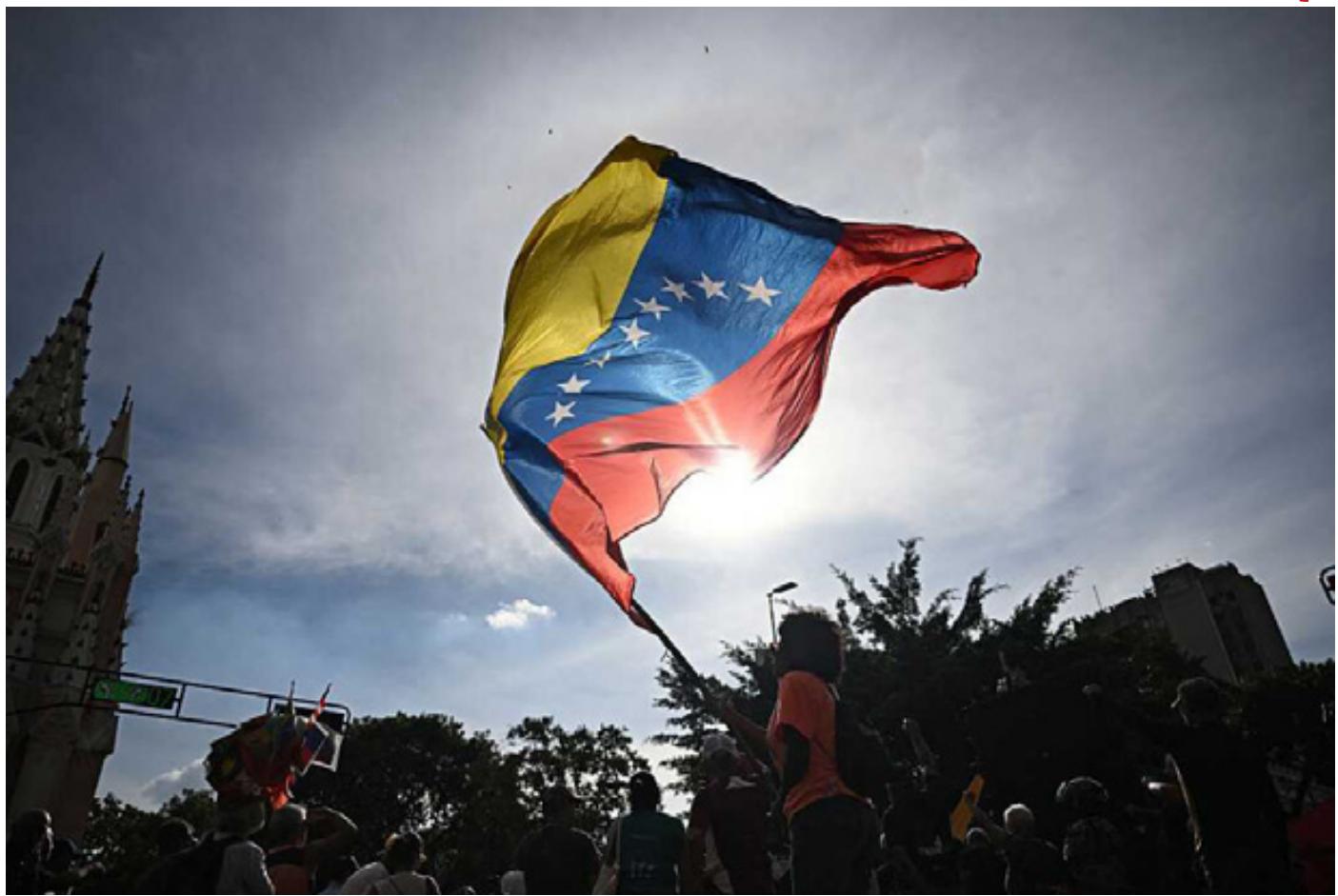
How, then, is this to be done?

Is it enough to add a third pillar—"the struggle of the working class against capital is fundamental"—alongside those who prioritize freedom and democracy and those who see opposition to US imperialism as the sole objective?

The struggle of the working class against capital is indeed fundamental. But the real task is to address freedom, democracy, and imperialism within this framework, and to dismantle the illusion that these are independent domains governed by their own autonomous rules.

The communist movement can neither downplay the narrowing of freedom and democracy and the escalation of imperialist aggression, nor politically counter them by confining the struggle to the immediate categories of the labor-capital contradiction. Expecting such an approach to succeed politically in many countries would be naïve. New examples are added to the list daily, and similar tensions increasingly shape social dynamics in Europe and North America as well.

MAGA-style leftism may for the moment be confined to a very narrow milieu, but we should not forget that in the United States—especially during presidential election cycles—those who elevate "freedom and democracy" to the primary criterion line up behind Biden and Kamala Harris, while those who see the rollback of U.S. imperialism as the sole task find themselves, albeit reluctantly and often with embarrassment, lending support to Trump. In Europe, reformism likewise appears to be fragmenting into two distinct currents: a liberal-libertarian one



and a Eurasianist one.

As I have just pointed out, we cannot push these two issues to the back of the agenda. Both the narrowing of the space of bourgeois democracy—what some describe as authoritarianization—and the intensification of U.S. imperialist aggression are undeniable realities. While leading, in every country, the working class into direct confrontation with the capitalist class, the communist movement also has the obligation to address these two issues from the same class perspective and to assume a leading position on these fronts as well.

At a theoretical level, it is both possible and necessary to prevent the hollowing out of the concepts of freedom–democracy and imperialism. Against the tendency to assess freedom and democracy solely within the limits and criteria of bourgeois democracy, Marxism possesses far greater analytical strength than is often assumed.

Concepts such as authoritarianization—frequently invoked as an extremely superficial term—and fascism, which is

increasingly used in a random and careless manner, can easily be placed on a sound analytical footing. It is also a fact that imperialism cannot be reduced to the United States and its foreign policy practices alone. All of this is indispensable for achieving conceptual clarity and for preventing communists from being pulled in different directions.

However, this kind of conceptual clarification is by no means sufficient to overcome the impasse discussed in this article. This is because each concrete case confronts not only the communists struggling in that country but also those in other countries who must take a position on it in a dynamic rather than static form. Although conceptual rigor and revolutionary theory provide the necessary tools and sense of direction for approaching the issue, identifying, in each case, the critical link most compatible with a revolutionary perspective—the one that can inject the greatest energy into it—is of decisive importance. This cannot be achieved through rote thinking or fixed formulas.

Following those, we can speak more concretely.

Under no circumstances can the task and responsibility of communists in capitalist countries to bring the working class to power in order to transform the social system be set aside. In this sense, the struggle for socialist revolution is, in every country, also a right of the working-class movement; this right cannot be rendered illegitimate on the basis of one or another geostrategic consideration.

Similarly, the right of the working class to resist or counter the attacks of capital through political and organizational means is inviolable from a communist standpoint. Branding the struggles of working people, or popular reactions against the confiscation of basic rights, in countries where the United States is engaged in conflict as “serving imperialism” in fact amounts to serving the United States itself. One cannot be part of such folly, which grants the U.S. the opportunity to pose as a defender of democracy and freedom.

At the same time, communists must act carefully and responsibly

to ensure that they do not end up serving one imperialist power or another. This is a matter that requires ideological and political precision as well as organizational vigilance. As emphasized earlier, achieving such an independent position is a matter of process and requires an independent class movement to make its presence felt. A strategy trapped within the internal tensions of the capitalist system and limited to expanding the space of bourgeois democracy cannot achieve such independence. The socialist perspective does play a role in preventing indirect service to imperialist interventions—but this is not sufficient. Communists have the responsibility, in every country, to take the lead in the struggle against the intervention and presence of imperialist powers. This task cannot be neglected on the grounds of “authoritarianization” or any other pretext. In cases where this responsibility has not been fulfilled, working people have repeatedly been seen to continue supporting the rule of capital in the face of an “external enemy.”

This is not merely a moral obligation. It should not be forgotten that, in many countries, crises generated by contradictions and interventions within the imperialist system can give rise to revolutionary situations, and that the struggle for socialism can take concrete form through the intervention of the working class in these chaotic processes.

The capacity to intervene in such crises cannot be acquired through formulas of “equal distance.” In the struggle for socialism, an “independent line” is not preserved or strengthened by maintaining the same distance from all other vectors, but by repeatedly redefining the coordinates that reinforce that independent line. In this sense, slogans such as “neither Assad nor the U.S.,” “neither the mullahs nor Trump,” or “neither Hamas nor Israel” do not help to resolve the difficult problems we are discussing; in fact, such positions amount to throwing in the towel in the face of difficulties.

In cases where initiative clearly lies with imperialist aggression, an “equal distance” stance evidently means remaining outside developments—or worse, lending support to external intervention.

But what if bourgeois governments exploit this impasse for their own interests?

This is not a new phenomenon. Let us recall how the Bolsheviks, and Lenin in particular, were accused of being German agents. In nearly every country, communists have been accused of treason and forced to contend with the lies of a capitalist class devoid of concepts such as country or homeland.

To confront such provocations, it is necessary to adopt a genuinely credible and consistent working class patriotic position capable of convincing the working people; to avoid links with foreign states; to stay away from fund-laden networks; not to assign strategic priority to notions such as “struggle against authoritarianism”; and, most importantly, to possess a perspective that questions capitalist domination. The worst thing that can happen to a communist party is to slip into a position of collaborationism without realizing it.

All of this requires communist parties to make rapid decisions and act swiftly in each concrete case, while avoiding formulaic speech.

The character of a government confronted by an occupying or aggressive power cannot be ignored. However, in a conjuncture where imperialist aggression has seized the initiative, it is a revolutionary necessity for communists to focus on moves that disrupt that initiative. Indeed, there can be only one reason for imperialists to intervene in a country when the working-class movement has become—or has a strong likelihood of becoming—a political alternative: to assist the rule of capital.

If this alternative does not yet exist and an imperialist power is targeting occupation or regime change, the first task is to engage in efforts that strengthen resistance against imperialism, to strive to play

a leading role within that resistance, and to imbue it with an entirely different character. At this point, “equal distance” is utterly ineffective and meaningless. Focusing on imperialist aggression is undoubtedly easier for communists outside the country. As emphasized at the outset, for the people and revolutionary forces directly bearing the brunt of the existing government, there are undeniable political and psychological obstacles that make such determination more difficult.

Nevertheless, the history of the communist movement is rich enough with instructive examples of how to overcome these obstacles. Without abandoning the goal of socialism and without falling into the betrayal of serving one’s own bourgeoisie through a nationalist posture, it is difficult—but possible—to focus on the imperialist aggressor.

Doing so must mean integrating one’s own class position into the struggle to repel external intervention, attack, or occupation. In this context, the rhetoric and instruments brought to the fore may differ from case to case. What matters is standing against imperialist intervention while preserving the independent identity of the working-class movement.

A line of struggle must be built in which the weaknesses of the existing government of a country targeted by imperialist aggression are exposed in the face of that aggression; in which the revolutionary character of steps that strengthen the country’s resistance is demonstrated to the people; and in which the economic, political, and cultural foundations of imperialism are questioned—something that constitutes a direct anti-capitalist intervention.

For this reason, TKP insistently emphasizes in its strategic documents that the socialist revolution in Turkey will have a predominantly anti-imperialist character. Due to the tectonic characteristics of Turkish capitalism, imperialist intra-system tensions and the possibility

of imperialist intervention exist along all major fault lines. Both programmatically and in the context of current politics, TKP has accumulated sufficient ideological and political reserves to address a potential imperialist intervention from a revolutionary and at the same time working class patriotic perspective.

It must not be forgotten that in Turkey as well, during moments of tension between the government—which has been in power for 25 years—and U.S. and European imperialists, the tendency of certain segments of the left or the establishment opposition to “seek salvation from the West” or to remain silent has always benefited the AKP government. A working class patriotic position, however, does not mean backing the government; on the contrary, through a political approach that exposes how the class character of the government endangers the security of the country and the people, it weakens the government’s political and ideological influence.

The examples are very different from one another. In Venezuela, ruled by a government that is presented—without any real foundation—as “21st-century socialism,” and that in fact constitutes the clearest proof that a revolutionary process which does not advance inevitably moves backward, the response to the pressure and attacks it faces will be decided by the Venezuelan people and their vanguard. These pressures and attacks stem from multiple factors: the intensifying competition at the international level, the desire for direct control over energy resources, imperialist arrogance, and the intention to make a new move in the historical reckoning with the Cuban Revolution. Yet it is evident that the issue also has an international dimension. Regardless of their assessments of the Venezuelan government, many communist parties have adopted a sound position by focusing on U.S. aggression.

At the same time, no one should expect communists to follow the

idea that socialism must be pushed off the agenda because the United States is attacking one place or another. On the contrary, imperialist aggression has intensified precisely because the abolition of capitalism has been delayed.

The debate is not about whether to abandon the perspective for a revolution because of current alignments. It is about how to overcome the impasse created by these alignments through a revolutionary strategy. Unless this strategy includes claiming, on behalf of the working class, concepts such as homeland, country, sovereignty, and borders—at a time when imperialist barbarism recognizes none of them—and confronting imperialist arrogance head-on, insurmountable material and moral obstacles will stand in the way of socialism’s success in that country.

In the struggle for socialism, there has never been a period in which all tasks aligned seamlessly with one another. From the moment of its founding of the Comintern in 1919, which can be seen as one of the birth dates of the international communist movement, advancing the world revolutionary process while simultaneously assisting in the defense of Soviet Russia, and later the USSR, placed each communist party on a line of extremely high tension. No “perfect” or “complete” solution was ever achieved at that time—nor could it have been. What mattered was managing the process in a healthy and revolutionary manner. It is clear that this was not always achieved. For our part, we strive to assess honestly what we failed to do and which mistakes we could not avoid in the history of the TKP—a history we nonetheless take pride in.

The same applies to today’s set of tasks, which will be reflected in each country’s communist party with different historical and social roots. The starting point must always be the fact that socialist revolution is an actual necessity, and the obligations that arise from this fact. As emphasized earlier, this fundamental task can be fulfilled not by ignoring or sidelining other

responsibilities, but by striving to integrate them into an organic whole. This also means redefining other tasks through the political and ideological consistency required by a socialist revolutionary approach.

With the turbulence currently unfolding on an international scale, ending the counter-revolutionary historical period that has persisted since the 1980s through a revolutionary breakthrough; preventing the destructive consequences of tensions, conflicts, and wars within the imperialist world for working peoples; stopping the aggressive United States and its allies, which pursue incessant policies of occupation, coups, and annexation; and defending socialist Cuba—managing the tensions between these tasks and the struggle for socialist revolution constitutes the central theoretical and practical issue of the communist movement.

In the final analysis, the political and organizational independence of the communist movement is an indisputable principle for us. Communist parties do not allow interventions aimed at undermining this independence and, if necessary, continue their struggles through different methods of work. This independence requires separating oneself from the capitalist class and its representatives.

Nevertheless, in certain countries or conjunctures, shades of gray rather than clear black and white may dominate the political and social landscape. Ignoring these ambiguities and imposing a degree of clarity beyond what social dynamics allow can create serious problems for the communist movement. For this reason, we always emphasize the importance of managing processes rather than issuing declarations fixed on the moment.

Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Iran, Venezuela... Tomorrow, another country... Each will confront us with new challenges, and we will overcome them through interventions that simultaneously activate orthodoxy and creativity—correcting errors along the way, without ever losing sight, even for a moment, of the goal of revolution and socialism.



Why has TKP launched a moral challenge to capitalism?

Cansu Oba,

Member of TKP Central Committee

Turkey spent the month of December engulfed in debates over social decay. First, a legal operation targeting allegations of illegal betting in the football industry—now a major capitalist sector—dominated the public agenda. This was followed by a drug operation centered on the editor-in-chief of a prominent mainstream television news channel.

Even before these developments unfolded, Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) had been preparing a political intervention for December that would amount to a moral challenge to the capitalist system itself. The fact that these events erupted onto the national agenda made the party's stance even more meaningful, while also making it necessary to clearly distinguish TKP's position from the discussions widely circulated in the mainstream media.

The scale of decay exposed by these two operations offers clear examples of the corrosive power of money. However, there is no serious reason to believe that these operations genuinely targeted the dominance of capital over sports or

the media. In Turkey, a deep and open power struggle is underway within the ruling circles and the state apparatus, with clear repercussions inside the main opposition party, the CHP. These operations should be understood as extensions of this internal conflict—a stage on which establishment factions settle accounts with one another. For instance, it has been widely claimed that the television channel at the center of the drug operation was targeted because its management was perceived as being close to Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan, who is said to be a key actor in intra-governmental rivalries. In other words, issues such as drug use and distribution networks, substance addiction among media workers, and the notion that involvement in such networks is a prerequisite for professional advancement in journalism were brought into public discussion not out of concern for social harm, but as part of an internal power struggle.

The same logic applies to betting in football. The intense debate over

the distinction between "legal" and "illegal" betting is itself proof of this. In reality, there is no such thing as ethical betting—legal or otherwise. Regardless of its form, betting functions as a mechanism that transfers wealth from the public to capital and integrates directly into processes of capital accumulation. Any genuine opposition to this system therefore requires rejecting betting not only in its illegal forms, but also in its fully institutionalized and "legal" versions, which have become inseparable from contemporary models of rapid enrichment. TKP's challenge, however, is grounded in a far more comprehensive perspective that goes well beyond these two issues.

In Turkey, children are increasingly remembered not for their lives, but for child labor, workplace "accidents" and deaths, abuse scandals—often involving religious sects—and outright murder. When none of these dominate the headlines, we are confronted instead with millions of children who go to school hungry and return home hungry, deprived of adequate

nutrition. The system treats the elderly no differently. Pensioners are abandoned to poverty wages that make survival impossible, while longer life expectancy is framed by those in power as an economic burden rather than a social achievement.

A system that condemns the citizens—especially children and the elderly—to such conditions must be questioned at its very foundations.

This decay is not confined to the social sphere alone. The inherent lack of principles embedded in the bourgeois political system itself is among the core drivers of this comprehensive collapse.

The electoral system as a whole is built on opportunism. Electoral thresholds alone obstruct voters from freely supporting the parties they choose. Public funding for political parties that surpass a minimal vote percentage represents another channel for transfer of the public resources. Politics has become a pathway to personal enrichment. Delegates are bought at party congresses, party-switching is normalized, and ideological consistency is treated as irrelevant.

Since the last parliamentary elections, more than one hundred MPs now sit in parliament under parties other than those they were originally elected from. Candidates solicit votes from citizens only to betray them by transferring allegiance once elected. This entire system is structured around deception, hypocrisy, inconsistency, and a fundamental

absence of principles.

There are many ethical and humanitarian reasons to oppose this order. But the deeper danger lies elsewhere. Within such a landscape of total decay, it is impossible for the working class to insulate or protect itself—especially at a moment when the strength of the working-class politics is relatively weaker.

Capitalism long ago lost its ability to mobilize the masses through positive promises. In Turkey, the dominance of monopolies and religious sects has instead strengthened the system's capacity to rule by relying on social decay.

Individualism, survivalism, dreams of quick wealth, and the urge to “save oneself” at all costs—seeds planted through major political assaults such as the September 12, 1980 military coup—now represent some of the most severe attacks on the working class's collective consciousness and moral compass.

Intertwined with rising violence and cycles of murder, this environment objectively dulls the working class's revolutionary potential.

Under these conditions, we face a task with two inseparable dimensions. First, we must prevent social corruption from being normalized in any form. This requires a multidimensional political and ideological struggle. Although recent operations have partially exposed these issues to public scrutiny, discussing betting, addiction, or corruption without addressing their

structural causes ultimately serves to normalize and legitimize them.

When only the consequences of social decay are debated—while its roots remain untouched—society is conditioned not to resist, but to adapt. The fact that some of those publicly targeted in these high-profile operations have returned to their positions or escaped accountability further entrenches this normalization.

At the core of this decay lies the system's success in legitimizing inequality. Once inequality becomes socially acceptable, the sense of justice erodes. Violence against women and children, the breakdown of class solidarity within the ranks of the working class, and the dominance of competition over cooperation all follow from this erosion. For this reason, TKP will continue to emphasize the systemic roots of this crisis and insist on placing morality from a revolutionary perspective on the agenda.

The second task is to build resistance—starting with the working class itself. This requires, above all, the expansion of organized struggle. Only an organized movement can cultivate its own political ethics, working-class culture, and moral worldview capable of confronting and reversing this decay.

Ensuring that the working class does not internalize this corruption—and fostering a new moral horizon rooted in class solidarity—is not a peripheral issue. It is a central question of class struggle.





Centers for solidarity and struggle: District houses as icebreakers

Ali Ufuk Arıkan,
Member of TKP Central Committee

One of the most severe consequences of the temporary defeat of the revolutionary period opened by the October Revolution was the radical restriction, both in Turkey and across the world, of the communist movement's ability to act, think, and produce together with the working masses, and, as a result, narrowing of its channels of organization.

Communist Party of Turkey took a series of ideological, political, and organizational steps in order to overcome this problem and to build a ground that would enable the people to act, think, and produce together.

In this respect, we will focus on one of the most unique of these steps in this article: the district and workers' houses established by the TKP in working-class neighbourhoods.

To the workers!

One of the most important decisions taken by the Party Conference convened in 2018 under the title "To the Workers!" was the decision to open district, workers', and village houses.

At its core, this decision emerged

as part of the antidote we sought to produce against capitalism's increasingly atomizing assaults on people and its transformation of organizing into an object of fear.

Workers were keeping politics at a distance in their workplaces and avoiding coming together to address their problems; citizens were increasingly forgetting how to unite and struggle over issues that directly concerned them.

As we emphasized at the outset, this came to be recorded as one of the system's, of capitalism's, greatest achievements.

It is clear that the ideological and political problems created by this situation cannot be ignored; likewise, it is also clear that this problem cannot be solved with a magic wand.

It is precisely for this reason that we said, "To the Workers!"

Yes, in Turkey one of the capitalist system's greatest achievements was to decisively strip politics from workplaces and factories, accomplishing this through both intimidation and isolation. In response

to this move, which progressively narrowed the channels of organizing within the working class, it became necessary to find creative alternative solutions while firmly persisting in workplace-based organizing, guided by a clear strategic direction: to turn workers' greater openness to contact and intervention in their living spaces and neighborhoods into an opportunity.

In this sense, the decision to establish district houses did not emerge as a magic wand, but rather as one of the icebreakers needed to overcome the impasse that had developed. The concrete gains achieved also served, to a certain extent, to confirm this assessment.

As a result, the decision shaped by these considerations produced not only a number of political outcomes but also certain practical results.

For example, one such outcome was abandoning the practice of opening party offices on upper floors in city centers and instead renting ground-floor offices located within neighborhoods and working-class



districts that are easily accessible to working people.

Since then, many centers operating under the name of district and workers' houses have begun to function directly within the living spaces of working people, in locations that are easily accessible.

With the decision it took at the 2018 conference, the Party has been "moving" to the working class neighbourhoods and through these centers it was focusing on reversing the impasse that had emerged.

How did we begin, and how are we continuing?

Following the decision to establish district houses, pilot steps were taken rapidly, and the initial results were evaluated as highly positive in terms of overcoming the problems described above.

It was precisely at the moment when these first steps were being taken that the pandemic, which came to grip the entire world, emerged.

In such a situation, how were we to continue on our path?

While the pandemic further deepened all of the problems we have pointed to above, most notably the isolation of working people, the initiative of district houses came to represent a tremendous opportunity as a response to this situation.

District houses became one of the most important tools in overcoming the initial hesitation we experienced at the beginning of the pandemic regarding how to carry on the struggle.

For example, in a poor working-class neighborhood, protective masks that the capitalist system was unable to provide for working people were produced and distributed collectively by the residents living around those district houses. During the pandemic period, district houses became one of the most important addresses of the solidarity that working people urgently

needed.

The intention we set out with, that being placing solidarity, collective production, collective thinking, and the creation of a ground for struggle at the forefront, found a strong and tangible response.

With the emergence from the pandemic, district houses became spaces where people socialized, watched movies together, and came together in workshops organized around various themes as well as in political activities.

In some working-class neighborhoods, literacy courses were organized; in others, people came together through volleyball and football tournaments; in certain districts, educational activities for children were held; in others, first-aid courses were offered –and more besides.

In short, depending on each neighborhood and each locality, different initiatives were taken up, placing the local dynamics and needs at the center.

Beyond this, district houses also played an important role as the local base for the Women's Solidarity Committees, where women in the neighborhood came together, as well as for the "Breathe Down the Bosses' Neck" Communication, Struggle and Solidarity Network through which working people collectively struggled against the problems they faced in their workplaces.

These initiatives also provided the Party with a significant opportunity to mobilize and organize around concrete agendas of struggle.

In addition, district houses proved capable of becoming central hubs in the districts where they operate during extraordinary situations as well. For example, during the major earthquake disaster that occurred in Turkey in 2023, district houses

stood out as the most important centers of solidarity in their respective neighborhoods. Citizens who did not trust state officials or institutions delivered the aid they wished to send to earthquake victims to district houses and took part in the relief centers organized there.

At the point we have reached today, numerous district and workers' houses are operating across the country. New ones are added throughout the year; thanks to this, the Party's expansion and its rooting itself in working-class neighborhoods have gained momentum.

However, as we emphasized at the outset, district houses did not emerge as a magic wand that would solve all problems.

These spaces must be living centers, constantly in contact with working people, where solidarity and struggle are actively produced.

After seven years of experience, some of our neighborhood houses operate with a very strong accumulation of experience and capacity across all the areas mentioned above, while others have not yet reached the desired level of dynamism and initiative.

For this experience to succeed, it must continually move forward and never allow getting stale or a routine to take hold.

Today, we possess a substantial accumulation of experience and a significant opportunity.

With this experience and opportunity, we are faced with the task of both ensuring that existing district houses create much more advanced channels of engagement with workers and adding new centers to them, so that the working class's struggle for socialism can take root in working-class neighborhoods and continue its path with firm steps.



Turkey's abandoned population: Pensioners

Savaş Sarı,

Member of TKP Central Committee

There is a heated propaganda campaign underway in Turkey. Led by the ruling party, this propaganda insists on emphasizing the importance of the family and having many children. Those who speak for the capitalist class complain publicly about the aging population. Beyond mere lamentation, the aging population is defined as a major problem by the ruling front. One in ten people living in Turkey is over 65 years old. One in seven people is retired, meaning they have earned the right to receive a pension after working for decades. Among them are those who have earned the right to receive a pension at a younger age due to health and similar problems, but their number is limited. This ratio is expected to increase in the coming years. This scenario greatly frightens the government and the capitalist class.

In terms of the system, there are two critical aspects to the aging population. In Turkey, labor-intensive exploitation is quite widespread in both production and service sectors. Wages for workers in our country are

low. This low labor cost enables the capitalist class to achieve higher profit margins. Therefore, having as many people as possible working for low wages is a crucial factor for capital. The increase in the senior population means an increase in the population that is not working or unable to work. The pension, health-care, and similar rights available to this population, and the increase in the population using these rights, are considered an unnecessary burden for capital. That is why those in the ruling class have been taking steps for years to eliminate the social rights of pensioners one by one. They are implementing regulations aimed at raising the age of retirement. They have long since made retirement pensions insufficient to live on. But clearly, these steps are not sufficient for the system so it clearly wants to get rid of the elderly people. It views the elderly people as an unnecessary population that must be eliminated, and officials representing the government do not hesitate to state this openly. For a

senior citizen, there is no option left other than death or working until they die.

You have to keep working after retirement

The high cost of living, unemployment, low wages, and unregulated and severe working conditions are Turkey's core realities. Although there have been periods of relative relief due to the reactions and struggles of the working class and the populist policies of governments, conditions for the working class have been poor for decades and are getting worse. Since the 2018 economic crisis, life has become much harder for working people in Turkey. It is difficult to find work, and when they do, the conditions are tough, and they struggle to make ends meet on wages that are not enough for anything. People feel insecure and helpless in the face of this situation. Workers' purchasing power is decreasing day by day. This means that more people in each family are forced to work. People are working multiple jobs and longer

hours. This includes children and senior family members. Children and elderly people work for low wages in whatever jobs they can find. The work is generally demanding for them, both in its nature and in the long hours they are required to endure.

A legal regulation gradually raising the age of retirement to 65 to enable workers to continue working despite their advancing age was enacted in 2008. Under this legal regulation,

complete, the number of pensioners will be at most equal to the population at age 65 and over, so the pensioner ratio is expected to decrease. In fact, capitalists expect that even the majority of the population over 65 will continue to work. Even today, one in eight older people is either working or looking for work since there is virtually no pension system left.

Impossible to live on a pension

Approximately 12 million of the

Rising difficulties in accessing essential services such as healthcare and elderly care, combined with the gradual erosion of social rights, have effectively left older people abandoned and exposed to severe deprivation.

In Turkey, the primary means by which older people are able to survive is support from their children and other family members. Pension payments alone are insufficient to



the age of retirement in Turkey will be gradually raised to 65 by 2048. This law also gradually reduces the privilege of earlier retirement granted to women, equalizing it with men by 2048. According to the law, the age of retirement for currently working employees varies between 60 and 65 for men and between 58 and 65 for women, depending on the total required period of service. By 2048, the minimum retirement age for both women and men will be 65. In 2010, there were more than 1.5 times as many pensioners as people at age 65+ in Turkey. Once this process is

nearly 16 million pensioners entitled to retirement benefits earned their pensions through paid employment. As of December 2025, the average monthly pension for these 16 million pensioners stood at 30,700 TRY (Turkish lira), while the minimum pension was only 16,880 TRY. The income required to cover the basic monthly living expenses of a person living alone is more than twice the minimum pension and about 1.2 times the average pension. As a result, individuals who rely solely on their pension income are unable to meet even their most basic needs.

sustain a dignified life. However, given the widespread poverty affecting the working class, even younger family members increasingly struggle to earn enough to support themselves, let alone provide financial assistance to others. Rising unemployment and the growing necessity for family members to migrate in search of work have further weakened traditional support networks.

In the past, extended family structures and strong intergenerational ties played a crucial role in keeping working-class households afloat. Today, these



arrangements are rapidly eroding for the reasons outlined above. As a result, 2 million of the country's 16 million older people now live alone. One in six requires home-based care—amounting to roughly 1.5 million individuals.

Across the entire country, there are only around 500 elderly care facilities, the majority of which are privately operated. These institutions can accommodate just 30,000 older people in need of care. The conclusion is difficult to ignore: nearly all of the 1.5 million older people whose families are unable to care for them are effectively left without support and face severe neglect.

How will they survive?

In a recent speech, an AKP minister lamented the rising average age of the population, expressing frustration over increasing life expectancy and going so far as to imply that people beyond a certain age constitute a surplus population—one that should simply die. Today, both implicit and explicit propaganda increasingly portrays older people as a burden on society. For pensioners, this translates into being forced to survive on minimal means, withdrawing from social life, and abandoning any expectation of the rights they possess—or should possess. This pressure is constant. As noted above, neither pensions nor existing social rights are sufficient to sustain their lives.

The harsh conditions faced by older people in Turkey are now visible almost everywhere. Across the country, millions of pensioners have been left to fend for themselves, struggling to survive and, in many cases, forced to continue working under ever more

difficult conditions. In large cities in particular, elderly people can be seen in nearly every neighborhood—made especially visible during the pandemic—trying to make ends meet by collecting recyclable waste from garbage bins because their pensions are simply inadequate.

This devastating reality was also reflected in press reports in December. Tens of thousands of elderly people who receive no family support or live entirely alone are unable to secure a place in care facilities or unable to afford rent. As a result, they are forced to live in cheap hotels offering unhealthy and degrading conditions, often sharing overcrowded rooms and communal bathrooms. These hotels serve merely as places to sleep; during the day, elderly residents must go out and work odd jobs to earn daily income just to afford a bed for the night. In many cases, their pensions do not even cover basic food expenses. Equally grim is the existence of tens of thousands of elderly people who are unable to access medical treatment because they lack both caregivers and financial means—people who are, in effect, left waiting to die.

Yet this bleak picture has also given rise to growing anger. Pensioners experiencing the most extreme forms of poverty are engaging in levels of activism unprecedented in Turkey. Over the past two decades, an increasing number of pensioner associations and unions have emerged. While these organizations have yet to coalesce into a unified force, their existence reflects a mounting sense of injustice and a deepening search for collective solutions.

As part of its work within the working class, Communist Party of Turkey has been developing organizational tools and initiatives aimed at bringing pensioners together. District Houses play a central role in this effort. One of their primary functions is to create spaces where pensioners in neighborhoods and local communities can come together, rebuild social ties, and reengage with collective life. These spaces serve as platforms for organization, empowerment, and collective action. Under the umbrella of the District Houses, pensioners have begun forming Pensioner Solidarity Networks. Though still in their early stages, these networks represent an important and promising experience.

The Pensioner Solidarity Networks aim to unite pensioners around concrete demands for basic rights, including healthcare, housing, nutrition, and transportation. They raise clear demands directed at both central and local governments and work to organize pensioners around these shared struggles, amplifying their collective voice.

TKP remains at an early stage in transforming District Houses into vibrant social spaces for pensioners and in strengthening the Pensioner Solidarity Networks operating within them. While valuable experience is being accumulated, much work remains. The organization of pensioners constitutes a vital link in the broader struggle against rising living costs and deepening impoverishment. Guided by this understanding, TKP is committed to ensuring that the organized power and voice of pensioners are heard throughout Turkey by 2026.



Party History - Volume III: The Years of the Left's Rise

Murat Akad,

Member of TKP Party Council

Another stage in the writing of the history of the Communist Party of Turkey has been completed. Following the publication of the first two volumes, the third volume – covering the 1960s and 1970s – has now been released.

Communist Party of Turkey has been conducting a historical study unprecedented in Turkey. This work examines the party's history in detail, tracing it back to a period even before its official founding in 1920. It follows the introduction of socialist ideology into the country during the Ottoman era, from the emergence of the first socialist organizations and working class movement to the present day. Previous studies on the history of TKP have not offered such a comprehensive perspective. The aim of this project is therefore to fill a significant gap. The first two volumes, published in recent years, covered developments up to the early 1960s.

The newly published volume continues the narrative from this point, focusing on the 1960s and 1970s, a period when the left reached its greatest strength in Turkey's history.

The rise of the left in the 1960s took place largely under the umbrella of the first Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP). The 1950s had been a turbulent decade for the country. Turkish capitalism, aligned with imperialism during the Cold War, reached a major turning point with Turkey's accession to NATO. Under the right-wing government of the time, the country was opened to imperialist powers, and numerous US military bases were established, some of which remain in operation today. Progressive forces, including communists, were suppressed, and many members and leaders of the TKP spent these years in prison. In this sense, the period represented a low point for the left.

At the same time, the social conditions for new dynamics to emerge were taking shape, forming the basis of the developments of the 1960s. The Workers' Party of Turkey entered the political arena during this period. TKP, still recovering from the repression of the 1950s, supported this initiative in the legal sphere, and many of its members joined TİP. Progressive intellectuals, revolutionary youth,

Kurdish democrats, Alevi communities with egalitarian traditions, and, above all, advanced sections of the working class came together within the party. TİP grew rapidly and gained sufficient public support to win 15 parliamentary seats in the 1965 elections. As the working class became increasingly aware of its strength, organized class consciousness began to develop.

During this period, TİP came to represent a broader progressive tradition, strongly influenced by figures rooted in the TKP tradition. It became the leading party of the working class and played a key role in introducing socialist ideas to a wide public in Turkey. For this reason, it occupies an important place in the historical experience associated with the TKP.

The 1960s were marked by mass movements. The labour movement and, particularly in the latter half of the decade, the youth movement became central to the country's political agenda. However, TİP was unable to effectively manage this

mobilization. Debates emerged over the need for a Marxist-Leninist leading party. Influenced by international discussions, differing strategic positions within TİP led to internal divisions. The main axis of disagreement centred on the National Democratic Revolution versus the Socialist Revolution. Advocates of the former argued that priority should be given to the democratic revolution because it had not yet been completed and the working class was not sufficiently developed. The opposing view held that the social structure was sufficiently mature for a socialist revolution. Those aligned with the National Democratic Revolution left TİP to form separate organizations, while proponents of the Socialist Revolution continued their efforts starting from the party leadership.

Despite the military coup of 1971, the left continued to develop along different paths. While fragmented in outlook, it expanded in size and influence. The labour movement reached unprecedented levels, and the country entered a period of revolutionary crisis.

After experiencing severe repression in the 1950s, the Communist Party of Turkey had maintained its organizational and political existence largely abroad. In the early 1970s, it decided to re-establish a stronger presence within the country. The 1973 Leap Forward

marked a turning point, as the party reorganized domestically and made a significant political intervention. This breakthrough enabled the communist movement to emerge not only as a historical legacy but also as an organic leading force within the working class. Operating under conditions of under clandestine conditions, the party rapidly organized among workers and youth and gained considerable influence.

The third volume examines this process in detail. At the same time, the 1970s were a period in which other currents on the left also gained strength and became more deeply embedded in society. Political awareness reached unprecedented levels, with the working class organizing through trade unions, associations, and professional organizations. The left as a whole achieved a high degree of social engagement, and the book also addresses the dynamism of these various movements.

However, this period also revealed significant weaknesses. Despite widespread politicization and the presence of a revolutionary crisis, TKP did not adopt revolution as an explicit objective, instead prioritizing democratic progress. Insufficient effort was made to channel the social momentum toward a revolutionary outcome.

At the same time, both the national bourgeoisie and imperialist forces intensified repression against the left through NATO-linked counter-guerrilla structures and the growth of fascist movements within the country. TKP was also targeted by fascist violence. Meanwhile, revolutionary-democratic sections of the left turned to armed struggle, but these efforts were incapable of establishing a meaningful connection with the organized power of the working class. The combination of armed struggle fetishism, isolated acts of violence, and counter-guerrilla activity contributed to a broader de-politicization of the society. Preparations for a military coup were increasingly evident, and these dynamics ultimately played into that process.

It was not necessary to wait for the military coup of September 12, 1980 to recognize that the period of expansion was coming to an end. The left, unable to respond to the crisis with a coherent revolutionary strategy, suffered a comprehensive defeat. The coup suspended bourgeois democracy and severely disrupted social politicization and leftist movements, marking the beginning of a long period of retreat.

The third volume of the Party History presents this twenty-year period and its dramatic conclusion in detail, offering a rich account filled with historical lessons.



Bilal Erdoğan: A trajectory shaped by ongoing leadership debates

Within the ruling party AKP, the struggle and reckoning over the post-Erdoğan era has gained momentum in recent months. While some candidates have been eliminated or neutralised, the name of Bilal Erdoğan, initially seen as a very remote possibility, has gained strength.

Bilal Erdoğan, the son of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, continued his education in the United States after graduating from Kartal Imam Hatip High School. Like the children of several AKP leaders...

While pursuing his education, Bilal Erdoğan also completed a two-year internship at the World Bank. He later returned to Turkey, where he entered the maritime and construction sectors. During this period, he partnered with Azerbaijani businessperson Mübariz Mansimov, who acquired Turkish citizenship in 2006 and was later tried on charges of knowingly aiding the Fethullah Gülen movement following its break with the AKP. This business partnership subsequently became a source of controversy for Bilal Erdoğan.

The December 17-25 Operations

The most significant development raising concerns around Bilal Erdoğan was the conflict between the AKP and the Fethullah Gülen movement. He had already been the subject of criticism due to the appointment of individuals who graduated from the same high school as him to senior positions in various state institutions, and the December 17-25 operations further intensified scrutiny of his role and connections.

For years, the AKP and the Gülen movement jointly overturned established laws and norms in the country, carrying out a wide range of reactionary operations together. As tensions between the two deepened,



however, they began to take increasingly aggressive steps against one another. This power struggle continued until the coup attempt of 15 July 2016.

The Gülen movement's first major offensive came with the investigation known as the December 17-25 operations, launched in the final days of 2013. Prosecutors and police officers affiliated with the movement initiated a series of corruption and bribery investigations targeting several cabinet ministers. As part of this process, President Erdoğan's son,

Bilal Erdoğan, was also sought for questioning on similar charges. It was even reported at that time that the order was issued to open fire on the police officers who went to detain Bilal Erdoğan.

Preparing once again: Reactionary youth organisations

The founding generation of the AKP was essentially a group that formed around various Islamist associations and magazines in the 1960s and 1970s. Similar to this generation, which was prepared in cooperation with the US and NATO against the rising

POLITICAL PARTIES AND FIGURES FROM TURKEY

revolutionary youth movements in Turkey at the time, Bilal Erdoğan has also focused on various organisations targeting young people.

Bilal Erdoğan, who chaired the İlim Yayma Foundation, an anti-communist organisation that had existed since his father's youth, also reached a wide network through the Turkish Youth Foundation (TÜGVA), of which he was a member of the High Advisory Board.

These associations and foundations, which sought to organise youth around reactionary ideas with financial support from the state and even EU funds, also provided Bilal Erdoğan with extensive opportunities for preparing and organising, utilising all the resources of state power.

Demonstrating an example of reactionary propaganda using the resources of the government, this year's preparatory meeting for the Gaza March, organised for several years on the morning of 1 January under the leadership of TÜGVA, was also attended by the presidents of Turkey's largest sports clubs. Targeting the New Year celebrations the night before, the march, scheduled for 8:30 am, is being organised as an Islamist demonstration in Turkey rather than as a gesture of sympathy for the suffering of the people of Gaza.

The founding generation of the AKP largely emerged from circles clustered around Islamist associations and publications during the 1960s and 1970s. Much like that generation—which was shaped, in cooperation with the United States and NATO, as a counterweight to the revolutionary youth movements then gaining strength in Turkey—Bilal Erdoğan has also focused his activities on organizations targeting young people.

Bilal Erdoğan chairs the İlim Yayma Foundation, an organization that has functioned as an anti-communist hub since his father's youth. In addition, he has extended his influence through the Turkey Youth Foundation (TÜGVA), where he serves as a member of the High Advisory Board, giving him access to a broad and nationwide network.

Backed by financial support from the state and, in some cases, European Union funds, these

associations and foundations seek to organize young people around reactionary ideas. At the same time, they provide Bilal Erdoğan with extensive opportunities for preparation and mobilization, drawing on the full range of resources available to those in power.

A striking example of the fusion of state resources and reactionary propaganda can be seen in the Gaza March, organized for several years on the morning of 1 January under TÜGVA's leadership. This year, the preparatory meeting for the march was attended by the presidents of Turkey's largest sports clubs. Scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. and deliberately positioned in opposition to New Year's Eve celebrations the night before, the event is organized less as an act of solidarity with the people of Gaza than as an Islamist political mobilization within Turkey.

Bilal Erdoğan is beginning to be promoted...

One of the issues long debated within AKP circles has been the question of who will succeed Erdoğan as leader. At various points, the names of his two sons-in-law—Berat Albayrak and Selçuk Bayraktar—have been raised, while former Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu was also briefly regarded as a contender before being effectively removed from consideration.

Although National Intelligence Organization (MIT) Director İbrahim Kalin and Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan are currently mentioned as possible alternatives, Bilal Erdoğan has made a noticeable push in recent months. This has prompted growing speculation that "the Erdoğan family has settled on Bilal Erdoğan" as its preferred option.

It has been observed that several influential figures within the AKP have aligned themselves with Bilal Erdoğan. Beyond this, significant interventions appear to be taking place that could reshape internal power balances within the party. Reports in the press suggest that, following changes in organizational roles, a younger cadre regarded as loyal to Bilal Erdoğan has been brought into key positions, with claims that control of the party organization could be fully transferred

to him within the coming year.

Active beyond Turkey's borders

In previous years, Bilal Erdoğan occasionally accompanied his father on official overseas trips, though he played no substantive role in them—an arrangement that drew public criticism. More recently, however, his rise has also been reflected in an increase in international engagements.

Despite still holding no official position, he joined his father on official visits to Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman. He subsequently held personal meetings with the Prime Minister and President of Georgia.

Another notable stop was Northern Cyprus. Following the recent presidential election, tensions over the Cyprus issue had emerged between the AKP and its coalition partner, the MHP. While MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli harshly criticized the newly elected president of Northern Cyprus, Erdoğan hosted President Tufan Erhürman in Ankara. Against this backdrop, Bilal Erdoğan also traveled to Northern Cyprus and paid an official visit to the president's office.

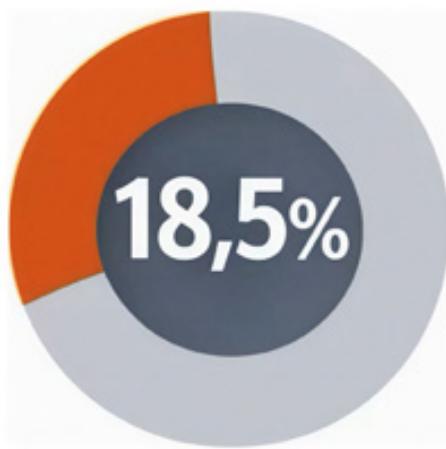
The family's choice - But what about the people?

For some time now, Turkey's ruling bloc has been marked by serious internal friction. The succession of maneuvers that followed—many of which failed to resolve underlying conflicts and instead deepened uncertainty—has not gone unnoticed. These developments are closely monitored and evaluated by Voice of TKP.

The emergence of Bilal Erdoğan's name is one such development. The Erdoğan family's internal compass may now be pointing in his direction, and even some former rivals appear willing to back him.

Yet Turkey is not a country that can be governed according to the preferences of a small group entrenched in power. Nor will the people who have stood in opposition to Erdoğan remain silent in the face of such political maneuvering.

Pensioners in Turkey



18.5% OF TURKEY'S POPULATION

In Turkey, the retirement age is 58 for women and 60 for men. Approximately 16 million retirees correspond to around 18.5% of Turkey's population. This shows that retirees make up the largest societal segment after workers.

76% OF THE MINIMUM WAGE



The lowest retirement benefit granted in Turkey in 2025 corresponded to 76% of the minimum wage. With Turkey's hunger and poverty thresholds taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the lowest retirement benefit stays well below the hunger threshold. While the nationwide mean house rent is around 25,000 Turkish liras, the retirement benefit is at 16,000 Turkish liras. The number of citizens forced to pay 200 liras daily to dwell in hostel rooms with no bathrooms and toilets or to reside in intercity bus terminals is ever-increasing.



26,823 PENSIONERS

APPLYING FOR A JOB

26,823 pensioners over 60 applied to İŞKUR for a job this year. With the informal sector included, it is estimated that over 8 million retirees participate in the labor force in Turkey. This corresponds to over half of the total retired population. Furthermore, 80% of retired workers over 65 work precariously off the record. While the number of retired job seekers over 60 who applied to İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency) this year was 26,823, the total number of citizens who were assigned a job increased by 38.3%.

512 PENSIONERS

KILLED AT WORK

According to 2024 data, 512 pensioners were killed in work-murders, reported as "workplace accidents". Despite their old age, the retired people find employment mainly in physically demanding sectors such as construction, agriculture and services. These sectors are where unreported and precarious work has almost become the rule.



Highlights from Turkish Foreign Policy



The dichotomy of the “number one security threat”

During his visit to Iran, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Ankara was open to extending its natural gas agreement with Tehran and reiterated opposition to sanctions. Turkey imports about 10 billion cubic meters of gas annually from Iran under a contract set to expire in mid-2026. Despite this, Fidan acknowledged that bilateral ties remain limited, particularly in transportation and logistics. Both sides described Israel’s regional expansionism as the Middle East’s “number one security threat.”

This rhetoric, however, contrasts with Turkey’s broader strategic posture. Assessments produced under Fidan’s tenure at the National Intelligence Organization argue that Turkey should align with the US and Israel in a potential conflict with Iran. References to a regional axis stretching from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea further underscore this positioning. The contradiction is reinforced by the 2025 US National Security Strategy, which claims that “Iran has weakened.”

Gaza: disarmament and political engineering

Negotiations over Gaza remain

stalled amid efforts by the United States and regional mediators—including Qatar, Egypt, and Turkey—to impose a framework centered on disarmament and political restructuring. According to Fidan, the disarmament of Hamas would be neither realistic nor feasible without first establishing a civilian administration and a legitimate security apparatus.

Fidan has stated that Hamas is open to relinquishing administrative control, provided governance is transferred to a committee of Palestinian technocrats. He emphasized that Gaza’s security should be ensured by a police force formed by Palestinians rather than by Hamas itself. While presenting this stance as being on “the right side of history,” Fidan continues to distance Ankara from Trump’s plan, which is widely viewed as incompatible with Palestinian self-determination.

Syria: recognition, pressure, and internal fault lines

On December 8, 2024, Turkey’s Foreign Ministry marked the anniversary of the Assad regime’s collapse, though claims of a mass refugee return have proven exaggerated. According to Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, only about

560,000 Syrians have returned from Turkey since Assad’s removal.

Turkey’s Syria policy remains heavily shaped by pressure from the US, UK, and Israel, while Syria has been left unable to defend its territory against Israeli attacks and continues to face widespread violence and political fragmentation.

Ankara’s stance toward the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) is



another source of tension. While pursuing domestic talks with the Kurdish movement, Fidan warned that Turkey’s patience with the SDF is “running out,” statements that sparked criticism within the AKP and exposed internal divisions. Amid these strains, Fidan, Defense Minister Yaşar Güler, and MIT chief İbrahim Kalın visited Damascus and met HTS leader Ahmed al-Shara. The visit coincided with clashes in Aleppo. Afterward, Fidan drew attention by praising President Trump for lifting

Caesar sanctions and accusing the SDF of coordinating with Israel.

Rising risks: Black Sea and Libya

Turkey faces increasing regional risks as NATO activity intensifies in the Black Sea. Drone incidents and attacks on commercial shipping—known to Ankara in advance and reportedly approved—raise the possibility of escalation, despite Turkey's stated commitment to neutrality and the Montreux Convention.

At the same time, the crash of a private jet carrying Libya's Chief of General Staff, shortly after departing Ankara, heightened tensions. The incident occurred just as parliament approved a decree extending Turkey's military mission in Libya by

24 months, underscoring Ankara's deepening involvement.

Africa, Somalia, and Somaliland

Turkey's expanding footprint in Africa—particularly in Somalia—has made the region a key arena of competition involving the US, UAE, China, and European powers. Since Erdo\u011fan's 2011 visit, Somalia has become a major recipient of Turkish military, construction, and defense investments, hosting a Turkish military base and numerous state-linked institutions.

Israel's recognition of Somaliland's independence has further destabilized the region. While Ankara condemns Israel's actions, Turkey's growing role exposes it to new

conflicts, including tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia and UAE-backed proxy forces.

Energy politics and strategic dependence

Legal pressure on the Turkish Stream pipeline has prompted its operator to relocate headquarters from the Netherlands to Hungary, with Turkey extending security guarantees. The move highlights Ankara's increasing entanglement in European energy politics amid sanctions and geopolitical rivalry.

S-400s, F-35s, and strategic retreat

Reports suggest Ankara is exploring the return of the Russian-made S-400 air defense systems—once framed as a sovereign breakthrough—to repair relations



with Washington and regain access to the F-35 program. The \$2.5 billion system, delivered in 2019 but never activated, has instead become a financial and political liability, symbolizing Turkey's gradual realignment with NATO.

Eastern Mediterranean: from energy to militarization

The Cyprus-Greece-Israel summit held in Jerusalem on December 22 marked a notable development for Turkey amid rising tensions in

the Eastern Mediterranean. Ankara has closely watched the shift from energy cooperation to security and military coordination. AKP President Recep Tayyip Erdo\u011fan reiterated Turkey's stance, stating, "We will not relinquish our rights in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean, or anywhere else."

While energy issues remained formally on the agenda, the summit's emphasis was on maritime security, joint defense planning,

and rapid response to regional threats, signaling a move away from diplomacy toward military-based management of tensions. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Northern Cyprus aims to strengthen its international standing and reaffirmed Turkey's commitment to pursuing a "constructive agenda" with Greece. Meanwhile, Ankara's statements avoided addressing US-backed regional initiatives and the British military presence on the island.

We stand with the people of Venezuela!



Immediately following the U.S. attacks targeting Venezuela, TKP responded swiftly to the developments, issuing multiple statements throughout the day and calling on the public to mobilize for protests.

In the first [statement](#) released by TKP, the following was stated:

"This aggression constitutes a blatant violation of international law and is entirely illegitimate in both historical and social terms. The Communist Party of Turkey stands firmly with the people of Venezuela in the face of the ongoing U.S. aggression. We believe that the Venezuelan people—who have steadfastly defended their sovereignty to this day—possess the collective strength and social resources needed to once again defeat these attacks. The future of Venezuela will not be determined by the vision imposed by imperialism, but by the struggle for independence and socialism."

TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan also shared his [assessments](#) of the unfolding events and issued a call for struggle against imperialism through a series of posts on his X account over the course of the day:

"A new struggle is beginning now. A struggle in which fence-sitting, indecision, and half-measures will not work; a struggle waged by a people relying on their own strength, not on illusions about 'great powers'. It will be a long struggle. It will be ours to fight."

On the same day, TKP organized a mass protest in front of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara. This was followed by another protest in Istanbul on Sunday. At the same time, TKP organizations took part in protest demonstrations held in Germany and the Netherlands.



The letter of solidarity from TKP to PCC

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkey sent a letter to the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba, expressing its commitment to solidarity and struggle in response to the death of 32 Cuban internationalists in Venezuela and U.S. aggression against Cuba.



Cuba is not alone!



On the occasion of the 67th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, the José Martí Cuba-Turkey Friendship Association organized an event in Izmir titled 'The People Who Made the Revolution, the Revolution Living Among the People,' featuring the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Ankara Alejandro Diaz F. Palacios and TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan as speakers. The event opened with a moment of silence in memory of the 32 Cuban internationalist fighters killed in the U.S. attack on Venezuela.

A moral challenge to capitalism from TKP

Turkey has been shaken for weeks by incidents exposing deep moral decay caused by the capitalist system. As debates range from widespread drug networks to gambling and match-fixing, TKP has issued a statement highlighting the responsibility of the capitalist system. The party stressed that child labor, workplace murders, the unprincipled nature of bourgeois politics, and many other features specific to this system are all components of a broader moral collapse.

This intervention, which directly challenges the immorality of the system, is expected to remain one of the central themes emphasized by the TKP in the coming period.

In the [statement](#) by the TKP Central Committee named "We will not abandon our people to this immorality", it is pointed out that this system places money above all values and drags society into a bottomless swamp and a call to organize was made.

TKP took the to streets: down with your minimum wage!



TKP took to the streets in İstanbul, declaring: *"We have a message for the government and the capitalist class that have decided millions of our citizens must try to survive on 28,075 TL: Down with your minimum wage!"*

Party History – Volume III: The Years of the Left's Rise

The third volume of the book "Party History" has just been published. The third volume of the four-book series on the history of the Communist Party of Turkey traces the rise of the left in Turkey beginning in the late 1960s, its nearly two-decade-long period of prominence, and the tragic end of this era full of historical lessons.



Solidarity with Cuba against U.S. blockade



Solidarity event "Fidel's Legacy, the Future of the Revolution" organized by the José Martí Cuba-Turkey Friendship Association (JMKDD).

After the opening speech of the president of JMKDD, Nahide Özkan, Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and Head of International Relations Emilio Ratmir Lozada Garcia and TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan spoke in the event.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) also authored a [statement](#) in opposition to the U.S. blockade against Cuba.

Women's Solidarity Committees met for a volleyball tournament



Women's Solidarity Committees (KDK) organized the Spike Against the Darkness Volleyball Tournament, bringing women together in opposition to violence, reactionism, and exploitation. The tournament lasted for 2 days and featured 8 teams. Senem Doruk İnam, member of TKP Central Committee, responsible for Women's Solidarity Committees spoke in the tournament: ***"We must win a match together against religious reactionism, exploitation, and violence that condemn women to death. We are preparing for that fight."***

The Syrian people don't deserve this



TKP Central Committee issued a statement on the first year since jihadist forces mobilized by the US, Israel, UK, and the AKP government seized power in Syria.

In the statement titled *"The Syrian People Don't Deserve This"* it was emphasized that *"Syria's underground and ground resources, along with the labor of the Syrian people, have been exposed to plunder and exploitation by international monopolies, those who have descended upon the country like vultures. They have already seized control of Syria's and the Syrian people's future."*

TKG protested Polish Ambassador: solidarity with Communist Party of Poland



Communist Youth of Turkey (TKG) protested Polish Ambassador to Ankara Maciej Lang, who was visiting Eskişehir city today to meet with students. In their statement, TKG emphasized that it is unacceptable for those who seek to ban communism in their own country to lecture students in Turkey about freedom, and clearly stated the call that the Polish authorities keep their hands off the communists of Poland.