

A historic advance in the fight for Trotskyism: The International Committee of the Fourth International accepts application of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu to become its section in Turkey

26 June 2022

The International Committee of the Fourth International, meeting on June 19, unanimously approved the application of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu (Socialist Equality Group, SEG) to be its section in Turkey.

The comrades of Sosyalist E?itlik have been working closely with the International Committee in the publication of a Turkish language edition of the World Socialist Web Site and in the translation and distribution of its literature. The leading comrades of the SEG have acquired an extensive knowledge and firm grasp of the history, principles and program of the ICFI.

The June 19 decision followed extensive discussions with representatives of the International Committee in Istanbul on the development of the fight for Trotskyism in Turkey and the Aegean and Black Sea regions.

Upon accepting the application of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu, the International Committee paid tribute to the memory of Comrade Halil Celik (1961-2018), who, in the years prior to his untimely death, fought tirelessly for Trotskyism and laid the foundations for the establishment of a section of the ICFI in Turkey.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu will now proceed to the organization of its founding congress.

We publish below the resolution unanimously adopted by the leadership of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu on June 15, 2022, requesting its acceptance as a section of the ICFI.

1. The Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu (Socialist Equality Group, SEG) has taken the resolution to apply to join the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), whose political authority it recognizes and with which it works in the closest political cooperation.

2. It is an integral part of the decision to found the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) as the Turkish section of the ICFI. Both decisions are not based on conjunctural or national considerations, but on the SEG's agreement with the ICFI on questions of history, principles and program. The building of a revolutionary party in any country is possible only on the basis of an international perspective, program and party. The only solution to the major problems in Turkey, which is in a critical position in terms of global geopolitics and class struggle, is the international socialist revolution. The founding of the SEP (Turkey) will be an expression of the global expansion of the ICFI, the only political tendency that assumes the task of solving the great historical problems.

3. As Leon Trotsky wrote in his 1928 *Critique of the Draft Program of the Communist International*:

In our epoch, which is the epoch of imperialism, i.e., of world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital, not a single communist party can establish its program by proceeding solely or mainly from conditions and tendencies of developments in its own country. This also holds entirely for the party that wields state power within the boundaries of the USSR. On August 4, 1914, the death knell sounded for national programs for all time. The revolutionary party of the proletariat can base itself only upon an international program corresponding to the character of the present epoch, the epoch of the highest development and collapse of capitalism. An international communist program is in no case the sum of national programs or an amalgam of their common features. The international program must proceed directly from an analysis of the conditions and tendencies of the world economy and of the world political system taken as a whole in all its connections and contradictions, that is, with the mutually antagonistic interdependence of its separate parts. In the present epoch, to a much larger extent than in the past, the national orientation of the proletariat must and can flow only from a world orientation and not vice versa. Herein lies the basic and primary difference between communist internationalism and all varieties of national socialism.

4. Only the ICFI represents the political continuity of the world Marxist/Trotskyist movement. This continuity goes back to the founding of the Left Opposition under the leadership of Leon Trotsky in 1923 to defend the strategy and program of the world socialist revolution against nationalist Stalinist degeneration. It was this strategy and program that guided the October Revolution in 1917 led by the Bolshevik Party in Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

5. The founding of the Fourth International in 1938 under the leadership of Trotsky after the collapse of the Communist International paving the way for the Nazis to come to power in Germany in 1933; the founding of the International Committee in 1953 by orthodox Trotskyists led by James P. Cannon of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the US against the revisionist-liquidationist tendency led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel; the political struggle by the British Trotskyists led by Gerry Healy against the unprincipled reunification with the Pabloites in 1963; and the struggle of the American Trotskyists led by David North in 1982-86 against the national-opportunist degeneration of the Workers

Revolutionary Party (WRP) in Britain and the regaining the control of the IC by orthodox Trotskyists, constitute critical turning points in this political continuity.

6. In this context, the Socialist Equality Group emphasizes that it fully agrees with the “Historical and International Foundations” documents of the Socialist Equality Parties affiliated to the ICFI, and it bases itself on these historical and international foundations.

7. Trotsky wrote in 1938:

It is possible to maintain and develop a revolutionary political grouping of serious importance only on the basis of great principles. The Fourth International alone embodies and represents these principles. It is possible for a national group to maintain a constant revolutionary course only if it is firmly connected in one organization with co-thinkers throughout the world and maintains a constant political and theoretical collaboration with them. The Fourth International alone is such an organization. All purely national groupings, all those who reject international organization, control, and discipline are in their essence reactionary.

This is the approach that led to the SEG’s decision to join the ICFI.

8. The SEG’s resolution to join the ICFI is a very conscious political decision that reflects the step-by-step integration of our group with the International Committee over the past years on the questions of principle and history. Comrade Halil Çelik, who passed away at the end of 2018, played a decisive role in reaching this point, which has an international political and historical significance.

9. The political orientation of the predecessor group of today’s SEG towards the ICFI dates back to the early 2000s. In November 2007, Halil’s group wrote to the ICFI at that time:

You are aware of the fact that we have been following the ICFI closely for the last two years through the WSWS and discussing some of its documents internally by translating them into Turkish. Through the meetings and discussions we held, we managed to find answers to many of the questions we had in our minds. In a nutshell, the discussions we have conducted in Istanbul have accelerated the process of understanding the basic positions of the ICFI by our comrades and sympathisers.

The year 2007 also marked an important milestone when German comrades from the ICFI visited Istanbul and discussions with our group deepened.

10. By 2014, the IC plenum unanimously passed a resolution that read:

The plenum of the International Committee of the Fourth International formally accepts the application of Comrade H[alil] on behalf of the organisation Toplumsal Esitlik (Social Equality Group) to open discussions with the aim of establishing a section of the International Committee in Turkey. The IC will work closely with the Turkish comrades to assist them in the political and theoretical preparation of a Founding Conference.

11. This resolution and closer political collaboration with the ICFI shaped our group’s political activity after 2014. As an important step in our political integration with the ICFI, in 2018 we changed the name of

our group to “Socialist Equality,” stating in the resolution that:

The SE is assuming a name in line with that of all the official sections of the ICFI (Socialist Equality Party, Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei, Parti de l’égalité socialiste) and thereby stressing its determination to become the Turkish section of the Fourth International.

12. The founding of Mehring Yayınları at the end of 2017 and the publication of some of the key works of the ICFI in Turkish represented a major step forward in the building of the Socialist Equality Party (Turkey). Comrade Halil’s prediction was vindicated:

Publications of the contemporary Marxist literature produced by the world Trotskyist movement in Turkish, we believe, will contribute to the laying of the theoretical and political foundation for the building of the Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).

13. In 2020, the Socialist Equality Group’s decision to come under the full control of the International Editorial Board of the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) and to continue its publication exclusively on the WSWS was another important step towards establishing a Turkish section of the world party.

14. The last critical meeting in the decision to found the Socialist Equality Party (Turkey) and apply to join the ICFI was the visit of the International Committee delegation to Istanbul in early June 2022.

15. In the historic meetings held during this visit, it was unanimously supported that, on the basis of both the maturity of the objective situation in the world and the SEG’s agreement with the ICFI on program, principles and historical issues, the founding of the SEP (Turkey) as an expression of the international expansion of the ICFI could no longer be delayed. The founding of the SEP (Turkey) will inspire the founding of new ICFI sections in the Middle East and around the world.

16. As the COVID-19 pandemic, which intensified the crisis of world capitalism, is entering a new phase, NATO’s proxy war against Russia in Ukraine threatens a nuclear World War III. The global food crisis and the cost of living crisis are accompanied by the accelerating collapse of democratic forms of rule in all countries. However, the internal contradictions of capitalism that give rise to these crises are also paving the way for the development of the world socialist revolution. Capitalist globalization and the communication technologies that accompany it have objectively integrated the world economy and the working class to an enormous degree. The class struggle is taking on an international character as never before. The developing movement of the international working class is increasingly intersecting with the conscious political activity of the ICFI. Only the ICFI has a global revolutionary program of solutions to the great historical problems facing the international working class.

17. All global objective developments confirm the ICFI’s analysis and prediction at the beginning of 2020: “The decade of the socialist revolution begins.” However, as the statement explained, “the spontaneous struggles of workers and their instinctive striving for socialism are, by themselves, inadequate. The transformation of the class struggle into a conscious movement for socialism is a question of political leadership.” The SEG’s decision to found the SEP (Turkey) and apply to join the ICFI is part of the fight to resolve this question of political leadership.

18. On this basis, taking a resolution to apply to join the ICFI, the SEG

decides to submit its founding documents “Statement of Principles” and “Historical and Political Perspectives” for the political approval of the International Committee. The official founding of the party will take place after this process of preparation, discussion and IC approval.

19. At the same time, the SEG enthusiastically supports the proposal to develop the Turkish edition of the WSWs in daily practical cooperation with international comrades. The WSWs is the critical political tool for the building of the ICFI all over the world and thus for the development of the world socialist revolution.



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