

Communist Party of Turkey, Left Party support for K?l?çdarolu in presidential election exposes bankruptcy of pseudo-left

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27 March 2023

The Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) and the Left Party in Turkey have announced that they will support Kemal K?l?çdarolu, the Republican People's Party (CHP), candidate of the Nation Alliance, in the May 14 presidential election.

President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an, who can serve two terms, has declared his candidacy for a third term, in violation of the constitution. The TKP and Left Party, which are part of the Socialist Union of Forces (SGB) founded last August, will participate in the parliamentary elections on the same day as part of the SGB.

Turkey's presidential and parliamentary elections are proceeding in the shadow of extraordinary global and national developments. On the one hand, the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused billions of preventable infections and millions of deaths worldwide since the beginning of 2020 due to the murderous policy of the ruling elites, is raging. On the other, NATO is rapidly escalating its war on Russia in Ukraine.

Directly linked to these, rising inflation is driving down workers' real wages, amid an unprecedented social onslaught on the living conditions of workers in Turkey and worldwide. At the same time, working class resistance is growing in Europe and around the world, from France and Britain to Spain and Germany.

Turkey's elections are being held as millions are still struggling with the catastrophic consequences of the February 6 earthquake in both Turkey and Syria. The preventable devastation and tens of thousands of deaths caused by the failure of President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an's government to take the necessary precautions, despite the warnings of scientists, have led masses of workers to question the capitalist system and the state.

Under these conditions, all factions of the ruling class agree that a social explosion must be prevented or suppressed at all costs. Their best assistants in this are pseudo-left forces that try to confine mass anger within the

existing political and social order.

The declaration of support for K?l?çdarolu by the TKP and the Left Party undeniably confirms this analysis. It follows similar declarations by the Workers' Party of Turkey, the Labour Party and members of the Labour and Freedom Alliance (EÖ?), led by the Kurdish nationalist Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP).

In its election statement, the TKP announced: "The Communist Party of Turkey will enter the parliamentary elections with its own name and candidates together with the Socialist Union of Forces alliance, which has a meaning beyond an electoral alliance." It then called on a vote for K?l?çdarolu, the candidate of the Nation Alliance, "to prevent Erdo?an from being elected once again."

The Left Party's presidential election statement said: "For a long time, our party has been working towards the formation of a broad opposition consensus in the presidential elections. At this stage, we find it very important that such a consensus [to support K?l?çdarolu] is formed." It added, "In the face of possible problems that may arise during the election process, we will support Kemal K?l?çdarolu and fight together with all opposition forces to overthrow the Palace [Erdo?an] regime."

The support of the TKP and the Left Party for the Nation Alliance—a coalition of bourgeois parties no less right-wing, pro-imperialist and anti-working class than Erdo?an's People's Alliance—vindicates the Socialist Equality Group's analysis of the SGB. In September, we explained:

The main function of the misnamed SGB is to try to drive rising social opposition into safe political channels and block the development of a genuine revolutionary socialist alternative for the working class... Both so-called "left" alliances [i.e. EÖ? and SGB] are essentially oriented towards the bourgeoisie, advancing a nationalist, parliamentary

reform program and rejecting a program for international socialism based on the working class.

The pseudo-left parties aligned with the Nation Alliance, which they claim is a “lesser evil” than Erdoğan, work to curb growing social opposition among masses of workers and youth. They spread reactionary illusions not only about the Nation Alliance, but about the entire capitalist system.

However, while there is massive anger and opposition among the working masses against Erdoğan’s reactionary government, there is also a growing sense that the Nation Alliance is another faction of the ruling class, and that it cannot solve any fundamental social problems.

The domestic and foreign policy positions of the Nation Alliance, which is presented as an alternative to Erdoğan, have no fundamental differences with those of the current government.

A potential Kılıçdaroğlu government would continue the offensive of finance capital against the working class at home and maintain Turkish ruling elites’ war policies in Syria and Iraq, Libya, the Caucasus and the Mediterranean in the name of “national interests.” The Nation Alliance’s “Memorandum of Understanding” published at the end of January made this clear. It declared: “We will continue our contributions to NATO on a rational basis, and in line with our national interests.”

Moreover, in an interview with the *New York Times* before the 2020 elections, current US President Joseph Biden declared his support for Kılıçdaroğlu-led Nation Alliance against Erdoğan. Ruling circles in the imperialist centers who prefer Kılıçdaroğlu over Erdoğan expect that he will actively involve Ankara in NATO’s war against Russia.

The Nation Alliance has deep political ties to the Islamist and far-right forces making up the People’s Alliance between Erdoğan’s Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the fascist Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).

In addition to the Kemalist CHP, the alliance includes the far-right Good Party, which broke away from the MHP; the Islamist Felicity Party, from which the AKP was born; the Future Party of Ahmet Davutoğlu, who served as prime minister under the AKP government and who determined its war policies across the Middle East; and the DEVA Party of Ali Babacan, who served on the AKP’s top economic official and is a trusted figure of finance capital.

The pseudo-left parties backing Kılıçdaroğlu against Erdoğan claim he is not a “right-wing” or “counterrevolutionary” politician. “We cannot say that Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu is a counterrevolutionary politician,” TKP leader Kemal Okuyan told *Gazete Duvar* in January.

This statement exposes the falsity of the “anti-

imperialism” posturing of the TKP and other Stalinist or pseudo-left parties. In reality, Kılıçdaroğlu is as much a right-wing and counter-revolutionary bourgeois politician as his allies in the service of imperialism and the Turkish bourgeoisie.

Except for the last vote, the CHP, led by Kılıçdaroğlu, has always voted in favor of Erdoğan’s illegal invasions in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, Erdoğan’s constitutional proposal to lift the immunity of HDP deputies was passed with the CHP’s support. At the time, Kılıçdaroğlu said: “It [the proposal] is against the Constitution, but we will vote in favor.” Today, the HDP’s former co-chairs are still in prison.

Kılıçdaroğlu vows to improve relations with the major NATO powers and “fix” Turkey’s economy, together with the financial oligarchy in New York and London. One of his most dangerous and reactionary promises is to deport Syrian and Afghan refugees. On March 14, Kılıçdaroğlu once again declared: “My presidency will have two important goals: The first is to reunite Syrians with their homeland. The second one is to send those [Afghan refugees] who came illegally through Iran back to Iran.”

Not only Kılıçdaroğlu but also the pseudo-left parties that support him as an “alternative” to Erdoğan are hostile to the interests of the working class and to democratic rights.

The Socialist Equality Group rejects both the People’s Alliance and the Nation Alliance in principle. It stresses that the way forward is via the mass mobilization of the working class, independent of all political factions of the bourgeoisie, and building its own revolutionary party, the Socialist Equality Party, as the Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International. All the social and political issues facing the working class raise the necessity of establishing its own power as part of a global struggle for socialism.



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