

Greetings to the Founding Congress of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi

David North
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The Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi – Dördüncü Enternasyonal (Socialist Equality Party – Fourth International), which is in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), held its founding congress on June 13–15, 2025. The party’s official formation process was completed in August. Other ICFI sections sent greetings to the congress, which will be published on the WSWs over the coming days, beginning with these greetings from Socialist Equality Party (US) national chairman David North.

Dear Comrades,

I am deeply honored to extend the greetings of the Socialist Equality Party in the United States to the delegates of the founding congress of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi. Your congress is the outcome of years of intense and principled political work. The efforts of our beloved late comrade, Halil Çelik, to establish a section of the International Committee of the Fourth International in Turkey have now achieved their fruition.

Your congress is being held at a critical point in the crisis of world capitalism. As you meet, Israel—the vicious attack dog of US imperialism—is expanding its genocidal assault on Gaza with an attack on Iran. The United States—the center of world imperialism and the self-proclaimed leader of the capitalist “free world”—is being transformed into a military-police dictatorship. The entire capitalist world is descending into barbarism.

But the malignant growth of fascism is only part of contemporary political reality. There is also the upsurge of the global class struggle and the resurgence of revolutionary Marxism.

This latter process finds expression in your founding congress. It marks a milestone in the history of the international Trotskyist movement. In objective terms, the congress represents an extension of the work of the Fourth International into a country and region of the world that occupies an increasingly critical place in the violent geopolitics of world imperialism.

Across the Black Sea, only several hundred kilometers to

the north of Istanbul, the imperialist-instigated war in Ukraine is now in its fourth year. Turkey shares a border with eight countries, three of which—Syria, Iraq and Iran—have been directly attacked by imperialism and its proxies. The three Transcaucasian neighbors—Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan—are zones of intense conflict generated by the preparations of US imperialism and its allies for war against Russia and China.

In addition to its perpetual conflict with Greece—which can at any point erupt into a full-scale war—the Turkish capitalist class is deeply implicated in all the conflicts in the region. In the era of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople was known as the “crossroad of civilization.” In the contemporary world, Ankara is one of the principal junctions of international capitalist crisis and chaos.

But counterposed to the role of the Turkish bourgeoisie as a major regional policeman of imperialist interests is the increasingly powerful working class, which is emerging as a major force in the global class struggle. The combination of industrialization and urbanization has resulted in the huge growth of the proletariat in Turkey. It is in this powerful social force that you will build the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi.

Since 1975 the segment of the population living in urban areas has grown from 40 percent to nearly 80 percent. The population of Istanbul has increased fivefold; that of Ankara threefold; and that of Izmir fourfold. The population of Antalya was approximately 200,000 in 1975. Today it stands at over 2.6 million.

A half century ago, the total number of wage and salaried workers in Turkey comprised less than 30 percent of the work force. The percentage now stands at over 70 percent. The working class occupies a major position in key sectors of the economy: in manufacturing, metallurgy, construction, aerospace, chemicals and agriculture.

The economic and demographic transformation of Turkey provides the objective foundations for the building of a powerful section of the International Committee. However, objective factors alone do not determine the outcome of political processes. The subjective factor—the will and

determination of Marxist revolutionists to fight for principles in the face of obstacles and difficulties—is of decisive importance.

In the persistent and principled work that has set down the foundations of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi, you, dear comrades, have demonstrated that the necessary will and determination exists. You are establishing, for the first time, a Trotskyist—that is, genuinely revolutionary Marxist—party in Turkey.

However, while there has never before existed a section of the Fourth International in Turkey, the political legacy of the Bolshevik Revolution and the revolutionary persona of Leon Trotsky are deeply rooted in the history of the country.

First, it is an irrefutable historical fact that the proletarian revolution in Russia was the decisive factor in the victory of the Turkish independence movement over British and French imperialism. This historical connection is not eradicated by the subsequent perfidy of the Turkish national bourgeoisie.

Second, the four years of Trotsky’s exile on the island of Prinkipo (Büyükaada) were of immense historical significance and left an indelible mark on the intellectual life of Turkey. It is widely known that the writings produced by Trotsky between 1929 and 1933—his autobiography *My Life*, the *History of the Russian Revolution* and his efforts to mobilize the German working class against fascism—were world historical masterpieces of political literature.

As demonstrated by the memorial meetings held by the SEG in 2023 and 2024 on Büyükaada, the refuge given to Trotsky remains a source of pride for the working class and best elements among the democratic intelligentsia.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi is a new party in Turkey; but it is a party of history. The full content of the struggle for Marxism on a global scale is present in the program and work of the SEP in Turkey. Our parties are sections of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. Our collective work is rooted in the essential theoretical and political premise, explained by Trotsky, that “The revolutionary party of the proletariat can base itself only upon the international program corresponding to the character of the epoch, the epoch of the highest development and collapse of capitalism.”

Written almost a century ago, in his devastating critique of the nationalist Stalinist program of “socialism in one country,” the principle of socialist internationalism as the foundation of the strategy of working class revolution has increased—as a consequence of the vast growth of the world economy and its network of global production networks—by several orders of magnitude.

It is against the inseparably connected principle of socialist internationalism and our insistence on the central

revolutionary role of the working class that all opponents of Marxism and Trotskyism direct their attack. Significantly, the Kurdish nationalist leader Öcalan, in the process of justifying his capitulation to the Turkish state, claimed in his prison writings that the alleged failure of Marxism stemmed from its “overemphasis on the proletariat and internationalism.” One cannot help but note the coincidence between Öcalan’s criticism of Marxism and that made by Cliff Slaughter, approximately 20 years earlier, in his attack on the Workers League’s “too heavy emphasis” on the political independence of the working class.

All forms of anti-Marxism—Stalinism, social democracy, bourgeois nationalism, Pabloism, anarchism, the innumerable forms of petty-bourgeois radicalism and pseudo-left “identity politics,” have been discredited.

A century of historical experience, which spans the vicissitudes of revolution and counter-revolution, has vindicated the theory of permanent revolution. Only the parties affiliated with the International Committee of the Fourth International base themselves on and fight for a program that is equal to the challenges of this epoch.

The founding congress of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi in Turkey vastly strengthens the work of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

You have opened a powerful new front in the struggle for the victory of the World Socialist Revolution.

Long Live the Memory of Comrade Halil Çelik!

Long Live the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi!

Long Live the International Committee of the Fourth International!

Forward to the victory of the World Socialist Revolution!

David North

On behalf of the Socialist Equality Party (US)

June 14, 2025



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