

# Türkiye calls for negotiations after US and Israel launch an illegal war against Iran

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The illegal imperialist assault launched by the United States and Israel against Tehran on Saturday exposes the collaborationist position of NATO member Türkiye’s political establishment and ruling elite.

In his first statement on Saturday evening, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said he felt “deep sorrow and concern” over the US-Israel attacks, adding, “We deplore this morning’s attacks, which clearly violate Iran’s sovereignty and threaten the peace of our friends and brothers, the Iranian people.” But he then immediately denied Iran’s right to self-defense. “Similarly,” he said, “we find Iran’s missile and drone attacks against our brotherly countries in the Gulf unacceptable, regardless of the reason.”

Erdoğan directed his fire at Israel and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, continuing to refer to “Dear” US President Donald Trump as his “friend”. Yet the fascist US president is the one who has ordered the largest military buildup in the Middle East since the 2003 war against Iraq.

Trump ordered the cold-blooded killing of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, as well as numerous political and military leaders of a sovereign country. This is the president of an imperialist administration that does not hesitate to set the Middle East on fire to establish a puppet regime in Iran and bring this country of 90 million people and its resources under full imperialist domination.

The genocide in Gaza by Israel, which began during Joseph Biden’s presidency, continues with Trump’s approval and support.

Erdoğan continued, “If common sense and reason do not prevail, and if there is no room for diplomacy, our region faces the risk of being dragged into a ring of fire. This must not be allowed.”

He called for a ceasefire and negotiations, demanding that “all actors, especially the Islamic world,” including the regimes that directly aid the US-Israel aggression, “take urgent action.” As was the case before the military attack on Iran last June, negotiations served only to cover up the military preparations of Washington and Tel Aviv.

There is an unbridgeable political and class divide between the stance of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi (Socialist Equality Party), the Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, toward war and the stance of the Erdoğan government, which objectively serves imperialism.

The SEP and the *World Socialist Web Site* warned against the

imminent imperialist war that has been in preparation for weeks and the regime-change operation planned under the leadership of the puppet “crown prince” Reza Pahlavi and called on the international working class to take action to defend Iran, an oppressed country.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi unequivocally condemns the US-Israeli attack on Iran. At the same time, we explain that the Iranian regime or any other bourgeois national leadership cannot, by its very nature, consistently oppose imperialist aggression. This requires mobilizing the working class in Iran, the Middle East, and worldwide against the capitalist system. Imperialism cannot be negotiated with; its elimination through socialist revolution is essential.

Türkiye has strong historical, cultural, economic, and political ties with Iran, its neighbour and regional rival. Although Türkiye does not import oil from Iran, approximately 20 percent of its oil supply comes from the Persian Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz, according to an official statement in 2025. In December, Iran met 7.5 percent of Türkiye’s natural gas needs.

While there are concerns that the war on Iran could trigger a new wave of refugees to Türkiye, both Ankara and Tehran fear that the Kurdish issue, which they are unable to resolve domestically on a democratic basis, could result in partition.

The war against Iran would also further deepen the class polarization in Türkiye that is heading toward an explosion. Dissatisfaction is growing in the working class, which is facing a high cost of living and a brutal austerity program. Over 6,000 workers have joined a wildcat strike movement that has developed among miners in recent days.

This is the social force that must be mobilized against imperialist war, based on a socialist program, by building rank-and-file committees in workplaces and neighbourhoods.

The Erdoğan government is responding to the maelstrom of war engulfing Türkiye, and the spectre of social revolution, by further strengthening its ties with imperialism and building an authoritarian regime.

Regardless of Erdoğan’s concerns and criticisms, Türkiye is generally acting in line with the United States’ “new Middle East” plans. Despite a pro-war “resolution” being rejected by parliament in 2003, Ankara supported the US invasion of Iraq, abandoned its initial calls for “restraint” in Syria in 2011 to become a staunch supporter of the regime-change war, and backed the bombing of Libya.

Ankara has constantly rhetorically criticized the genocide that began in Gaza in October 2023, but it has allowed Azerbaijan, a critical oil supplier to Israel, to continue supplying oil through Türkiye, and it continues to do so.

Erdo?an's criticism of Netanyahu reflects an effort to safely channel overwhelming popular opposition to Israel. According to a 2025 Pew Research Center survey, 93 percent of people in Türkiye view Israel negatively.

At the same time, Ankara is concerned about the growing influence of Israel, its regional rival, in Lebanon and Syria, and fears that a US-Israel-backed regime-change war in Iran could have devastating consequences for the interests of the Turkish ruling elite.

Foremost among these concerns is the possibility that, in the event of a power vacuum, Kurdish nationalist movements in Iran could advance toward independence in Iranian Kurdistan with the support of Washington and Israel. Although denied by the Ministry of National Defense, allegations that the Turkish Armed Forces discussed entering Iran to create a buffer zone on the grounds of "preventing refugee flows" in the event of the Tehran regime's collapse take on even greater significance in this context.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi unconditionally opposes the repression of the Kurdish people by Türkiye and other regional states and is fighting to unite and mobilize the working class of all nationalities for the immediate recognition of the fundamental democratic rights of oppressed peoples. However, nationalist movements such as the coalition formed in Iranian Kurdistan on February 22 are objectively in the same camp as the imperialist powers, which brings nothing but disaster for the peoples of the region, including the Kurds.

The US-Israeli attack on Iran has vindicated the SEP's internationalist and socialist opposition to this pro-imperialist coalition and its perspective.

The Erdo?an government has verbally criticized the US and Israel's preparations for war against Iran but has done nothing to prevent Türkiye's military and intelligence capabilities from being used in these preparations. Bloomberg reported that a few days before the assault on Iran, AWACS surveillance aircraft taking off from the NATO base in the Turkish city of Konya changed their routes from Russia to Iran. The air base in Incirlik, in the south of the country, has been one of the US's operational centres in the Middle East for decades. The Kürecik base in the east provides intelligence to Israel via the US.

Bases in Türkiye could be targeted by Iran in retaliation. Following the US-Israel attack, a senior Iranian official told Al Jazeera that "all American and Israeli assets and interests in the Middle East have become legitimate targets" and that "there are no red lines after this aggression."

The Erdo?an government has rejected calls for Türkiye to sever its direct or indirect ties with Israel, as well as popular demands for the country to leave NATO and close its military bases. Instead, Türkiye, which boasts of having NATO's second-largest army and hosts more than 25 US and NATO bases, is preparing to host a NATO summit in Ankara in July.

All political tendencies calling for "neutrality" or a "third way" in the face of this war are objectively on the side of imperialist-

Zionist aggression. This war aims to re-colonize the entire Middle East, from Palestine to Lebanon, Syria to Yemen, and Iraq to Iran, as part of an imperialist redivision of the world.

Türkiye's main bourgeois opposition parties have again demonstrated their inability to consistently oppose US-NATO imperialism by adopting a stance of "neutrality" similar to that of the Erdo?an government.

Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Özgür Özel, in a statement on X on Sunday, said, "We oppose the attacks on our neighbour Iran that disregard international law," but then took a stance that equates the two sides in the war, adding: "As the Republican People's Party, we call on the parties to exercise restraint and common sense, and we call on regional countries and the international community to stand against all interventions that disregard international law."

Özel, like Erdo?an, expressed concern about the dangers that an escalation of the war against Iran could pose to the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie, stating, "A war spreading across the region will lead to irreversible destruction. In this context, we call on the parties to cease hostilities immediately and return to the negotiating table."

The inconsistency of the CHP's opposition to imperialism is exposed by its own orientation. Just last September, CHP deputy Utku Çak?rözer's report to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly repeated the imperialist narrative that distorts reality, declaring Iran the source of regional instability and proposing measures to strengthen US policy against Iran, Russia, and China, while advocating NATO's expansion into Middle Eastern countries.

The Kurdish nationalist Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) also adopted a bankrupt "third way" stance. DEM Party Co-Chair Tuncer Bak?rhan said, "We, as the DEM Party, neither support these hegemonic imperialist attacks nor the tyrannical, authoritarian system [in Iran]," adding, "If there is no democracy, there will be external intervention. Without democracy, there will be engineering projects from outside to plunder those countries' underground and surface resources and smuggle them elsewhere. Democracy is the cure for everything."

Such statements, which fail to condemn the US and Israeli attack on Iran and also legitimize their pretexts, must be rejected. US imperialism's drive for global domination stems from the insoluble contradictions and deep crisis of American and global capitalism.

The solution is not the pro-imperialist "democratization" advocated by the DEM Party or the Turkish political establishment, but the revolutionary mobilization of the working class internationally to end the imperialist nation-state system. Only when the working class takes power and puts an end to the capitalist profit system can a truly peaceful and democratic world order based on the needs of society be established.



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