

Freedom for Ba?aran Aksu and all working-class prisoners in Türkiye!

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13 April 2026

Ula? Sevinç, leader of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi – Dördüncü Enternasyonal, Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, released a video statement on X Saturday, condemning the arrest of independent union leader Ba?aran Aksu. Below, we are publishing the English translation of this speech.

Ba?aran Aksu, leader of Umut-Sen and Independent Mining Workers' Union, was unlawfully arrested on Thursday, April 9th.

As the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi – Dördüncü Enternasyonal (Socialist Equality Party - Fourth International), we insist that this arrest is aimed at intimidating to the entire working class and we reject this attack.

We call on all workers to defend Ba?aran Aksu, the imprisoned B?RTEK-SEN leader Mehmet Türkmen, the imprisoned Akbelen Forest protester Esra I?k, and all other working-class prisoners, and to demand their release.

If one of the main slogans of workers on the upcoming May Day is “No to the imperialist war against Iran,” then another must be “Freedom for the prisoners of the working class!”

Ba?aran Aksu, like Mehmet Türkmen, was arrested as part of a deliberate offensive by the ruling class against the working class.

They were arrested because they exposed the brutal exploitation of the working class, the ill-gotten wealth derived from this exploitation, and the structures of class rule designed to preserve and perpetuate these capitalist exploitative relations. They were arrested because of the role they played in the emerging independent workers' movement against this exploitative system.

Unlike the dominant union bureaucracy, these labor

leaders do not act as extensions of the state and corporations. Because they are leading the initial stages of the resurgent labor movement, they are viewed as a threat. By turning a blind eye to these attacks, union confederations—including D?SK—are effectively condoning them and are complicit.

The intensification of this wave of arrests and repression in recent months is no coincidence. During this period, there has been a significant rise in class struggles, including wildcat strikes. Migros warehouse workers, textile workers in Gaziantep, and Polyak miners in Izmir have waged significant struggles. In these struggles, Ba?aran Aksu and Mehmet Türkmen played a role that was deeply troubling to the ruling class.

During the same period, Türkiye's NATO ally, the United States, launched an imperialist war of aggression against Iran alongside Israel. The overwhelming majority of the population in Türkiye, facing rising living costs and economic hardship—over 90 percent according to polls—opposed this unjust war. However, the government adopted a stance completely contrary to the will of the population and even condemned Iran's right to defend itself against the aggression.

The working class's stance toward imperialist war and the capitalist oligarchy's increasing exploitation and enrichment is diametrically opposed to the government's stance on these issues. It is precisely this class antagonism that lies behind the growing assault on the working class's independent organization and actions, and on democratic rights.

The solution is not to call on the government to reform and change its policies, or to elect another government in the next election that also represents the capitalist oligarchy, which is inextricably linked to

imperialism.

The entire political establishment, by their very nature, cannot solve the urgent social and democratic problems of the overwhelming majority of the population. It requires a frontal attack on the wealth, power, and ties of the capitalist oligarchy to imperialism. It requires a struggle for workers' power and international socialism. Join the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi in this struggle!



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