

STOP EXTRADITION OF FORMER KURDISH MP REMZI KARTAL TO TURKEY

With Germany's support, Turkey continues with the criminalisation of Kurdish politicians living in exile.

Remzi Kartal, a founding member of the Kurdistan National Congress and former DEP MP, was arrested at the request of Turkey on January 22 2005 in Nuremberg.

Remzi Kartal is a Kurdish politician who has been active politically on a completely legal basis and has worked exclusively for a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. He is known internationally for his struggle for democracy, as are his colleagues from the DEP, Hatip Dicle, Leyla Zana, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak. Now he is to be deported to Turkey.

Former DEP MP Leyla Zana was awarded the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for her struggle for a democratic solution for the Kurdish question. For the same commitment Remzi Kartal has been arrested with the claim that he is guilty of terrorism .

Since 1994 he has lived in exile, because after that time it was no longer possible to carry out legal political work in Turkey. Since then he has carried out his struggle for democracy within various organisations in Europe such as the Association for Solidarity with DEP, the Kurdish Parliament in Exile, the Kurdistan National Congress, and most recently the People's Congress of Kurdistan (KONGRA-GEL).

As with the other Kurdish former MPs, Remzi Kartal has become well-known through his diplomatic work and because of his Kurdish identity. KONGRA-GEL, of which Remzi Kartal is vice-president, has dedicated itself to the pursuit of a just and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question and has worked for this since it was founded.

By taking the step of arresting Remzi Kartal, the Federal Republic of Germany is making it harder to achieve a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. At the same time, Germany is damaging the efforts to democratise Turkey, and encouraging the continued use of torture and the commission of human rights violations, as well as Turkey's policy of assimilation, denial and annihilation towards the Kurds. This is why we categorise the anti-Kurdish alliance of Turkey and Germany, the latest result of which is the arrest of Remzi Kartal, as an attack on the democratic and legal struggle of all the Kurds.

We therefore call on the Kurdish and Irish people and the democratic public of Europe, as well as all friends of the Kurdish people, to protest against Remzi Kartal's arrest and to work for his release.

KNK Executive Council
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