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Takeaways from this year's May Day

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We have just marked another May Day. First and foremost, solidarity greetings to workers across the world on International Workers' Day. This year, demonstrations—particularly across many European countries—appeared more massive, and we salute our class brothers and sisters who filled the streets.

In Turkey, May Day has long been a focal point for the working class. Since the early years of the Republic, it has held symbolic importance in the labor struggle, and by the 1970s it had become a key moment reflecting the rising momentum of the left. This prominence also made it a target:

in 1977, a counter-guerrilla attack on the May Day rally resulted in what is now remembered as the “Bloody May Day,” leaving a deep imprint on the public conscience. Perhaps because of this legacy—and the years in which May Day was banned—it has carried a stronger political meaning in Turkey than in many other countries.

In recent years, however, this has begun to change. May Day is gradually losing its place in the consciousness of workers. There are several reasons for this, which I will outline below. But first, it is important to consider the stance taken this year by the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) in response to this trend.

In Turkey, May Day events are typically organized by four main bodies in each city: two major trade union confederations (representing private and public sectors) and two professional associations. Although pro-government unions sometimes hold separate events, the main demonstrations are shaped by these four institutions. Trade unions and political parties participate with their own columns.

For many years, TKP took part in these rallies. It organized some of the most dynamic and well-attended parts, often forming the liveliest sections of the demonstrations. Despite the

lack of a strong, inspiring message from the main platforms, TKP prioritized working-class unity and directed its supporters to these rallies, attempting to compensate for the shortcomings by organizing alternative platforms afterward.

This year, however, TKP took a different approach. Breaking with more than a decade of practice, it organized its own mass rallies in four locations: İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, and Adana (in the Çukurova industrial region).

Several key factors led to this decision: The inability of the union confederations to act independently of bourgeois parties such as CHP (main opposition party, social democratic) and DEM (political party of the Kurdish nationalist movement); the failure to seriously consider TKP's proposals and concerns, despite it being one of the largest political participants in the rallies; the persistence of uninspiring speeches confined within the limits of mainstream politics, which risk further declining participation in future May Days.

Over the past two years, TKP had openly expressed its concerns to the organizing institutions and offered to contribute ideas to make May Day more meaningful and energizing. Although assurances were given that the

influence of bourgeois parties would be limited, these promises were not fulfilled. As a result, organizing separate rallies became a necessary step.

At first glance, this decision may appear contradictory. After all, TKP emphasizes working-class unity, and May Day rallies already attract relatively modest participation. However, this move can be understood as a necessary break to restore May Day's vitality and mass character in the years ahead. Importantly, TKP's rallies were open to all groups that believe the working class itself should be at the center. It is also worth noting that the unity of left parties and unions in Turkey does not necessarily mean the unity of the broader working class, given their limited social reach.

In this sense, TKP's aim this year was to move May Day beyond a narrow, "inner-left discussion" framework and transform it into a genuinely mass event that strengthens the morale and struggle of working people. Accordingly, it neither joined the confederation-led rallies nor supported small-scale, highly symbolic radicalist actions aimed at entering Taksim Square, despite its historical significance and current ban.

By the evening of May 1, several conclusions had become clear:

1. The confederations' monopoly has been weakened. The dominance of union confederations over May Day was significantly challenged this year. Their failure to support a recent miners' resistance had already damaged their credibility. Combined with TKP's mobilization, two distinct and comparably visible May Day events emerged, and even mainstream media reflected this reality.

2. The limits of confederation-led rallies are clearer. As TKP had argued, these rallies remain confined within the influence of bourgeois politics. Participation was relatively low, and messaging lacked coherence. Platforms that ought to be defined by the voice of the working class were not supposed to be open to any political party. Yet, for instance, in İzmir the CHP metropolitan mayor—widely criticized for anti-worker policies—funded the stage with municipal resources and had his personal imprint prominently displayed on it.

3. Independent May Day organizing must continue. One of the main reasons May Day is losing relevance is its lack of meaningful content. Rallies that fail to inspire hope or

determination risk alienating participants. In contrast, TKP's rallies—featuring speeches focused on socialism, firsthand accounts from workers, and energizing cultural elements—offered a more compelling model.

4. May Day must be reclaimed. Despite these positive developments, it is clear that May Day needs to be rebuilt as a day of mass participation. Overcoming the damage caused by bourgeois politics and reconnecting with working people depends on sustained organizing throughout the year. In this sense, preparations for May Day 2027 have already begun for the TKP.





TKP's call:

Turkey must withdraw from NATO

Gözde Kök,

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The imperialist attack directed at Iran and the war expanding across the Middle East have brought into mainstream political debate in Turkey an issue that the ruling class has long avoided opening for discussion: Turkey's NATO membership. Communists have been struggling for withdrawal from NATO since Turkey joined the alliance in 1952. In the 1960s, a broad anti-imperialist public opinion emerged against NATO, accompanied by the rising working class and revolutionary movement. However, this

public momentum was suppressed through mechanisms of violence and massacre orchestrated by the state itself, developed within NATO frameworks and carried out by fascist forces. NATO membership was presented as if it were a matter of consensus among the people and marketed as a guarantee of Turkey's security.

In the current period, the fact that this debate is no longer confined to leftist circles but has spread across a wide spectrum, including political Islamist segments, is striking given this background. This indicates that NATO's "untouchable" position in Turkey is beginning to erode. The imperialist attack on Iran has brought NATO bases in Turkey and the operational freedom of U.S. armed forces on Turkish soil into public debate. A strong public sentiment has emerged in favor of avoiding a war that is already at Turkey's doorstep. In the face of this pressure, NATO's tendency to push Turkey to the front lines in possible war scenarios appears to have disrupted the clarity within establishment politics and led to some objections being voiced more openly.

However, how the debate is conducted is just as important as the debate itself. Even when imperialist aggression and NATO's role are criticized, the proposed way to protect against

imperialism is once again to “get along well” with imperialism. Remaining within NATO is presented as the best antidote to the danger of being drawn into regional wars. Meanwhile, the claim that Israel would be admitted to NATO if Turkey were to leave is circulated as a fear-inducing argument.

This framework, which criticizes NATO but considers the demand to leave it “too radical,” ultimately aligns with the line of the government in Turkey. On the one hand, the government emphasizes a policy of “staying out of regional war,” while on the other, it takes steps to strengthen military and strategic ties with the United States and NATO. Public questioning of whether NATO bases in Turkey would play a role in a war against Iran is firmly rejected by the government, which claims these bases are “within Turkey’s sovereign domain.” Yet at the same time, there is no transparency regarding their operations, no effective oversight mechanisms are in place, and alignment with NATO’s regional military planning is maintained.

This situation clearly reveals the contradiction between claims of sovereignty and the actual state of affairs. This is not a balancing policy; it is a current manifestation of Turkey’s dependency

relationship with the imperialist system.

The global context reinforces this contradiction. Statements by Donald Trump questioning NATO frequently come to the fore. The fact that an alliance that appears unshakable is being questioned by its leading country exposes contradictions among imperialist states and raises doubts about NATO's future. Yet at the same time, NATO countries are rapidly rearming, military budgets are increasing, and the alliance is being reshaped along a more aggressive line. In other words, what we are witnessing is not a dissolution but a process of consolidation.

Turkey is not outside this process—it stands at its very center. In recent months, while imperialism continues to plunge the Middle East into bloodshed, the emergence of armed unmanned naval vehicles near Turkey's Black Sea coasts and attacks on commercial ships indicate that tensions in the region have entered a new phase. As tensions escalate, certain steps taken in military structuring show that Turkey is being integrated into a new regional security architecture. When the land-based MNC-TUR corps planned within NATO's force structure is considered alongside the multinational naval command envisioned in the Bosphorus under the

heading of “Black Sea security after the Ukraine war,” it becomes clear that Turkey’s military role is being redefined across both land and sea dimensions.

This redefinition indicates that Turkey is being positioned as a direct carrier of regional military operations. Increasing military activity in the Black Sea and the establishment of new command structures also heighten the risk of the de facto erosion of the Montreux regime. Any step in this direction would push Turkey into openly taking sides in a potential confrontation between Russia and the imperialist Western alliance.

The current level of alignment between the AKP government and the United States and NATO is the result of a series of oscillations over many years. TKP had consistently argued—even during the AKP’s most intense anti-Western rhetoric—that Turkey’s ruling class could not develop a stable position outside the imperialist Western bloc and would eventually return to it. Because NATO, for Turkey, is far more than a military alliance.

The relationship established with NATO functions as a superstructural mechanism that guarantees the continuity of the capitalist system in Turkey.

By joining NATO in 1952, the Turkish ruling class did not merely enter a military alliance; it also made a strategic choice to align the country's political and economic trajectory with the needs of the imperialist system. This choice aimed to secure the internal system of exploitation at the cost of deliberately narrowing the country's sovereignty.

For this reason, NATO's presence in Turkey has not only functioned as a defense mechanism against external threats, but also as a safeguard against internal class struggle. The counter-guerrilla structures established during the Cold War, and their Turkish counterpart, the Special Warfare Department, operated as mechanisms of direct intervention in domestic politics. Political assassinations, provocations, and coup processes clearly demonstrate the class character of this relationship. The military coup in 1980, is one of the clearest links in this chain.

NATO is a structure that directly shapes a wide range of areas in Turkey, from defense policies to foreign relations, and even to the internal security framework. U.S./NATO bases in Turkey are the most concrete expression of this relationship. Military facilities such as Incirlik Air Base are not sites of joint use; they are centers where Turkey's control is limited and

which directly serve U.S. and NATO operations. The nuclear warheads known to be stationed at these bases further deepen the gravity of the issue. Turkey does not have sovereignty over these strategic weapons located on its own territory.

Turkey's defense strategy is largely shaped in alignment with NATO's general plans; the capacity to develop an independent military doctrine is systematically constrained. This dependency is clearly visible across a wide range of areas, from defense industry orientation to military training systems.

The expansion of war in the Middle East and rising tensions in the Black Sea make this situation even more critical. For precisely this reason, the NATO debate must be grounded in concrete political demands. Calls such as "dissolve NATO" may carry long-term significance but have no immediate practical meaning. In contrast, the demand put forward by the Communist Party of Turkey—"Turkey must leave NATO"—offers a concrete objective. This demand is of critical importance for distancing Turkey from war policies and enabling it to determine its own security path.

The situation today is clear: Turkey claims to be trying to stay out of war, yet at the same time it is deepening the risk of becoming part of that war through NATO. This contradiction is not sustainable. The fact that NATO is now being debated in Turkey marks an important threshold. However, for this debate to have real consequences, it must be tied to a concrete political goal. From the standpoint of Turkey's security and independence, the most viable option is becoming increasingly clear: the termination of NATO membership.





School shootings in two provinces: What do they reveal?

In April, Turkey experienced two school shootings in two different provinces in two days in a row. A man entered a high school in Şanlıurfa that 743 students were attending and opened fire with a shotgun, wounding 16 people. Authorities announced that the attacker, identified as a former student of the school, committed suicide following the incident. No information was provided regarding the attacker's motive, though it was stated that he was born in 2007 and had no prior criminal record.

On the other hand, a 14-year-old attacker entered a school in Kahramanmaraş, armed with five guns and seven full magazines, killing eight students and a teacher. The attacker was an eighth-grade student at the same school. The

governor's office announced that the attacker was killed; however, the issue remains unclear due to discrepancies between eyewitness statements and those of officials regarding the attacker's death.

“Yusuf Tekin, Resign!”

In the wake of the attacks, citizens gathered in many streets and took to the streets. Upon the call of the Communist Party of Turkey, the people gathered in İzmir and İstanbul and held a march under the slogan “Down with your system, long live the children.” In Ankara, educational workers went on strike and marched to the Ministry of National Education. The police tried to prevent the marching workers from proceeding. Calls for the resignation of Education Minister Yusuf Tekin were made in the speeches. The unions, meanwhile, have decided to hold a three-day strike.

Families and students anxious; the government unfazed

While parents and students across the country experience significant anxiety and growing hesitation about sending their children to school, statements from government officials have shown a total lack of accountability. In his

remarks on the incident, President Erdoğan focused on digitalization and proposed “placing greater emphasis on cyber patrol activities” and “strengthening the capacity of cyber units” as solutions. The Ministry of National Education’s approach, on the other hand, was to station the gendarmerie in classrooms where students are already distressed. The decision to deploy gendarmerie for backpack searches and intensified inspections suggests a hasty, superficial approach, prioritizing law enforcement over the guidance and counseling services needed in such sensitive situations.

More security measures: The solution?

While school shootings of this kind may be considered a new phenomenon in Turkey, they have long been a social problem in many countries, particularly the United States; therefore, they are not a brand new occurrence. Nevertheless, the reactions from both the ruling party and the opposition provide important insights into how the issue is perceived. Debates shaped by a purely security-oriented paradigm pose an obstacle to the societal ability to address the issue on a sound basis. Blaming families by attributing the problem to social media and the internet may offer an easy and concrete explanation; however, this approach

amounts to shifting responsibility rather than finding a solution. This situation not only creates a climate that prevents the government from being held accountable but also generates a basis of legitimacy that obstructs genuine and structural solutions.

It is debatable how realistic and sustainable proposals such as installing camera systems in schools, switching to turnstile entry systems, or stationing security personnel at every school actually are. Furthermore, increasing such physical security measures carries the risk of reducing the issue to a purely technical and administrative matter, while pushing the focus on the root causes of violence to the background. Moreover, not only is the deterrent effect of these measures limited, but they also cause schools to be perceived not as safe spaces for children and teenagers, but as places of potential threats and of constant surveillance. It is clear that this situation will have a negative impact on the development of young individuals and will increasingly criminalize schools.

The pattern of U.S. and European attacks

While the statistical spike in school violence cases in the U.S. dates back to the 1990s,

this phenomenon is relatively new in Turkey. Although the attacks arise in different socio-cultural contexts, they are rooted in similar structural crises. Studies conducted in the United States reveal that such acts do not emerge as sudden decisions, but are preceded by various warning signs, and that violence is often conceived as a “performance.” The perpetrator conceives of the act not merely as a means of causing physical destruction, but also as a form of “public spectacle” designed to achieve radical public visibility. By positioning themselves outside academic and social hierarchies, individuals transform violence into a claim to existence through their manifestos and fictional details regarding the moment of attack. In this context, the primary motivation is to make their social exclusion visible through a tragedy that will resonate on a global scale, by seeking a form of “recognition” that reverses that exclusion.

The cases observed in Europe, particularly in Germany and Finland, demonstrate that the social fabric can become fragile despite advanced educational systems and high standards of living. These examples demonstrate that material welfare does not guarantee social cohesion; on the contrary, competitive individualism deepens social

fragmentation once certain thresholds are crossed. The fundamental tension here lies in the conflict between material well-being and emotional deprivation. In a system where success is reduced to narrow performance metrics and individuals are evaluated solely on the basis of their productivity, young people who cannot conform to the system experience “social invisibility.” This condition manifests itself not so much as a physical deprivation but as a lack of meaning and a sense of belonging; it disconnects the individual from both school and social ties. When the school environment loses its protective function and transforms into a hierarchical structure, it can, within this fragile context, turn violence into a legitimate form of expression for some individuals.

Points of intersection and the context of Turkey

The most prominent pattern in school shootings worldwide is the “leakage” of signals, through which perpetrators express their intentions in various ways prior to the attack; however, the fragmented, ambiguous nature of these signals, buried in digital noise, seriously limits the capacity for early intervention. When we factor in the copycat effect that violence

generates as it spreads through the media, school shootings transcend their local context and become a self-perpetuating global cycle. In this context, the problem lies not merely in the existence of technological traceability, but in the lack of institutional and pedagogical awareness necessary to interpret the traces as a meaningful threat.

In the context of Turkey, however, these global dynamics intersect with a deeper structural rupture: the simultaneous dissolution of traditional solidarity networks and the retreat of public protection mechanisms push the individual into a precarious state of isolation, while the neoliberal transformation of education reduces the school to a competitive arena for the production of human capital. In the process, the pedagogical relationship weakens, the sense of belonging erodes away and the school becomes a precarious place where social tensions intensify. Thus, violence ceases to be an isolated deviance and becomes a structural symptom that finds its meaning within the context of disintegrating social bonds. The situation facing children and educational institutions as a whole clearly reveals the depth and multifaceted nature of the darkness we are currently experiencing. [soL Portal](#)

As the Ministry of Education gains strategic importance: A portrait of Minister Yusuf Tekin



The AKP government has stepped up its reactionary policies in the field of education in recent years. Yusuf Tekin, who has served as Minister of National Education for the past three years, has played a major role in implementing these policies.

Almost all right-leaning governments established

in Turkey to date have shared a common characteristic: they have consistently attached particular importance to the Ministry of National Education. This reflects an intention to shape society along certain ideological lines and to guide broader socio-economic transformations through educational policies. For this reason, appointments to this ministry have often carried significant weight in terms of the governments' overall policy orientation.

In this context, the current Minister of National Education, Yusuf Tekin, can be considered among the figures who have stood out in this regard. His policy approach since taking office in June 2023 appears to support this assessment. His tenure corresponds to a period in which notable shifts in education policy have taken place and have been closely scrutinized, particularly with regard to their broader ideological implications.

An academic and a bureaucrat

Born in 1970, Tekin chose an academic career after graduating from the Faculty of Political Sciences at Ankara University, working at various universities. Most recently, he served as rector of Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University from 2018 to 2023. This appointment was made possible by a presidential decree that

waived the three-year tenure requirement for the rectorship. Soon after, another regulation reinstated this requirement. During this period, Tekin was one of several rectors who benefited from this change.

Tekin's ministerial post is not his first role in the bureaucracy. Before becoming rector, he served as undersecretary at the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of National Education from 2011 to 2018. He is no stranger to the bureaucracy or the government. He has as much experience in the bureaucracy as he does in academia. In fact, one could say that his career in the bureaucracy has been even more "distinguished" than his academic career.

But Tekin's most notable trait is his reactionary stance and the fact that he does not mince words on this issue. He openly supports the prominence of religious themes in education. While AKP officials have always shared this view, in the past they generally preferred to express it in more indirect terms. Tekin, however, speaks openly about it. He criticizes secularism, one of the founding principles of the Republic, and claims that it is used as a tool to oppose religion or restrict religious beliefs.

Religious oriented education

He had been voicing these views even during his time as undersecretary. For example, in 2014, he stated that gender-mixed education was not mandatory. Gender-mixed education represents one of the most significant progressive steps taken since the founding of the Republic. It is a crucial milestone not only for secularism in education but also for women's rights. It is one of the most important symbols of a break from a backward social order.

During the AKP era, efforts to undermine and even eliminate this achievement intensified. Secularism was generally eroded, and today Turkey has become a country that is difficult to define as "secular." However, just as the AKP government has struggled to take certain other steps, it has not yet managed to abolish gender-mixed education in schools.

Nevertheless, Tekin moved quickly, cramming into three years what the AKP had failed to accomplish in 20. He spearheaded the development of a curriculum that was reactionary and stripped of all scientific substance, and this curriculum was put into effect. Now, students are exposed to this reactionary curriculum that emphasizes religious values from a young age. Religious

education is mandatory for all Muslim students starting in the 4th grade. In addition, the new curriculum includes new religion-centered courses offered as electives. And in many schools, students are pressured to take these courses, or even required to do so. The old curriculum also had significant weaknesses, but the new curriculum has made it even more difficult for students to acquire a scientific education.

A key concept in Tekin's discourse is the "education of values." According to Tekin, education is not merely a process aimed at exam success, the acquisition of knowledge, and the development of skills; it is also a field dedicated to the transmission of moral and social values, with the ultimate goal of "raising good people." Tekin attributes current issues such as violence, discipline problems, and social disintegration to a weakening in the transmission of values, and believes that schools play a vital role in this process. In his view, the education of values should be at the center of educational policy. In Tekin's approach, the education of values does not necessarily have to be a separate subject; it can be integrated into all subjects and into overall school culture. It can also be reinforced through other activities.

By “values,” Tekin is, of course, referring to religious values. And he advocates that education in schools must be supported by families. In short, in Tekin’s model, education based on religious values should be at the center of social life.

Religious orders and sects in schools

During Tekin’s tenure, significant progress was made in establishing religious orders and congregations in all educational institutions. Protocols were established between the Ministry and various NGOs regarding these organizations’ operations within schools. All of these NGOs are tools established by religious orders to legitimize their activities. NGOs not approved by the Ministry have no chance of operating within schools under this framework. It is also clear which NGOs will be deemed suitable.

Religious activities in schools have intensified, both through initiatives directly organized by the ministry and through these NGOs. These activities are particularly prominent during the month of Ramadan.

While the ministry stated that no budget could be allocated for certain basic expenses, no budgetary constraints were encountered for religious activities in particular. The Communist

Teachers made the following statement on the matter:

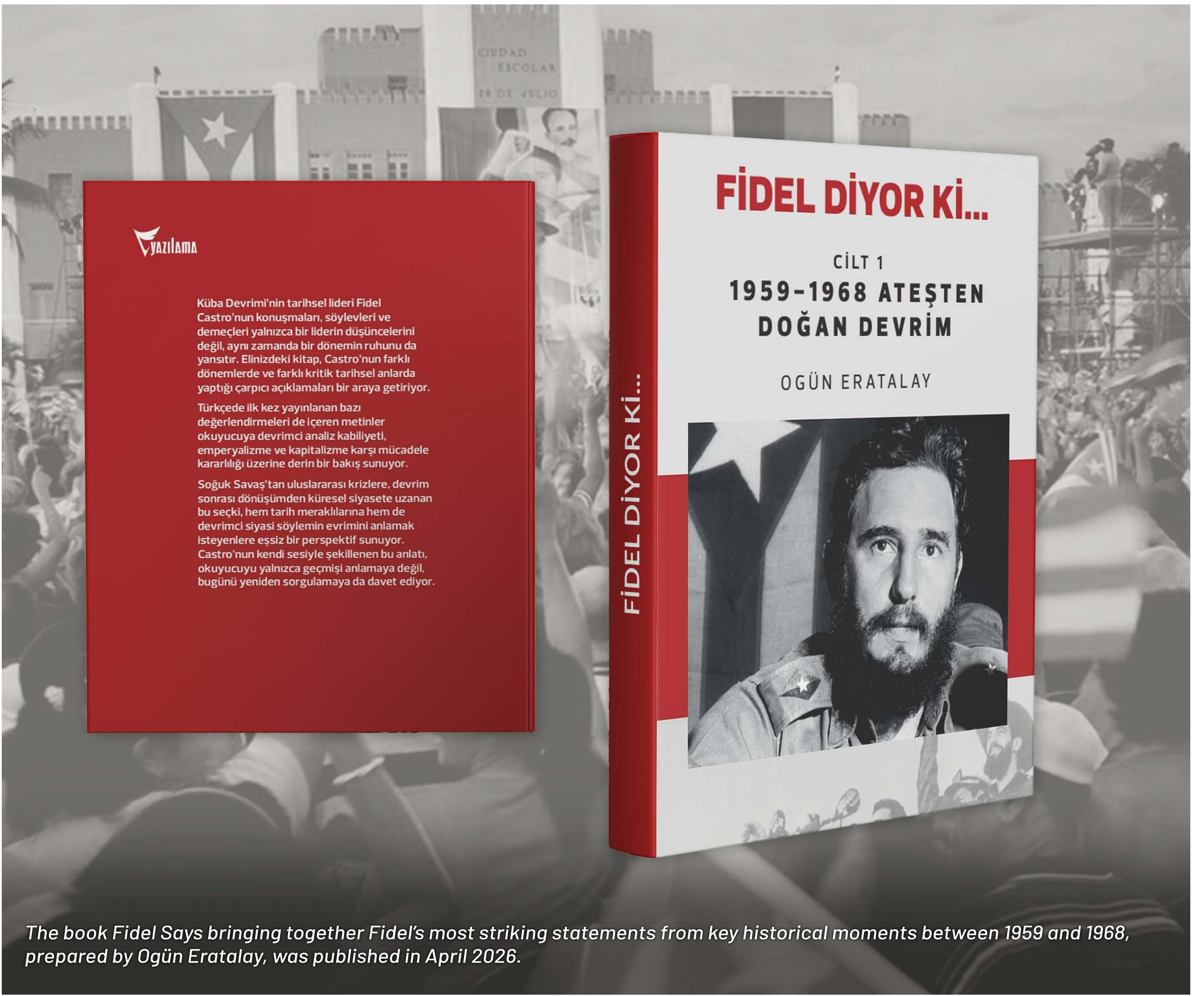
“The fact that the Ministry of National Education, which refuses to provide even one free, healthy meal to children on the grounds that ‘there are no resources,’ mobilizes all its resources when the subject is religion and the month of Ramadan clearly demonstrates that this policy is not humanitarian but ideological. It is unacceptable to prioritize religious activities while ignoring the basic needs of millions of students struggling with hunger and poverty.”

A common trait of all governments that have served in Turkey to date, particularly right-wing governments, has been their refusal to ever accept responsibility for their mistakes or engage in self-criticism. For this reason, none have ever resigned. Yusuf Tekin is continuing this tradition. For example, in April, when two students in two cities in Turkey, Şanlıurfa and Kahramanmaraş, carried out armed attacks at their schools and killed numerous students and teachers, Tekin treated the incidents as if they were merely routine criminal cases. He limited himself to expressing sorrow and stating that measures would be taken in the future. He did not address why these attacks, which are more common in some countries but occurred on this

scale for the first time in Turkey, took place, nor did he discuss how shortcomings or mistakes in the education system or the ministry contributed to the incident.

Yusuf Tekin is a key proponent of the AKP's social agenda in the education sector; the party has been in power for 24 years. However, secularism, whose seeds were sown at the founding of the Republic of Turkey, is not a value that society can easily abandon. Even if secularism has been consigned to history in state policies, a significant segment of society remains committed to it. This social sensitivity lies at the root of the public backlash against Yusuf Tekin.





The book *Fidel Says* bringing together Fidel's most striking statements from key historical moments between 1959 and 1968, prepared by Ogün Eratalay, was published in April 2026.

Fidel and the imperialism

Ogün Eratalay,
Member of TKP Party Council

Beyond being a revolutionary figure who left his mark on history, Fidel Castro, together with the organization of the Communist Party of Cuba, stood like a lighthouse constantly showing the right path. Fidel Castro's speeches at important historical turning points are almost like guides demonstrating how a communist should analyze events. The first volume of this work has been published in Turkish by Yazılama Publishing, and the remaining volumes are on the way. Through this book, we would like to remind you of Fidel

Castro and the struggle of the Cuban Revolution against imperialism.

First Encounter with Imperialism

While Cuban communists entered the struggle for the historical interests of Cuban workers, they found important reference points in their own history. Without a doubt, the most important of these was José Martí. Under Martí's leadership, Cuban revolutionaries saw the United States enter the war during the final stage of their struggle for independence against the Spanish Empire at the end of the 19th century. In the end, although the Cuban mambises were victorious, there was now a new ruler in their country: U.S. imperialism. Cuba, a so-called republic, became an island where imperialism established the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base, imposed the chains of dependency through its constitution, and turned it into a playground of casinos and brothels for the capitalists.

After the Revolution

When the 26th of July Movement under Fidel Castro overthrew the Batista regime and carried out the Cuban Revolution, uncertainty dominated the imperialist center.

People were waiting to see what path this new movement would follow. However, when Castro introduced agrarian reform and began nationalizing domestic capital and especially companies belonging to American monopolies, the situation became clear. A socialist state could never be tolerated right on the doorstep of imperialism.

The Bay of Pigs Invasion Attempt

In a context where the Soviet Union still existed, imperialism could not directly intervene on the island. Instead, under the pretense of bringing democracy, it organized a force of mercenaries. These troops were trained in Guatemala, one of the countries ruled by dictatorships dependent on the United States. Later, with the support of its own warships, an attempt was made to land them on the island. Before the landing, airports on the island were bombed by aircraft supplied by the CIA. A false narrative was spread claiming that the bombardment had been carried out by anti-Castro pilots. However, with the full support of the Cuban people behind them, the revolutionaries managed to stop and repel the invasion attempt within three days. The Bay of Pigs Invasion became one of the most important defeats imperialism suffered in the region.

Internationalism Against Imperialism

Fidel Castro was always aware that even though Cuba had become socialist, it was not a “paradise.” As a small island with a limited population and scarce natural resources, and with dependence on external sources in areas such as energy, Cuba could only achieve development within certain limits. However, despite all these constraints, the Cuban revolutionaries did not refrain from supporting the struggles of all peoples of the world for independence and against imperialism. In this sense, both material and moral support was provided to revolutionary processes in Latin America such as Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Chile. Beyond this, support was also extended to revolutionary processes in Africa, particularly in Ethiopia and Angola. The defense of Angola in particular—targeted by imperialism due to its natural resources—is an example filled with lessons about internationalism that deserves to be remembered today. Cuban revolutionaries and military units rushed to help their Angolan brothers who were fighting for independence in the land of their ancestors, without expecting any benefit in return. They fought shoulder to shoulder with them, were wounded alongside

them, and gave their lives for Angola. During the Angolan Civil War, as groups supported by imperialism and aligned with the army of the racist regime in South Africa were being defeated, South African forces were also defeated by the end of the conflict. In the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, South Africa suffered a decisive defeat. As a result, it was forced to abandon its colonies, and as the regime became economically unsustainable, Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress came to power in the country. Thanks to Cuba's internationalist support, we can today speak of the collapse of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, as well as the independence of Angola and Namibia.

Revolutionary vigilance

Despite the gains achieved by Castro and the Cuban Revolution, vigilance in the struggle against imperialism was never lowered. A distinction was made between imperialist centers and the working people within the United States itself, and Cuba consistently positioned itself alongside the working class. For example, when the Hurricane Katrina devastated the region, Cuba even offered medical assistance and doctors to the United States. At the same time, when the counter-

revolutionary “Gorbachev faction,” which promoted ideas of cooperation with imperialism, visited Cuba, they encountered an unexpected response. Cuba expressed its support for the Soviet Union, but also rejected and criticized the policy being pushed by Soviet leadership at the time—one that promoted peace, compromise, and surrender to imperialism.

Castro, while taking a stand against imperialism in the problems that emerged within the socialist bloc, did not ignore the mistakes of these regimes. He clearly exposed their deviations from Marxist-Leninist principles. As the Soviet Union and the broader socialist bloc gradually disintegrated, Cuba managed to survive by holding on to its ideological framework. The Communist Party of Cuba offered friendly and sincere criticisms of the socialist regimes in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, and today it is possible to see how justified those critiques were.

Looking at Cuba Today

Cuba and the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, offer important lessons on the struggle against imperialism. One of these is never to abandon revolutionary vigilance and caution, and to continuously renew and maintain

organization within society. It also involves never avoiding any ideological confrontation with imperialism, and consistently condemning it in public opinion. This approach was particularly evident in the early 2000s in cases such as the Cuban Five affair and the kidnapping of Elián González. Cuban operatives who infiltrated groups preparing terrorist actions against Cuba and exposed them in U.S. courts, later known as the Cuban Five, placed their lives at risk for their homeland. Their actions were framed as part of a clear ideological struggle, and many of their claims were eventually acknowledged in public debate, even though the legal outcomes remained controversial internationally. Similarly, such a strong and rational case was made for Elián, who had been illegally separated from his family, that even the imperial courts were compelled to return him to the island, to his family. Cuba built its revolutionary stance on truth and justice.

In this way, Cuba's revolutionary stance has often been presented as being built on principles of legitimacy, consistency, and the claim of defending what it considers to be historical and moral justice. A defense of the homeland built on this sense of legitimacy is presented as one of the key features that has kept Cuba

standing. The socialist government, while open to all sincere and constructive ideas aimed at improving socialism and solving its problems, simultaneously conducts an intense struggle against the rooting of imperialist arguments within the country. Against imperialist military threats, a doctrine of total national defense and fighting to the last breath is seen as one of the strongest deterrent forces against any potential aggressor. In the present day, with imperialism entering a new phase under the Trump administration, and after suffering setbacks in Iran, it is uncertain which region might be targeted next. However, regardless of these developments, the Cuban people—under economic and political blockade—continue to resist and struggle.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PRESS



International Communist Press has been relaunched

International Communist Press (ICP) has resumed its activity after a pause, at a historical moment when sharpening class struggles and escalating imperialist aggression call on communists to play their historical roles.

As an online English-language news platform, ICP focuses on the concrete dynamics of class struggle in different countries, the political interventions and assessments of communist parties, and the solidarity practices developed

around shared anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist goals.

Built through a collective understanding and editorially overseen by the International Bureau of TKP, ICP provides reliable, first-hand information, drawing on official party communications, SolidNet bulletins, progressive news agencies, and original interviews with representatives of communist and workers' parties. In doing so, it seeks to reflect both the pulse of global developments and the trajectory of the international communist movement.

ICP is committed to delivering broad, timely, and creative coverage of the progressive and revolutionary agenda. Against the powerful mechanisms of imperialist disinformation and propaganda, it aspires to be an effective voice that strengthens the struggle of communists across the world.

Content to be featured in ICP may be sent to the following e-mail address: icp@icp.org.tr

Highlights from Turkish Foreign Policy



European energy architecture

In response to U.S. and Israeli attacks, Iran first completely closed the Strait of Hormuz and then allowed only a limited number of ships to pass, leading to disruptions—especially in oil shipments—that sent shockwaves through the global economy. In the face of this crisis, Europe has begun seeking “independence” not only in security but also in the field of energy. Discussions centered on Syria also extend to countries such as Turkey and Jordan. The participation of Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan in a UK-led online meeting on the Strait of Hormuz issue highlights the seriousness and urgency of this pursuit. Approximately three weeks after this meeting, Fidan visited the United Kingdom.

During the visit, it was announced that the “Joint statement by the foreign ministers of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Türkiye on the Strategic Partnership Framework” had been signed, deepening cooperation in defense, economy, and security.

Minister of Transport Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, in a recent statement, also mentioned a railway project involving Turkey, Syria, and Jordan, aimed at creating a corridor connecting Southern Europe to the Gulf. In addition to ministerial initiatives, TotalEnergies’ oil exploration efforts with Turkey and Exxon’s signing of a preliminary exploration agreement in Turkey indicate that international capital has begun taking concrete steps. At the current stage of privatizations in Turkey—ranging from factories to energy facilities—the rapidly increasing allocation of mining and oil licenses to both domestic and foreign capital stands out.

The west’s crisis in positioning Turkey



Ahead of the NATO summit planned to take place in Turkey in July, Ankara is hosting preparatory meetings. While figures such as National Defense Minister Yaşar Güler, Head of Communications at the Presidency Burhanettin Duran, and NATO Chief Advisor Yavuz Türgenci continue internal preparations, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte also visited Ankara to meet with President Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. At the time of this visit, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen delivered a speech placing Turkey—alongside Russia and China—within a competitive framework. Although a correction was issued shortly afterward, the expectations from Turkey and the limits of the space to be granted to it were underlined through the emphasis on responsibilities in the Western Balkans. U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Tom Barrack, in a speech at the 5th Antalya Diplomacy Forum, stressed that Turkey should not be underestimated, while also highlighting that it is NATO's second-largest contributor.

The difficulty in defining Turkey's responsibilities and boundaries is not limited to the EU or the U.S. After arriving in Istanbul on his official aircraft and meeting with President Erdoğan, Ukrainian President Zelensky flew to Damascus on a Turkish Republic aircraft accompanied by

Foreign Minister Fidan. During the meeting—where Zelensky and Sharaa discussed bilateral relations as well as regional developments, along with cooperation in food supply, development, and security—Turkey’s Foreign Minister participated while seated on the Ukrainian side of the protocol, creating ambiguity regarding the capacity or agenda under which he was present. Fidan’s visit was presented to the Turkish public as part of his contacts in Damascus, including a trilateral meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Shaibani and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha.

A flurry of negotiations on the peace plan

In Ankara, a series of consecutive meetings focusing on Palestine were held. First, Nickolay Mladenov, the Gaza High Representative of the



Peace Council, then a Hamas delegation led by Political Bureau Member Khalil al-Hayya, and

Palestinian Deputy President Hussein al-Sheikh met in Ankara. In a press conference he held afterward, Foreign Minister Fidan admitted that there were certain problems in implementing the first phase of the Peace Plan, described as emerging from Trump's "ingenious pen." He stated that Hamas had largely fulfilled its obligations, but Israel had not adhered to its commitments, and emphasized that progress must first be made on the unfulfilled aspects on Israel's side before moving to the second phase, which includes the disarmament of Hamas. Although Fidan pointed to Israel as responsible for the deadlock in the process, it is known that behind the scenes—from ceasefire agreements to the broader peace plan—pressure has been exerted, particularly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), on Hamas to comply with Israel's demands. While discussions continue about the inability to move to the second phase and ultimatums are being issued by the U.S. and Israel, the series of meetings taking place is quite noteworthy.

Civilian Gun Ownership and Violence in Turkey



THREEFOLD INCREASE IN 4 YEARS

The number of privately owned firearms has been increasing every year in Turkey. The number of people prosecuted by the General Prosecution Office for carrying an unlicensed firearm was 54,198 in 2020; this number had surpassed 137,000 only four years later. Figures indicate an average of 4,500 deaths per year from firearms.



82%

OF CASES INVOLVE FIREARMS

In 2025, 3,422 incidents of armed violence were reported in the media. In these incidents, 2,225 people lost their lives, while 3,167 were injured. Sharp or bladed instruments were used in 638 cases, while firearms (handguns and rifles) were used in 2,784. These numbers show that firearms constituted approximately 82% of the incidents. In addition, a 74% increase in incidents of gun violence has been observed over the past year.



GUNS FOR \$110

The ease of access to unlicensed firearms has been a major factor in the rise in violence and homicides linked to these weapons. It is reported that a large portion of these firearms can be obtained online and also enter the country across the border from neighboring countries.

On Telegram and various social media platforms, pistols converted from blank-firing models can be obtained within hours for about 5,000₺ (\$110).

On the other hand, it is argued that many

incidents remain in the category of “unidentified cases” due to the lack of sufficient and regular data sharing with the public, and that this situation makes it difficult to clearly assess the scale of the problem.



30 MILLION UNLICENSED FIREARMS

It is estimated that there are over 30 million unlicensed firearms in Turkey. In contrast, the number of licensed firearms is estimated to be between 2.5 and 2.9 million.

Although there are legal penalties, such as prison sentences, for the offense of carrying an unlicensed firearm, there is no comprehensive or systematic official data available to the public regarding the extent to which these penalties are enforced.

TKP has declared July 4-12, 2026 as Anti-NATO Summit and called for mass rally on July 5

TKP Central Committee has issued a [statement](#) declaring the week of July 4-12, 2026 as the Anti-NATO Summit. Within this framework, various events and panels will be organized, culminating in a mass rally in Ankara on July 5. Declared in response to the NATO summit to be held in Ankara on July 7-8, the initiative aims to demonstrate throughout the week that Ankara does not welcome NATO.

TKP took the streets on May 1st!



Workers, women, youth, students, retirees, people who stand with the republic, and revolutionaries gathered in four centers, İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Adana in Turkey to celebrate May 1st, at the May Day rallies and marches called by the Communist Party of Turkey and supported by many institutions such as unions, associations, societies, solidarity networks and People's Representatives Assembly of Turkey (THTM).



Ankara

TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan addressed the crowd gathered to celebrate May Day in Istanbul. Okuyan protested the detentions of those attempting to march to Taksim Square and called on workers to reject hopelessness. Okuyan argued that Turkey's problems cannot be solved without confronting the political power of capital, describing the current system not simply as a "one-man regime" but as a "dictatorship of capital". He also saluted Cuba's May Day celebrations and called for support for the José Martí Cuba-Turkey Friendship Association's "We Harvest Sunlight for Cuba" campaign.



İzmir

TKP also celebrated May Day in different parts of Europe such as Amsterdam, Hamburg, Munich, Mainz, Köln, Berlin, and Oslo.

Solidarity event with Cuba: Cuba will win!



A large solidarity event titled “Cuba Will Win!” was held at the Nazım Hikmet Cultural Center in İstanbul on 19 April. Organized by the Communist Party of Turkey, the event brought together the friends of Cuba to express their solidarity.

TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan and Elier Ramírez Cañedo, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, addressed the audience. Emilio Lozada García, Head of the International Relations Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, also attended as head of the Cuban delegation.

Speakers drew attention to the intensification of the U.S. economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba under Donald Trump’s administration. They emphasized that the blockade targets the Cuban

people’s sovereignty, equality and socialist path, and underlined the growing international support against the blockade.



Several musicians took stage at the event and expressed their solidarity with Cuba.

You can read the [speeches](#) delivered by TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan and Elier Ramírez Cañedo, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Solidarity event with Cuba: Cuba will win!

At the solidarity event held in İstanbul, TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan announced that the José Martí Cuba-Turkey Friendship Association will launch a campaign to send solar panels to Cuba. These solar panels aim to provide support for Cuba’s efforts to expand solar energy production and strengthen public institutions facing the consequences of the blockade.

As part of the campaign, which launched under the slogan “We Harvest Sun for Cuba”, solar panels, inverters



and batteries for energy storage will be supplied and sent to three institutions in Santa Clara: the Ernesto Che Guevara Cardiology Center at the University Hospital, the Daniel Codorniu Pruna General Teaching Hospital, and

the Freddy Maymura Hurtado Psychopedagogy Center.

The Association stated that the campaign aims to contribute to Cuba's renewable energy mobilization and to support the Cuban people in their struggle against the effects of the U.S. blockade.

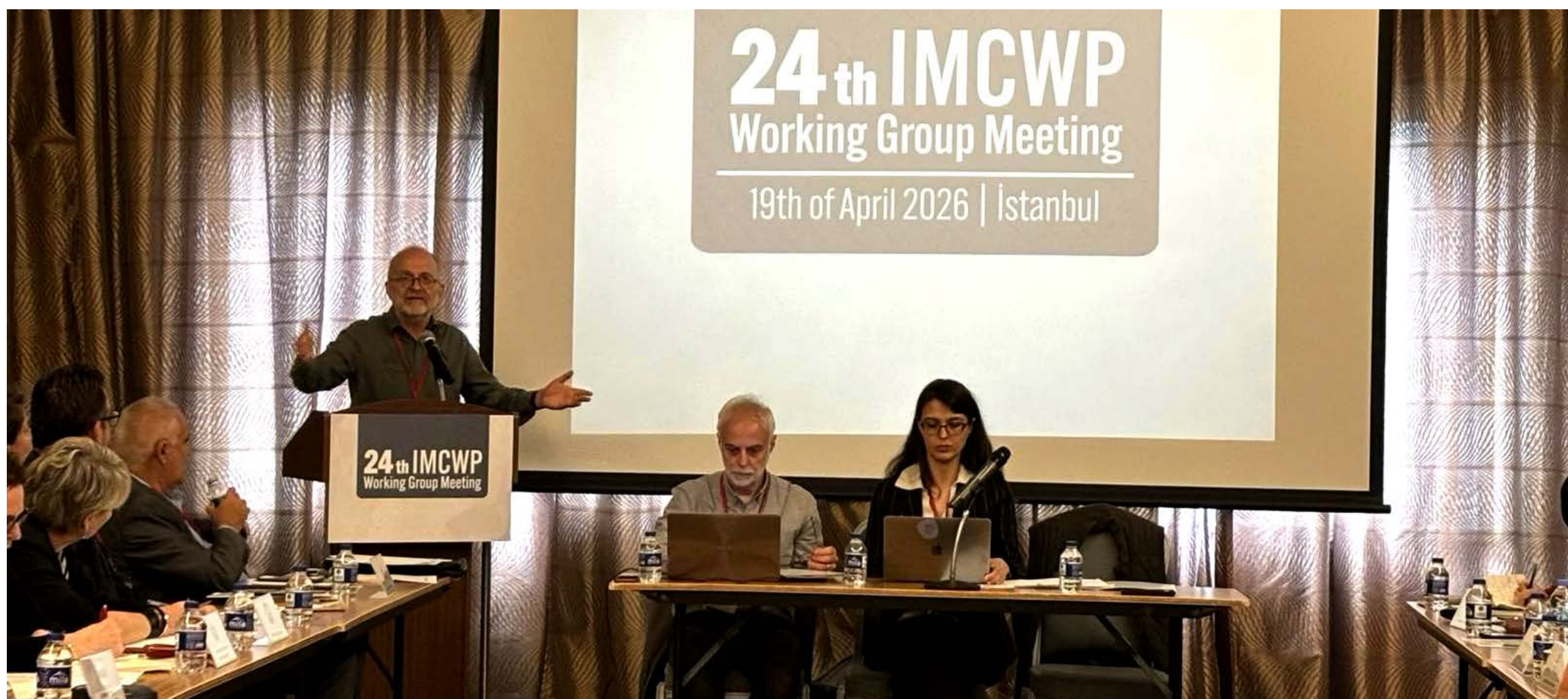
For those who wish to support the campaign, details are available on the association's relevant page:

[JMKDD - Harvesting Sun for Cuba!](#)

The Working Group of the 24th IMCWP has successfully concluded its meeting in İstanbul

The Working Group of the 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties met in İstanbul on 19 April 2026, hosted by the Communist Party of Turkey. The meeting was opened by TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan's opening remarks and attended by representatives of 23 parties.

Participants decided that the 24th International Meeting will be held in Havana in August 2026, hosted by the Communist Party of Cuba.



The theme of the meeting was set as follows:
“Defending and honouring the legacy of the Cuban Revolution on the centenary of Fidel, deepening solidarity with socialist Cuba, strengthening our joint actions, and uniting our forces for peace and against imperialist aggression. The parties also adopted joint statements expressing solidarity with Cuba against the US blockade, and with the peoples of Iran, Lebanon, and Palestine against US and Israeli aggression.

International Communist Press (ICP) relaunches its activities

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PRESS

International Communist Press (ICP), a digital English-language portal initiated by the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP), has resumed its activities at icp.org.tr after a period of inactivity. Relunched at a historical moment marked by sharpening class struggles and escalating imperialist aggression, ICP will feature current news, key interviews, and articles from communist and workers’ parties.

TKP in solidarity with miners



Workers from Doruk Madencilik, based in Eskişehir, marched to Ankara to demand unpaid wages, severance pay that had been withheld, and humane working conditions, but were detained in front of the Ministry of Energy.

The miners, members of the Independent Miners Union, later moved their protest to the headquarters of Yıldızlar SSS Holding and then to Kurtuluş Park. The workers announced that they would continue their hunger strike until their rights were fully restored.

On the 8th day of the hunger strike, Doruk Mining workers attempting to march to the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources faced a police blockade, barricades, and tear gas attacks. The infirmary set up in the park, by the TKP, who was there in solidarity with the miners, was also attacked with tear gas and plastic bullets. In a statement released afterward, TKP said: "The Communist Party of Turkey stands with the mine workers. The worker-hostile AKP and the holdings it represents will leave this country."

TKP was alongside the teachers who went on strike in protest against the school shootings.



Following the school shootings that took place first in the cities of Şanlıurfa and then in Kahramanmaraş, teachers' unions launched protests in the capital, Ankara. The Communist Party of Turkey stood with teachers who started a watch for their lives, in front of the Ministry of National Education that evening. The next day, TKP was on the streets with teachers continuing their strike.

Additionally, TKP organized protests in İstanbul and İzmir under the slogan, "We will tear down this system to protect our children!"

Revolution will be published in Spanish soon



The latest book of TKP General Secretary Kemal Okuyan, *Revolution*, will be published by Ediciones Tinta Roja this summer in Spanish.

Originally published in August 2025, *Revolution* received significant attention from Turkish readers and rapidly went through five print editions. The English edition, released in October 2025, brings Okuyan's reflections on the very nature of revolutions to the international audience.

You can reach the English edition as an [e-book at here](#).

