

via ANF-News

“As a parliamentarian, I particularly urge you and the European Parliament to play your constructive role in this process,” wrote Güven to the EP President.

DTK Co-chair and HDP Hakkari MP Leyla Güven continues her indefinite hunger strike for 83 days to protest the total isolation imposed on Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

Güven wrote a letter to the President of the European Parliament Mr. Antonio Tajani and the President of CPT Mr. Mykola Gnatovskyy.

The letter reads as follows:

“Dear Mr Tajani,

We are currently facing serious tremendous on the path towards democratization and normalization in Turkey, as was also made known in sessions held at the European Parliament. The most critical of these obstacles is the persistence of total isolation imposed on Mr Abdullah Öcalan held in Imrali Prison since April 5, 2015. Mr Öcalan has played a key role in the pursuit of a peaceful solution to the conflict, especially by all his efforts during the peace process that took place between 2013 and 2015. He continues to be the person best placed to continue playing this historic role. I believe that the clear positions taken by all the institutions that collectively constitute the European Union are going to be crucial for the restarting of the process of conflict resolution. The consistent demand for this stance in turn will enable a normalization to take place in Turkey, in my firmly held view.

The isolation amounting to torture that the Turkish government imposes on Mr Öcalan in violation of international law, is currently effectively being imposed on the entire political system in Turkey. As a result, the basis for democratic politics is extremely limited. Against this backdrop, as a Kurd, as a woman, and as an elected deputy of the third largest party in Turkey, which won 6 million votes nationally, I have been held in prison for one year by a Turkish government that is barely distinguishable from a dictatorship and is not restrained from pursuing an arbitrary administration with no respect even for the decisions taken at the European Court of Human Rights. Even though I may have been released on January 25, 2019, on the 79th day of my hunger strike, which I had begun on November 8, 2018 in order to break the isolation and torture system imposed on Mr Öcalan, I want you to know that I will continue my hunger strike until this isolation on Mr Öcalan is ended and his most basic right to receive regular visits from his lawyers and family members is guaranteed.

As evidenced by the CPT's decisions regarding the isolation, as well as the most recent sessions of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, the lifting of the isolation imposed on Mr Abdullah Öcalan is neither a privilege, nor a concession. Rather, it is a matter that is fundamentally related to defending the principle of the supremacy of human rights and international law.

I trust that you will show due sensitivity by opposing the isolation policies imposed on the prisons as well as on social life in Turkey, a country which has been accepted as an EU membership candidate. Indefinite hunger strike is not an individual matter. This action, which is currently being taken by more than 300 political prisoners, as well as in Strasbourg, Wales, Canada and Iraqi Kurdistan, and which is constantly spreading, is a right and just means of protest in defence of what is a legitimate and fundamental right. Through your office, with respect and gratitude, I greet all those who have issued solidarity messages from the European Parliament in support of my hunger strike. To break the isolation system, which is turning Turkey into an intolerable regime, you and your institution must take urgent action. As a parliamentarian, I particularly urge you and the European Parliament to play your constructive role in this process.

Yours sincerely,

Leyla Güven

Member of Parliament

Co-President, Democratic Society Congress

CC: - **Manfred WEBER**, Chair of **Group of the European People's Party** (EPP Group)

- **Udo Bullmann**, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

- **Syed Kamall & Ryszard Legutko**, Co-Chairpersons of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament

- **Guy Verhofstadt**, President, Alliance of European Liberals and Democrats in the European Parliament

- **Gabi Zimmer**, President, Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green

Left

- **SkaKeller - Philippe Lamberts**, Co-Presidents, **The Greens/European Free Alliance**

- **Nigel Farage**, Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy