

# PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC PARTY

## HALKLARIN DEMOKRATİK PARTİSİ



23 February 2017

*Subject: Referendum in Turkey on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

### INVITATION for INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

The referendum for the Constitutional amendments to build a “presidential system” in Turkey is scheduled for 16 April 2017. This referendum is of utmost importance for the future of democratic institutions in Turkey. As Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) we would like to invite you to observe the referendum process in order to ensure its transparency and fairness.

The result of the referendum will re-shape the political system in Turkey. If the Erdoğan-AKP government wins in the referendum, then the President will monopolize all legislative, executive and judicial powers and establish a totalitarian regime. This system does not involve any effective check & balance mechanisms. There will be no separation of powers, no rule of law, and no independent judiciary in the country.

The Erdoğan-AKP government has been using the countrywide state of emergency rule, declared immediately after the abortive coup attempt on 15 July 2016, to silence oppositional parties and groups and prevent them from carrying out their “No” campaigns for the referendum. The crackdown on the HDP and our sister Democratic Regions Party (DBP) is still going on. So far, about 3,000 executives and members of these two parties have been jailed, including our co-chairs, eleven deputies, and more than eighty Kurdish mayors. The government is determined to totally paralyze the HDP and DBP so that we cannot work for the referendum. We expect many more arbitrary detentions and arrests, as we get closer to the referendum date. In addition, the media, academics and civil society are under tremendous governmental pressure. Hundreds of media outlets and thousands of NGOs critical of the government have been banned, and more about 5000 academics have been dismissed from their jobs. Under such violent and unfair political circumstances, referendum observation missions by foreign parliamentarians, politicians, human rights or advocacy groups may help to ease the repression on the opposition, establish some transparency and fairness, and prevent the government from committing fraud in referendum results.

For further information and registration, please contact HDP's Representation Office for Europe ([hdpeurope@skynet.be](mailto:hdpeurope@skynet.be) – 0032 2 503 8619) and/or the Foreign Affairs Commission of HDP ([international@hdp.org.tr](mailto:international@hdp.org.tr) – 0090 312 427 1780) in Ankara.

Sincerely Yours,

**Hişyar ÖZSOY**

**Deputy Co-chair of HDP Responsible for Foreign Affairs**

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