

23.10.2017

**Subject:** Hearings of legal cases against HDP co-chairs Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş (**December 7, 2017**) and Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ (**December 6, 2017**)

HDP's co-chair Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş was arrested on 4 November 2016 together with co-chair Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ and seven other MPs. Mr. Demirtaş has been in Edirne F Type Prison since his arrest. **The first hearing** of the main legal case for which Mr. Demirtaş has been under pre-trial detention will be held 399 days after his arrest; on **December 7, 2017** at **Ankara 19<sup>th</sup> Heavy Penal Court**.

This case of Mr. Demirtaş consists of the merging of 31 summary proceedings, each having separate criminal charges. All of these files consist of press statements and speeches that Mr. Demirtaş had made as a politician. The indictment prepared for Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş accuses him with the following charges: Establishing or administering an armed terrorist organization, making propaganda of a terrorist organization, praising a crime or criminal, inciting people to hatred and enmity, inciting people to commit crime, inciting people to violate the law, organizing and participating in meetings and marches in violation of the law on protest and assembly. The prosecution has asked for the sentencing of Mr. Demirtaş up to 142 years in prison.

The third hearing of case against co-chair Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ will be held on **6 December 2017 (9:30 a.m.) at Sincan F Type Prison Campus in Ankara**. The charges raised against Ms. Yüksekdağ are almost identical with those raised against Mr. Demirtaş: Establishing or administering an armed terrorist organization, making propaganda of a terrorist organization, inciting people to hatred and enmity, inciting people to commit crime, inciting people to violate the law, participation in unlawful meetings and demonstrations. Her indictment consists of 8 separate files that were later merged into one single case. Almost all of the files are about the speeches she made as the leader of a political party.

These cases of HDP co-chairs are surely of utmost importance for the political future Turkey. We would like to invite you to observe them to make it clear that the international community is keenly following and deeply concerned with the destruction of democratic politics in the country. Observing these hearings will provide you with the opportunity to bear witness to the political and arbitrary use of the law to silence democratic opposition, suspension of the rule of law, and destruction of separation of powers.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need assistance for the necessary arrangements to observe the hearings.

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