

Removal of HDP Mayors

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On 19 August, Turkey's Interior Ministry removed from office the democratically elected metropolitan mayors of Diyarbakir, Mardin and Van without just reason. This unilateral, undemocratic decision by the Interior Ministry is again clear evidence of the AKPs lack of respect for election results. The three metropolitan mayors from the Democratic Peoples Party (HDP) were elected by the people to serve all citizens of their respective cities and offer services to all segments of society. Less than 6 months after the elections, the removal by state authorities of the mayors and the detention of hundreds of HDP members is another setback on the path to an inclusive political system in Turkey and a blow to all Turkish citizens craving for freedom, equality and democracy.

Under AKP dominance, Turkey's political sphere has become a spectrum to control. To control the Turkish political landscape, the AKP gets rid of political opponents and opposition figures at will and by all means available - whether by holding new elections after unsatisfying election results or simply by removing elected persons. Democratic principles, the Rule of Law and respect of elections results are discarded when it comes to the AKP's hold over the state apparatus. It uses the latter at will accordingly.

This is the moment for democratic forces, opposition groups and free voices to rally for the support of the HDP mayors. And the international community and especially the European Union should speak out firmly and take a stand against this unjust decision.