

The Right to Hope – A Key to Peace in Turkey”

Good afternoon, dear members of the press, representatives of international organizations, human rights defenders, and all those who stand for justice and peace.

Thank you for being here today. I speak on behalf of the campaign committee “Freedom for Öcalan – Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” Switzerland. We are here at a historic moment. A moment that puts the Right to Hope at the center. Not only as a personal right for Abdullah Öcalan, but as a collective force that can finally end decades of violence in Turkey and the Middle East.

Think of this: a man has been held in isolation for 27 years. His ideas inspire millions, yet even the smallest hope is denied to him. This is not only his pain. It is the voice of a whole people asking for dignity. Just twelve days after the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers passed a resolution calling for action against Turkey, we say: The Right to Hope is our weapon against oppression—let us use it to stop the bloodshed!

In 2014, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that life sentences without the chance of release break the ban on torture. The Right to Hope, confirmed in the case of Vinter v. United Kingdom, is not just a legal concept. It is the heart of human dignity. To take away hope is to break the human spirit. Judge Power-Forde said it clearly: it denies our humanity. In Öcalan’s case, it goes even further. It is also about the hope of millions of people—for peace, for an end to wars that destroy families and force children to grow up in fear. Without hope, the Middle East remains trapped in pain. It is time to turn this collective hope into action and to end the suffering.

Tomorrow, Kurdish women will begin a march from Amed (Diyarbakır) to Ankara.

This march shows their will to resist war. Women lead the way against destruction, death, and poverty caused by conflict. Their march is a living call for freedom that crosses borders. From Palestine to Latin America, the dignity of all people is part of this struggle. Their demands are clear: the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, the release of political prisoners, real steps toward peace through direct talks with the true partner, and the end of the extra delay given to Turkey after the ruling on the Right to Hope. To ignore or postpone peace is a crime against humanity.

The peace process that Öcalan began shows that change is possible. Since his call in February 2025, the ceasefire and the decision of the PKK to disband have raised real hope. Millions—from Nobel Prize winners to civil society—support this path, together with international institutions.

But the Turkish government still hesitates. Despite calls from the Council of Europe for reforms by 2026, and appeals from the European Left Party, Öcalan remains in isolation. Political prisoners continue to suffer. The Committee of Ministers has increased the pressure, but more must be done. Think of the tears of families, the years of separation. Freedom for Öcalan is the key to a just peace, to a democratic society where everyone can breathe freely.

The way forward is clear:

1. Turkey must implement the 2014 ruling of the European Court on the Right to Hope.
2. Political prisoners must be released, starting with Abdullah Öcalan, so he can speak and act freely.
3. The Turkish parliament must take real steps toward democracy and the recognition of Kurdish rights.
4. The EU, the US, and others must use diplomatic pressure to stop military operations and remove the PKK from terrorist lists.
5. All parts of society—opposition, civil society, women, youth—must take part in building a democratic future.

These are not abstract demands. They are a call to our shared humanity.

Dear friends, the Right to Hope is our common heartbeat. Let us break the chains, dry the tears, and light the fire of peace! For Abdullah Öcalan, for the Kurdish people and all ethnic and religious minorities, for a better and more just world—act now. Let us use hope to end the bloodshed. The world is watching. Act now for peace and dignity.

Thank you

Franziska Stier, Grossrätin BastA!