



IPPNW

Press Declaration 29 September 2025

We, the undersigned, members of IPPNW issue this urgent declaration to reaffirm the fundamental and universal principle of the **"Right of Hope"** as it pertains to **Mr. Abdullah Öcalan**, the imprisoned Kurdish political leader and founding member of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). As the key interlocutor within the ongoing process for 'Peace and Democratic Society,' and legitimate representative of the Kurdish people, the conditions must be created for Mr. Öcalan to participate fully in the process.

For over 26 years, Abdullah Öcalan has been held in almost total isolation on İmralı Island Prison, under conditions that have been widely condemned by international human rights organizations, legal experts, and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT). Last winter, after 4 years of total isolation, political talks between Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party PKK, and Turkish state officials started.

As result of these talks a group of PKK guerrilla fighters have burned their weapons in a symbolic ceremony and a parliamentary commission was founded in order to make legal reforms in Turkey.

The Right of Hope is a Human Right

The **"Right of Hope"** refers to the legal and moral principle that **no prisoner should be denied the possibility of release**, especially through indefinite or irreducible life sentences. The European Court of Human Rights has established that a life sentence without the possibility of release violates Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits inhuman and degrading treatment.

This principle is not just a matter of legality—it is a matter of **human dignity**. Every person, regardless of the crimes they are accused of or convicted for, must retain the **hope of freedom**, the opportunity for rehabilitation, and the right to participate in life beyond prison walls.

Abdullah Öcalan's Case is Political and Symbolic

Mr. Öcalan is not merely a prisoner; he is a **key figure in the Kurdish question** and a crucial interlocutor for any sustainable and democratic solution to the conflict in Turkey and the broader Middle East. His calls for peace, dialogue, and a democratic resolution to the Kurdish issue have been systematically silenced through a regime of extreme isolation. Denying him the Right of Hope is not only a violation of his individual rights, but a **blockade** against the possibility of peace for millions.

Our Demands

We call on the Turkish government and the international community to:

1. 2. **Immediately lift the isolation** imposed on Abdullah Öcalan and allow access to his lawyers and family.

Ensure his right to hope through mechanisms that allow for legal review, parole, or commutation of sentence, in line with international human rights standards.

3. 4. **Respect the rulings and recommendations** of the European Court of Human Rights and the **Committee for the Prevention of Torture regarding prison conditions and legal rights.**

Recognize the political significance of Mr. Öcalan's role and re-engage in meaningful dialogue for a peaceful and democratic resolution to the Kurdish issue.

Conclusion

The Right of Hope is not a privilege—it is a **universal human right**. Denying it to Abdullah Öcalan is a denial of justice, dignity, and the possibility of peace. We stand in solidarity with all those who believe in human rights, democratic principles, and a just future for all peoples.

Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan. Justice for the Kurdish people. Hope for all