



# ANNUAL REPORT

*2024*

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**Address:** 11 Guilford Street, London WC1N 1DH United Kingdom

**Website:** [democraticprogress.org](http://democraticprogress.org)

**Phone:** +44 (0) 207 405 3835

**Email:** [info@democraticprogress.org](mailto:info@democraticprogress.org)

**Facebook:** Democratic Progress Institute

**Twitter:** @DPI\_UK & @DemokratikGeli1

**Instagram:** @dpi\_democraticprogressinst

**LinkedIn:** Democratic Progress Institute

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# 2024

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# OUR MISSION



To broaden bases for public  
involvement in promoting  
peace and democracy.  
DPI's unique model combines  
expertise and research with  
practical inclusive platforms  
to increase dialogue.

# Foreword



“

Amongst momentous developments in Türkiye in 2024, DPI strived to facilitate the resumption of the peace and reconciliation processes through its project **Promoting an Environment Conducive to Peace-Making in Türkiye and the Region.**

DPI's activities over the past year sought to encourage democratisation and engaged with a diverse assortment of societal and political actors, touching on key themes pertaining to a range of sectors including to elections, art and culture, women in peacebuilding.

”

DPI's events and activities explored the social, political, and economic implications of developments in Türkiye and the region throughout 2024, **addressing the considerable political shifts concerning the Kurdish issue and domestic political realignments, with surges in momentum towards the potential renewal of dialogue and reconciliation.** 2024 saw DPI's approach to the situation in Türkiye and the Kurdish issue significantly contribute to broadening the bases for peace and promote reconciliation, trust, and co-existence, using its platform to foster consensus on the importance of establishing long-term and sustainable peace.

Regardless of escalations in the challenging situation in Türkiye, DPI made tangible differences on the ground at a pivotal political turning point. Regional tensions resulting from Türkiye's geopolitical relevance and evolving political dynamics indicate the pertinence and timely nature of efforts within this project. Recent developments suggest a possible shift in government policy towards re-opening of dialogue addressing the Kurdish issue, both presenting opportunities and eliciting a sense of uncertainty as DPI looks towards the future. The changing circumstances in Syria at the end of the year hold additional implications for the resolution of the Kurdish issue. These developments are unfolding in an increasingly fragile political environment, with recent events casting serious doubt on whether a genuine window of opportunity for peace and reform truly exists – further highlighting the **pivotal nature** of DPI's work.

Political developments in 2024 presented renewed opportunities for peace and democratisation within Türkiye, alongside the resolution of the Kurdish issue. Developments in early 2024 pertained to economic stabilization, local elections, and managing regional security challenges. The local elections in March resulted in the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) retaining key metropolitan areas, reaffirming their presence despite internal fragmentation, with the support of Kurdish votes, thus emerging victorious - followed by the governing Justice and Development Party

(AK Party). The outcome of the elections caused a rapid evolution in Türkiye's political landscape, triggering shifting dynamics, thereby warranting concerns of polarisation. However, the post-election period was heralded by a historic normalisation process between the governing AK Party and opposition CHP following years of tension.

The most consequential political movement pertaining to the Kurdish issue emerged in the final quarter of the year. A **crucial moment** for peace occurred on October 1st, where right-wing **Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli exchanged a handshake with pro-Kurdish Peoples' Equality and Democracy (DEM) Party Co-Chair Tuncer Bakırhan in Parliament.** The handshake signalled a cautiously optimistic chance for peace, considering past tensions between the parties, suggesting a potential softening of MHP's long-standing resistance to dialogue with pro-Kurdish political actors. Bahçeli's move, coordinated with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, ignited a wave of political debate across party lines, sparking hope for renewed political engagement on the Kurdish issue. **Historically, MHP has been one of the most hardline voices opposing negotiations in the previous Peace Process, making this shift particularly significant.**

Bahçeli emphasised the need for peace as Türkiye enters a new era, causing speculation of a possible transition in government policy – later actualised by his monumental proposition of reconsidering of the life sentence of imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan - on the condition of the dissolution and disarmament of his outlawed armed group - in governmental talks. President Erdoğan described this development as a historic opportunity for peace, reaffirming the government's commitment to resolving the Kurdish issue through state institutions whilst underscoring the goal of disarming the PKK and “eliminating terrorism.” In urging all political parties to seize this moment for Türkiye's future, Erdoğan's remarks hinted at a broader state-led approach that could involve both security measures and political steps.



The coupling of the President's public endorsement of Bahçeli's initiative with MHP's diversion from its past harsh stance on the Kurdish issue, signified a step towards a potential peace process. By the end of 2024, the political atmosphere in Türkiye had "changed" compared to the beginning of the year. A combination of political gestures, leadership shifts, and strategic recalibrations created a renewed sense of possibility for dialogue.

**In light of such developments,** DPI's work navigated Türkiye's complex political dynamics to open pathways for constructive dialogue in the hopes of driving the peace process onwards. By creating safe and neutral spaces for discourse, broadening the bases for dialogue through a range of activities and events, engaging a diverse array of voices and stakeholders, DPI strengthened its capacity to achieve impactful outcomes. Events



From left to right: Kerim Yıldız, Esra Elmas, Sirri Süreyya Önder, Sir Kieran Prendergast

and activities took shape in various formats, ranging from Peace Tables, Reverse International Conflict Resolution Exchanges, and Interactive Seminars, providing a fruitful opportunity to strengthen shared values and objectives whilst addressing crucial developments. Participants came together at DPI's events and activities to exchange and unlock crucial insights, addressing the challenges and opportunities embedded in the current situation in Türkiye and the region to achieve democratisation and peacebuilding. DPI's collaboration with a range of esteemed local and international experts, political commentators, policymakers, and organisations, expanded the reach of its initiatives and cemented its reputation as an advocate for democratisation and peacebuilding.

Throughout 2024, DPI leveraged its extensive network to bring together high-level representatives from an array of political parties to encourage cross-party support and positive relations. Activities and events engaged members of AK Party, DEM, CHP, Saadet, Gelecek, İyi Party, and DEVA Party. Through key knowledge-sharing opportunities and the provision of a platform for dialogue and insight exchange, actors prepared for a potential reopening of the resolution process whilst ensuring the Kurdish issue remains prioritised on the political agenda. The importance of maintaining dialogue and forming positive political connections is essential to bolster momentum in the processes of democratisation and peace building, laying the groundwork for the coming year. Topics central to the evolving political situation and the new chance for peace persisted throughout events, such as the roles of civil society and minorities in peace and the interconnection between Syrian affairs and the Kurdish issue.

The project's interactions with the peace and conflict resolution processes in Türkiye fortified DPI's role as a trusted and central actor for mediation and peacebuilding dialogue. Amidst the evolving situation in Türkiye, DPI remains cautiously optimistic and acknowledges the importance of taking the peace and conflict resolutions process forward to realise positive and sustainable change.



From left to right: Zeynep Ardic, Oral Çalışlar, Kerim Yıldız, Ufuk Uras, Ahmet Mümtaz Taylan, Sevtap Yokuş, Kezban Hatemi, Vahap Coşkun, Ali Bayramoğlu, Erol Katircioğlu, Katya Paus

Thus, I extend my sincere gratitude to our donors and funders – DPI's achievements over the past year would not have been realised otherwise. With the expertise and instrumental support of the **Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture**, DPI reinforced its capacity to promote peace, reconciliation, and democratisation within Türkiye and the region and contributed to the resolution of the Kurdish issue. Additionally, I express my thanks to DPI's staff, interns, Council of Experts and esteemed Board of Advisors for their hard work, dedication, and enduring efforts in the pursuit of DPI's goals.

The 2024 Annual Report presents DPI's activities throughout **the past year**, entailing a range of activities, initiatives and events undertaken across London, Europe, Türkiye, and online settings that brought tangible change to Türkiye and the region. Implementing a hybrid model ensured the accessibility of DPI's events and facilitated connections with international experts. Such aspects added further depth to the insights obtained from the past year's work in the hopes of actualising conflict resolution and democratisation. DPI continues to play a pivotal role in connecting key figures across the globe to discuss the possibility and pathways towards peace during a period of changing conversations.

Looking back on DPI's work throughout 2024 with satisfaction, DPI is entering 2025 with the aspiration to build upon the past year's accomplishments and to take the peace and reconciliation processes to the next level. I would like to reiterate the importance of pairing procedure with substantive action, amidst recent developments in Türkiye and the region. Accordingly, the statement released by Abdullah Öcalan, issued by the DEM Party on February 27<sup>th</sup>, is a crucial step towards peace, democratisation, reconciliation, the resolution of the Kurdish issue. DPI hopes that these developments will lead to an end to violence and pave the way to a just and lasting end to this protracted conflict.

I aspire for DPI's work to help reignite conversations on democratisation, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and establishing an inclusive and sustainable solution to the Kurdish issue. In the coming year, DPI seeks to expand on such progress to drive the ongoing processes forward, elevating matters to the next level and fortifying its commitment to actualising peace with its inclusive approach. The evolving situation in Türkiye further highlights the importance and productive potential of DPI's work at this pivotal time.

## Kerim Yıldız

Chief Executive Officer  
Democratic Progress Institute



The Democratic Progress Institute (DPI) is an independent non-governmental organisation established in consultation with leading experts in conflict resolution and democratic advancement. The organisation's primary objective is to promote peace and support democratic development by encouraging public dialogue and engagement between adversaries. To achieve this, DPI provides a unique programme model using our knowledge and experience of peacebuilding to support practical approaches to harnessing dialogue such as Peace Tables, workshops, seminars, and other platforms for exchange.

## About DPI

## Our Values

DPI was founded on the principles that inclusive dialogue and open knowledge exchange will be conducive to promoting peace, democracy, and human rights. With ten years of experience running inclusive programmes in Türkiye, the organisation has cultivated the trust and active participation of key stakeholders from both the political and civil society sectors. DPI's dedication to these relationships and networks on the ground has been instrumental in ensuring the projects' sustainability and is essential to the success of its mission. The work DPI strives to achieve is rooted in values of respect and equality, through which it seeks to foster strong relationships and a collaborative environment in which innovative ideas and expertise can come together to advance democracy. DPI is committed to professionalism, integrity, and impartiality at all levels.

## Our Aims and Objectives

DPI is focused on providing expertise and practical frameworks to foster public engagement and discourse in support of peace and democracy building on a global scale. To achieve this, DPI aims to continue to promote a structured dialogue between public and private actors and to create new opportunities for discussions on peace and democracy building. DPI seeks to encourage an inclusive, open, and structured discussion environment whereby different parties can share knowledge and concerns across multiple levels. Throughout these efforts, DPI strives to identify common priorities and develop

innovative approaches to actively encourage democratic solutions. Additionally, its initiatives strive to support and strengthen collaboration between academics, civil society organisations, and policymakers. DPI especially aims to use comparative studies as an essential tool to avoid past mistakes and ensure democratic issues are shared and resolved globally.

As a neutral and non-partisan organisation, DPI can extend invitations to senior political figures from across Türkiye's political spectrum. DPI has access to academics, civil society leaders and influential media



representatives across Türkiye's professional and political spectrum through networks built over ten years. Its commitment to inclusivity is reflected by the broad range of backgrounds represented by the participants who attend DPI's events. Feedback from such events has repeatedly held that DPI is uniquely positioned to facilitate the conflict resolution and peace building processes in Türkiye and the region, with its activities providing *“the most inclusive platform so far”* where: *“people from different political tendencies [in Türkiye] can easily come*

*together [...] and talk to each other and negotiate their differences”.*

DPI's structure additionally entails a Council of Experts who actively contribute to all its work. Consisting of local and international experts, this council provides advice on human rights, constitutional law, transitional justice and truth commissions, international humanitarian law, mediation, and conflict resolution. DPI's strong working relationships in the region allow it to collaborate with experts, scholars, and universities.

### DPI's work includes:

- ▶ Contributing to broadening bases and providing platforms for discussion on establishing a structured public dialogue on peace and democracy building.
- ▶ Prepare political stakeholders and civil society for their roles in the peace process.
- ▶ Build common ground across party lines by identifying practical steps toward peace and accordingly encouraging the sharing of experiences to do so.
- ▶ Broaden support for a sustainable resolution to the Kurdish issue.
- ▶ Providing opportunities for different parties to draw comparative studies and compare various mechanisms used to achieve positive results in comparable cases.
- ▶ Creating an atmosphere whereby different parties share knowledge, ideas, concerns, suggestions, and challenges facing the development of a resolution in Türkiye and the wider region.
- ▶ Supporting and strengthening collaboration between academics, civil society, and policymakers.
- ▶ Identifying common priorities and developing innovative approaches to participate in and influence democracy-building.
- ▶ Promoting respect for and protection of human rights regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political persuasion, or other beliefs or opinions.
- ▶ Actualising inter-community unity and cohesion through trust-building activities that allowed individuals to exchange their insights and ideas on their experiences.
- ▶ Fostering increased civic engagement and participation in political and democratic processes, particularly among youth, women, and minority groups.
- ▶ Providing neutral and inclusive platforms for dialogue between stakeholders, including conflicting parties, leaders, civic society members and organisations, and state actors.
- ▶ Facilitating regional and cross-border collaboration initiatives and dialogue across political and societal divides to include diverse voices in discussions on peace and conflict resolution.

# Our Methods



DPI provides expertise and practical frameworks to encourage stronger public debates and promote peace and democracy building. To achieve this, DPI seeks to foster an inclusive and structured discussion environment whereby a range of actors can share knowledge, as well as concerns, and offer suggestions for resolving conflict, strengthening democracy across multiple levels of society.

DPI programming is underpinned by a commitment to learning lessons from regional, national, and international examples using comparative studies as a tool for understanding and equipping stakeholders and stakeholder institutions. These processes guide DPI's activities across all its focus areas and help ensure that preparations are in place for a

resolution to the conflict in Türkiye. DPI activities include participants selected to represent their constituencies in consultation with our DPI expert advisers on the ground to address the need for equal representation and participation across all groups and perspectives.

DPI's events (Peace Tables, (Reverse) International Conflict Resolution Exchanges, Interactive Seminars, Assessment Meetings and Briefing & Mentoring Meetings) engage diverse viewpoints and are structured to facilitate interaction between participants and leading international experts. A balance of attendees of past events as well as new participants ensures the continuation of memory and knowledge transmitted from previous DPI activities whilst also broadening bases for wider involvement in promoting peace and democratisation.



# Our Key Themes

## Civil Society

DPI recognises the critical role of civil society in resolving conflicts and advancing democracy. In regions where official channels for conflict resolution may be limited, civil society can (and does) play a vital role in supplementing peace processes. As such, DPI emphasises strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations to contribute to conflict resolution and democracy building. In recent years, DPI has decided to particularly highlight youth organisations' contributions to achieving peace in the upcoming years. This focus has allowed DPI, as well as its participants, to consider more actors in the peace process and to discuss broader topics concerning the impact of war on different generations.

## Conflict Mediation

To establish sustainable peace agreements, addressing the underlying grievances fuelling the conflict is essential. By providing a forum for diverse representatives to exchange their views and experiences, DPI aims to facilitate their future participation and readiness for mediation and negotiation processes. By engaging in these discussions and conversations, DPI helps to educate individuals on various aspects of the

conflict and facilitates the formation of mutually acceptable agreements. DPI's efforts towards fostering open and inclusive communication serve as a crucial step towards achieving lasting peace.

## Democracy

DPI is committed to ensuring effective democracy building, which involves the consolidation of democratic institutions, ranging from the justice system and security services to the development of civil society. DPI is also extremely attached to processes of creating, strengthening, and sustaining democracy. For democracy building to be effective, it must ensure the participation of the entire spectrum of stakeholders within a society and requires the education and engagement of disparate groups. All of DPI's activities strive to broaden bases for public engagement and support of peace processes at all levels of society by making its events as inclusive and diverse as possible.

## Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Security Sector Reform

The disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of armed groups into the community, as well as security sector reform (SSR), are essential for a successful transition from conflict to a peaceful and democratic society where state security serves its citizens rather than oppresses them. DPI analyses global examples of DDR and SSR through comparative studies and, where appropriate, incorporates these into its activity programme to promote knowledge and facilitate informed debate.

## Dividends of Peace or Economic Perspective

Peace and stability are considered key factors affecting both a country's and region's economic performance. They are positively associated with economic development, attracting both local and foreign investments and increasing the volume of exports within the region. Therefore, linking the economic costs of conflict to the benefits of peace can be instrumental in changing attitudes within the business community, among political figures and in the wider region.

## Gender, Peace, and Security

DPI remains committed to addressing gender-related issues, focusing on the crucial role that women play in conflict resolution and promoting peace and security. DPI facilitates the active participation of women in peace negotiations and provides opportunities for both women and men from various countries and backgrounds to share perspectives and experiences. In 2024, DPI continued its commitment to gender equality and women's participation in peacebuilding by carrying out activities and events that emphasised the importance of women's involvement in conflict resolution.

## Governance and Constitutions

The nuances and complexities in many contemporary international conflicts pose challenges for countries transitioning from conflict, including implementing the suitable form of governance and solving constitutional problems. DPI aims to research and share insights into the approaches taken by international cases and identify lessons that can be learnt from them.

## Human Rights and Access to Justice

Human rights and access to justice are crucial during and in the aftermath of violent conflict, as they enable individuals to resolve disputes under the auspices of the state. DPI recognises that meaningful democratic reform, peace, and stability require a foundation of human rights, equality, and the rule of law. Its work aims to promote these principles and address language and identity issues, critical in resolving conflicts and establishing a stable democracy. DPI strives to contribute to a just and equitable society for all by focusing on these crucial areas.

## Media

The role of the media is imperative for reporting, reflecting, and influencing conflict resolution processes. DPI places a strong emphasis on the role of the media, both traditional and social, in rapidly spreading information surrounding conflicts, recognising the power of social media and uses it as a channel to disseminate its work and expand its reach and breadth.

## Transitional Justice

DPI focuses on transitional justice to address human rights violations, promote accountability, and encourage reconciliation in post-conflict societies. DPI's research and events aim to highlight the potential benefits of transitional justice measures, including recognising victims' rights, improving civic trust, and strengthening the rule of law, all with the hope of aiding democratic advancements.

# Impact Statement

During 2024, DPI proudly continued to provide an inclusive platform for dialogue within a period of political change and opportunity. In bringing together a range of individuals from diverse political backgrounds to exchange insights, experiences, and perspectives, DPI facilitated key discussions relevant to establishing peace in Türkiye and resolving the Kurdish issue. The insights obtained from discussing past peace processes on a global scale in the context of the current situation in Türkiye encouraged receptivity to the reopening of the peace process.

DPI's programme of activities throughout 2024 entailed Peace Tables, (Reverse) International Conflict Resolution Exchanges, Interactive Seminars, Briefing and Mentoring efforts, Assessment Meetings, and the production of materials such as Assessment Papers and Research Reports. A hybrid approach was adopted in past year's programme of activities, rendering participation, information, and insights from activities and events accessible. Simultaneously, face-to-face activities continued to build trust between diverse actors.

By engaging with and expanding its network of high-level and key stakeholders, DPI promoted diversity and an array of social, political, and cultural perspectives, involving varied actors from differing societal sectors. Political elites, policymakers, media figures, civil society actors, grassroots organisations, and marginalized communities received advice and learned from the experiences of international experts, thus strengthening their knowledge and capacity to advocate for peace. More broadly speaking, DPI's investment in grassroots engagement fostered long-term sustainability in peacebuilding efforts.

Such activities provided critical platforms for experts, politicians, and civil society representatives to discuss and assess Türkiye's evolving political landscape. These discussions facilitated a more inclusive understanding of the new possible peace initiative and highlighted democratic approaches to conflict resolution. The international element of DPI's work, through the (Reverse) International Conflict Resolution Exchanges held over the past year, allowed for Turkish stakeholders to engage with international experts, gaining comparative insights on sustainable peace processes from previous international

peacebuilding experiences. By drawing on global experiences, participants refined their approaches to domestic peace efforts. Complimenting more anecdotal with evidence-based recommendations provided further insight to conflict resolution for policymakers and stakeholders.

The impact of DPI's activities as a leading actor in Türkiye was recurrently acknowledged by participants, who shared positive feedback and highlighted gratitude for the opportunity to interact with a wide range of actors and to partake in discussions regarding the political processes in the region. Feedback from participants highlighted the significance of these discussions, underscoring their role in fostering renewed commitment to peace and democratisation during a period of evolving political dynamics. Doing so broadened the foundations of dialogue and communication for peace, considering the developing political context, thus bringing together high-level political representatives and key stakeholders to exchange views and knowledge. This facilitated societal readiness for a potential resumption of the resolution of the Kurdish issue and democratisation as an issue central to the public political track.

As Türkiye entered a pivotal period following the shifting political landscapes in the latter half of 2024, DPI crucially contributed to the maintenance of open channels of communication and thus an atmosphere ripe for potential progress. DPI's work throughout the past year has laid a foundation for continued engagement with key interlocutors, ensuring that momentum for dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution persists through cross-party collaboration and increasing knowledge and discussion of peace processes.

As a whole, DPI remains at the forefront of democratisation and peacebuilding efforts in Türkiye. The shift in political discourse towards a possible peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue was reiterated in DPI's engagements with high-level interlocutors, indicative of current window of opportunity to advance peace on the political agenda. With these promising and transformative developments in mind, DPI remains committed to its mission of fostering inclusive dialogue, strengthening democratic processes, and advocating for a peaceful resolution to long-standing conflicts in 2025.



# ACTIVITIES

## PEACE TABLE

### *New Political Balances in Türkiye:* **Opportunities for Conflict Resolution**

Online - February 26, 2024

On February 26, 2024, DPI held an online Peace Table event titled “**New Political Balances in Türkiye: Opportunities for Conflict Resolution.**” The event brought together a diverse group of participants, including scholars, representatives from civil society and political parties, legal experts, business leaders, and international specialists in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The group included new and returning participants to ensure continuity of knowledge and trust-building, whilst increasing diversity.

After the opening remarks, political commentator Ali Bayramoğlu delivered **the keynote address. He highlighted the impact of cultural and historical divisions on political polarisation, with nationalism as a key identity factor.** Analysing the upcoming elections, Bayramoğlu predicted **minimal power shifts toward the opposition**, due to their lack of a compelling vision, **thus maintaining the ideological status quo and limiting progress on issues like the Kurdish problem.**

Bayramoğlu found that nationalism has strained Türkiye’s ruling and opposition blocs. Tensions exist between the MHP and AK PARTY, while far-right parties push nationalist agendas. This has led to **hard-line stances on issues like the Kurdish question and relations with the West, hindering conflict resolution.** The discussion proceeded to highlight **external dynamics shaping current approaches to the Kurdish issue**, such as the Syrian crisis, the threat posed by the Islamic State, and the growing influence of regional Kurdish actors rather than President Erdoğan’s personal preferences.

The subsequent discourse built upon these insights and noted how **the rise of nationalism has impacted domestic dynamics, pushing political discourse further towards the right.** This right-wing shift, compounded by regional developments such as the Syrian crisis, and combined with the increasing securitisation of the Kurdish issue, problematise conflict resolution efforts. However, the panel recognised the crucial role that the **international community and civil society organisations** like DPI can play.

The Peace Table provided participants with a **timely platform** to discuss current political trends and their implications for the Kurdish issue, creating a space for **diverse multi-sectoral dialogue** that offered insights on impacts of the newly arising political balances within Türkiye. Participants cultivated their understanding of the current political situation in Türkiye and its consequences for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In acknowledging the need for a more inclusive approach to peace involving an international element and civil society actors, participants **highlighted potential pathways to peace.** Participants deepened their **geopolitical perspectives** on challenges to peace and conflict resolution in Türkiye by addressing external regional dynamics and actors in the Kurdish issue. A **critical and holistic understanding of the impact of identity politics and regional and domestic developments on democratisation and peace** was prompted through the session’s analysis and remarks. Overall, the Peace Table sought to lay the groundwork for inter-group engagement and increased trust between differing political alignments and affiliations to promote democratisation and peace building.



Women in Peace-making:

## UNSC Resolution 1325 & Women's Meaningful Participation in Conflict Resolution

Embassy of Switzerland, Ankara - March 12-13, 2024



From March 12 to 13 2024, DPI, in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy in Ankara, hosted a Peace Table event titled **"Women in Peace-Making: UNSC Resolution 1325 & Women's Meaningful Participation in Conflict Resolution."** The event sought to engage in a meaningful dialogue on the role of women in peace processes in both Türkiye and further afield, and to discuss the forms of discrimination and resistance women face when participating in such processes, and the progress made since the adoption of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325. The event brought together a diverse group of women from across a broad spectrum of different political affiliations in Türkiye and beyond.

Following opening remarks by the Acting Deputy Head of Mission Corinna Seiberth, Antonia Potter Prentice gave the keynote presentation. Potter Prentice reviewed UNSC Resolution 1325, emphasising its ground-breaking focus on participation, protection, prevention, and relief in conflict areas. She highlighted its positive effects on peace agreements and women's organisations but stressed the need for more National Action Plans (NAPs) by states and civil society to fully implement its goals. Prentice underscored the **importance of women's roles in conflict resolution, particularly in Türkiye**, and advocated for an NAP there.

The event proceeded to cover the matter of advancing the women, peace, and security agenda, noting challenges such as **increased global polarisation, inadequate female representation in peace talks, and the need to include women with disabilities in peacebuilding efforts**. Dr.



Esra Elmas, Kerim Yıldız, Zeynep Karahan Uslu, Antonia Potter Prentice



Esra Çuhadar, an academic and UN mediation adviser, gave the second keynote on resistances to women's inclusion in peace processes. Three resistance types were identified: implicit, explicit, and coercive, rooted in power competition, cultural norms, and identity threats. Dr. Çuhadar proposed nonviolent strategies to overcome these. Participants discussed **empowering women in Turkish politics, emphasising the inclusion of men in gender issues and adopting holistic approaches that bridge diverse groups for sustainable gender equality**.

In sum, the Peace Table provided a valuable opportunity for participants to reflect on issues fundamental to ensuring that **women can play a meaningful role in conflict resolution efforts**. The event provided a collaborative, neutral, and inclusive platform for **diverse political and civil society actors** with a stake in the ongoing situation in Türkiye and the region to gain insights in **structuring a dialogue on conflict resolution and promoting peace**. Coupled with the insights provided by Dr. Çuhadar and Potter Prentice, participants were well equipped with the **tools and understanding** needed to engage with the peacebuilding process in an active and informed manner. The shared dialogue underscoring the event promoted **trust and cohesion** amongst participants, originating from differing communities and political ideologies. Including **international case studies and global perspectives** in the Peace Table, encouraged participants to engage in **comparative reflection** and prompted the consideration of such lessons in the context of the role of women in peacebuilding efforts in Türkiye.

Post Election Analysis:

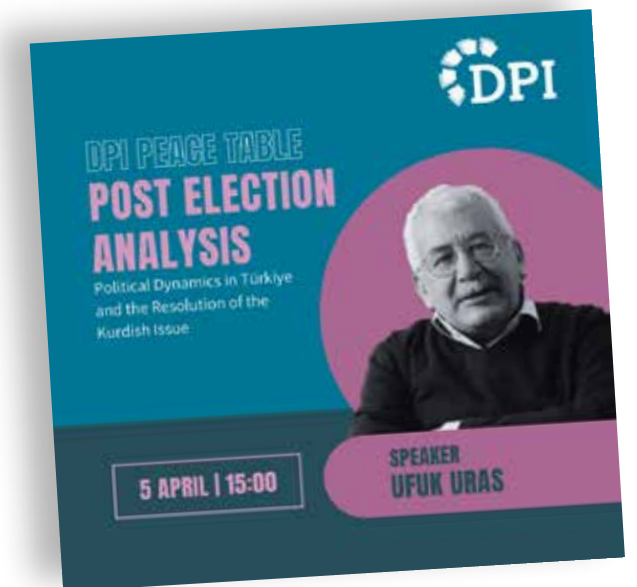
## Political Dynamics in Türkiye and the Resolution of the Kurdish Issue

Online - April 5, 2024

On April 5, 2024, DPI convened an online Peace Table titled **"Post Election Analysis: Political Dynamics in Türkiye and the Resolution of the Kurdish issue."** The event provided a forum for participants to analyse the **results of the local elections** which that took place in March, **examine the political environment of the country**, and **assess how the post-election landscape might impact prospects for conflict resolution**. The meeting brought together a diverse group of participants, including civil society, international experts and actors from AK Party, DEM, and DEVA Party. The meeting featured a keynote speech by Dr Mehmet Ufuk Uras, co-founder and member of the social liberal Greens and Left Party of the Future, and former leader of the now-defunct University Lecturers' Union.

Dr Uras provided an overview and analysis of the local elections. He emphasised the electorate's desire for **normalisation in international relations and domestic politics** and noted that voters were pleased with the results for a variety of reasons. The election outcomes ensured a balance of power between the government and the opposition, **legitimising the political process**, offering an exercise in democracy, and proving that democracy had the potential to solve seemingly intractable political problems. In this case, the election results seemed to have shifted the overarching feeling of pessimism that the current government had 'exceeded the limit of [their] occupancy.'

Analysing the choices taken during the election, Dr Uras took issue with **the claim that a suitable selection of candidates was the main reason for the opposition's progress**. He argued that privileging this factor was an oversimplification, as is favouring economic explanations, and instead argued for a more holistic and wide-frame approach that is sensitive to **multiple overlapping factors** such as previous election patterns, and how these contributed to this election's outcomes. Dr Uras also noted that the **drop in voter turnout** (from 85 percent in the Parliamentary and Presidential elections to 78 percent in the local elections) was due to AK Party voters, who previously were considered a secure bloc. **Some AK Party voters expressed their discontent with the government by voting for İmamoglu**,



**sending a clear message to the government**. Moreover, voters did not always vote along party lines but instead voted for figures they saw as more independent.

The session continued to discuss important themes in the current political climate and the post-election landscape. Two central strands that emerged were the debates over the dynamics of **nationalism** and **centralisation**, and how the form that these will take in the future might contribute towards democratisation and conflict resolution in Türkiye. Dr Uras discussed nationalism's contested role in politics, noting that recent elections had seen the İYİ party's "progressive nationalism" subsequently adopted by the CHP, and stating that the outcome of this contestation, between those in favour of a nationalism that **incorporates democratisation**, and those in favour of an **exclusivist nationalism** would impact Türkiye's prospects for constitutional reform, democratisation and conflict resolution. He added that these prospects could be further improved by empowering local governments' authority.

The Peace Table ended with an analysis of the postelection landscape, noting that the upcoming constitutional debate could provide an opportunity for **cultural reconciliation and democratisation**,





and that the political implications – and potential economic contractions - of the AK Party's **anti-inflationary policy** might damage the AK Party in the future. Dr Uras concluded by noting the importance of increasing and developing relations with the EU, and the agency of political actors to impact and decide the outcome of these processes.

A wide range of topics were subsequently discussed, including voter turnout, election fallout, and how polling data was viewed ahead of the election. One topic discussed was the difference between the local and general elections, and how voter behaviours and turnouts differ in each case. It was argued that **cultural cleavages** impact election results, and that, among many variables, small parties wielded incredibly **noteworthy influence** in deciding election results.

The event proceeded to examine different **demographics** in Türkiye, and their **voting preferences**. This conversation was caveated with the fact that in parliamentary elections voters are more likely to vote according to their **party identity**, whereas in local elections voters are more **independent**. It was noted that there are three main voting groups in Türkiye - **conservatives** supporting the government, **seculars** backing the CHP, and the **Kurdish** electorate. In this election, 4 million conservative voters withdrew support from the government, and 2 million Kurdish voters withheld support from DEM. They emphasized the importance of addressing the Kurdish voters' **political and sociological changes**, while noting a shift of secular voters from the İYİ Party to the CHP, leading to a significant CHP victory. It was also stressed that a voter's **cultural identity** – whilst weakened by recent events such as the economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic – was a stronger determining force than class identity in determining voter preferences.

Participants addressed the **potential new era of politics** emerging in Türkiye and its impact on the Kurdish region. It was acknowledged that in the past

five years, **Turkish politics has been dominated by elections and alliance politics**, with a lack of new policies and solutions to established problems, but Türkiye is also now at a unique and significant historical juncture with opportunities for change, it is not a reason for unguarded optimism. This juncture brings its own trends and challenges. The local election results showed that the opposition has expanded its base, which could be a step forward for democracy and the rule of law in Türkiye. This could **rebalance the relationship between local and central government**. However, Dr Uras pointed out the potential rise of the New Welfare Party in the Kurdish region due to **alliance realignments** post-election, especially given the possibility of **President Erdoğan**, a pragmatic politician, **changing course**. It was agreed that **Türkiye is entering an inflection point** and a period of re-politicisation. The outcome, both for the country as a whole and for democratisation and conflict resolution regarding the Kurdish issue, will depend on the alliances formed in the **post-election political realignments**.

This timely Peace Table provided both a detailed overview of the context surrounding the local 2024 elections and a platform for various actors to discuss different dynamics for the future, including how the elections present a **window of opportunity to address the Kurdish issue**. Participants from an **array of societal sectors and political parties** collaboratively analysed and discussed ongoing developments in the context democratisation and resolving the Kurdish issue within Türkiye, thereby **critically considering future pathways for engagement and policy in peace initiatives**. The event promoted **cross-party understanding and cohesion** through its diverse attendance and shared analysis and discussion of developments with **interconnected political implications**. Participants developed a nuanced comprehension of opportunities for furthering efforts promoting democratisation and peace amongst political shifts, as reflected by the noted trends in voter behaviour and political agency.

## Implication of the Constitutional Debates on the Political Sphere in Türkiye

Online - July 31, 2024

On July 31, 2024, DPI hosted an online Peace Table titled "**Implication of the Constitutional Debates on the Political Sphere in Türkiye**". This event brought together a panel of experts along with participants from various actors in Türkiye including civil society groups, political party representatives, academics, and legal professionals. The discussion aimed to analyse the **impact of constitutional debates on the political sphere in Türkiye and their potential contribution to conflict resolution efforts**. The discussions looked towards how constitutional debates can contribute to Türkiye's **democratisation process** and the establishment of social peace. The Peace Table aims to provide insights into managing these processes, analysing the impact of constitutional debates on social and political dynamics to draw crucial lessons for Türkiye's future in promoting social peace and democracy.

To commence, the **profound shifts** in Türkiye's political landscape following the March 31<sup>st</sup> elections were discussed. It was noted that these **elections** marked a pivotal moment, with **key changes in political power dynamics, societal relations, and the state apparatus**. Three emerging trends were identified: the **increasing influence of the electorate, the resurgence of political competition, and a gradual breakdown of identity-based voting patterns**. He emphasised that these trends place **new demands** on political parties, urging them to adapt as voters exert greater pressure on political actors.

Ali Bayramoğlu drew attention to the ongoing tension between Türkiye's **security-driven political agenda** was a key point of discussion, particularly in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt, and the **democratic and social pressures** currently emerging. He pointed out the opportunities within the constitutional debates to address longstanding issues, such as the Kurdish issue and strengthening local governance. Bayramoğlu concluded by stressing the need for **political renewal**, arguing that these debates present a crucial opportunity for transformative change in Türkiye.

Following this, Prof Dr Yokuş, a constitutional law expert, delivered a speech focusing on the **impact of constitutional amendments**, particularly in relation to Türkiye's **1982 Constitution**. She highlighted that constitutions are often a reflection of the **political climate** in which they are drafted, with the 1982 Constitution reinforcing an **authoritarian** model that restricts individual freedoms, glorifies state power, and marginalises minorities. Prof Dr Yokuş noted that while constitutional reforms have made progress



toward democratisation over the years, the 2017 amendments represented a **significant deviation** from Constitutionalism, increasing executive power at the expense of democratic institutions.

Earlier attempts, beginning in 2007, to draft a more **liberal constitution** were discussed.

It was noted that although these efforts were ultimately derailed by **partisan conflicts** and the **disbandment of the Constitutional Reconciliation Commission** in 2016, constitutional debates offer a critical opportunity to revisit key issues such as the **balance of powers, local democracy, and ethnic rights**. Prof Dr Yokuş underscored the importance of civil society's involvement in these discussions and argued that they should not be delayed, as they could lay the **groundwork for future democratic reforms**, regardless of the current political leadership.

Participants explored the political changes after the elections, the opposition's attitudes towards the constitutional debates, and how these debates could serve as an opportunity for conflict resolution. Firstly, participants engaged in a dialogue about the challenges facing both **political and constitutional reform** in Türkiye. Bayramoğlu critiqued the Republican People's Party (CHP) for its inability to offer a **compelling vision for change**, suggesting that the party has focused too much on criticising the government without presenting an **alternative agenda** for **societal transformation**. He noted two paths for the CHP: either promoting a **forward-thinking, change-oriented agenda** or leaning into **rising nationalism**, each with its



own set of risks. Concerns were raised regarding whether Türkiye's constitution-making process could move Türkiye towards a more participatory democracy, warning that the growing wave of nationalism might stymie democratic progress. Prof Dr Yokuş emphasised that constitutional citizenship must be defined without ethnic references, noting that an overemphasis on "Turkishness" would undermine efforts to create an inclusive and pluralistic society.

In addition, participants also expressed apprehension about the **rising influence of nationalism**, both within Türkiye and internationally. They warned that **engaging in nationalist rhetoric could deepen societal polarisation**. Prof Dr Yokuş pointed out that while nationalism could dominate the constitutional debates, **true reform** requires broader legal changes and international collaboration, particularly in addressing the Kurdish issue.

The event concluded with reflections on the potential for constitutional debates to be constructive in the current political climate. Some participants cautioned that too

much public involvement in these debates could exacerbate political polarisation, potentially hindering efforts to build consensus.

Overall, the Peace Table provided an **inclusive platform** for dialogue addressing key constitutional issues pertaining to the Kurdish issue and the broader Turkish political sphere. By initiating a dialogue addressing **potential barriers and opportunities in the evolving political situation**, stakeholders and actors grew prepared for **constructive and active engagement in future peace and democratisation processes**. Participants grew cognisant of **shared interests and challenges** in peace building and conflict resolution, promoting inter-party relations and understanding. The event's discussions, addressing central issues to the political recognition of the Kurds, built upon participant's understanding of the importance of constitutional change as a cornerstone of resolving the Kurdish issue. In fostering a stronger legal understanding of the next steps, the event provided participants with **forward-facing recommendations** to promote effective constitutional reform.

## Türkiye's New Peace Initiative: Possible Developments and Prospects

Istanbul - December 21, 2024

DPI hosted a Peace Table titled 'Türkiye's New Peace Initiative: Possible Developments and Prospects' in İstanbul on December 21, 2024. A group of academics, researchers and journalists participated in the event. The focus of the first discussion session was a roadmap of the **new peace initiative** prompted by Bahçeli. Assessments were made from different perspectives to understand the new initiative and to discover its motives.

The recent events in Türkiye and Syria were evaluated to understand the links between the **national and regional developments**. Participants discussed how the new peace initiative is entirely different from the previous peace process as it does not appear to be inclusive and democratic. In addition, a significant risk of **democratic backsliding** was established due to regional developments. It was discussed that if the Kurdish actors do not meet the expectations of the government, more severe militaristic policies could be embraced by the state.

The focus of the second discussion session was proposing **guiding steps** for Bahçeli's new initiative. Discussions detailed the possible ways of contributing to the new initiative to ensure that it is developed in a democratic, inclusive, and participatory way. It was commented that the **role of academia and the media are critical as they could be used to build societal peace**. Participants also **shared what they discussed and learned during the meeting with**

**their constituencies and organisations**. The **outcomes** of the roundtable were shared with other stakeholders to ensure broadened engagement.

Overall, the Peace Table provided a diverse range of actors and stakeholders with a neutral and inclusive platform for dialogue, facilitating the assessment of recent developments in Turkish politics and their potential for peace and the resolution of the Kurdish issue. Participants **grew informed and equipped for constructive engagement** in the next stages of the ongoing peace initiative through **analyzing the current initiative's roadmap and implications**. A shared awareness of potential **spoilers and risks** in the ongoing initiative was recognized and reinforced the importance of an **inclusive and holistic approach to peacebuilding** that accommodated Kurdish actors. In noting potential productive and sustainable pathways for peace, participants developed an understanding of the direction in which the peace initiative should be shaped across various societal and political sectors to lead to a successful process. The Peace Table promoted wider community engagement and the building of **mutual trust and accountability** through the acknowledgement of the peace process as an issue with **widespread implications for all political affiliations and alignments**. The event called for an **expansion of civic engagement** in line with the tenets discussed, and the inclusion of marginalised groups to build a sustainable peace.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION EXCHANGE



Oral Çalışlar, Kerim Yıldız, Elisabeth Lothe, Carlijn Lubbinge

DPI held a ICRE titled "Recent Developments in Türkiye: Implications for Conflict Resolution and Democratisation" in Geneva, Switzerland, from December 10 to 12, 2024. The event brought together participants, including Turkish civil society representatives, academics, and journalists, with discussions centring around peacebuilding, democratisation, the normalisation of Türkiye's political processes, and a focus on recent political developments and regional dynamics.

A key topic was MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli's handshake with DEM Party representatives, which marked a significant shift in the Kurdish issue and sparked cautious optimism. Participants also examined the impact of geopolitical changes, including U.S. policy shifts and Russia's retreat from the Middle East, and developments in Syria, on Türkiye's conflict resolution strategies. Constitutional reform was highlighted as critical for addressing Kurdish demands, despite challenges posed by opposition parties. The discussions highlighted the essential role of civil society in fostering dialogue and

building trust, particularly in the face of increasing polarisation.

**Recommendations** included fostering political collaboration between DEM and CHP, expanding DPI's role as trusted facilitator of dialogue, and organising thematic sessions on key issues such as local governance, mother tongue education, and constitutional reform. Participants expressed strong interest in further collaboration and continued support for DPI's initiatives.

Overall, the ICRE provided participants with a timely platform to discuss the recent developments in Türkiye and the region, and their implications for the resolution of the Kurdish issue and democratisation process. Participants cultivated an awareness of the interconnection of regional and domestic political developments to the peace process, thereby providing insight into how such affairs could promote or hinder the ongoing initiative. This **broadened participants' understanding of peacebuilding and conflict resolution**. The event facilitated dialogue between interlocutors with varying political affiliations that identified opportunities for advancing the ongoing peace initiative and, by extension, possible obstacles to its advancement. Actors were **primed and prepared to constructively engage** in the ongoing peace initiative, **driving the existing momentum forward** through **informed political action**, promoting partnerships between diverse actors in doing so.



## REVERSE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION EXCHANGE

*Dividends of Peace:*

### Role of Business in Conflict Resolution

Embassy of Finland, Ankara - June 13, 2024

On June 13, DPI held a Reverse ICRE titled “**Peace Dividends: Role of Business in Conflict Resolution**”. Hosted by H.E Ambassador Pirkko Hämäläinen at the Finnish Embassy in Ankara, the event addressed the interconnected relationship between conflict, peace, and the economy.

Beyond the incalculable human toll, conflict incurs **significant economic costs through the destruction of infrastructure, loss of productivity, and diversion of resources away from development**. In Türkiye, the economic rationale for peace is evident through its potential to attract foreign investment, stimulate tourism, and promote stable trade relationships with neighbouring countries. By avoiding conflict and maintaining political stability, Türkiye can leverage its strategic location, diverse economy, and rich cultural heritage to drive sustained economic growth and development.

The event began with opening remarks from H.E Ambassador Pirkko Hämäläinen, who emphasised the importance of dialogue in peacebuilding processes. She stated that **peace mediation is preventive diplomacy**, and Finland has always been a leading country for peace mediation concerning any conflict around the world.

Following the opening remarks, the first speaker, writer, and columnist Ali Bayramoğlu, gave an overview of the current political environment in Türkiye and the implications of the **economic situation** on politics. The second speaker, Fionna Fáil Senator, Party Spokesperson, and a Member of the Industrial and Commercial Panel, Gerry Horkan, discussed

the Northern Irish peace process and the role that business played in peacebuilding. He also detailed the economic benefits of the peace process which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year. Horkan underlined the importance of **continuous dialogue**.

**The head of Diyarbakir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mehmet Kaya** later spoke about the **implications of the conflict on business and the experience of peace in Türkiye from an economic perspective**. In his speech, Kaya gave concrete and compelling examples using statistics from the region during the peace process and made suggestions for improving chances for peace through business.

The event concluded with a discussion session where participants were invited to discuss the role of the business community in Türkiye as actors of peace. This event was part of DPI's larger series titled **Mapping Dividends of Peace in Türkiye and the Region**. Feedback from the event found that participants benefited from the event. There was an eagerness to continue the conversations as one participant highlighted “peace is a desire that cannot be postponed.” The comparative approach was another aspect of the event appreciated by participants. **One participant highlighted that it was “very effective and important.”**

In sum, the Reverse ICRE promoted the sharing of comparative experiences between participants, particularly in the context of **Northern Ireland's peace process**, to highlight the next steps that the business community can take to further peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts. Both data and foreign lived experiences demonstrated the **economic dividends of peace**, thereby enhancing stakeholder and actor understanding of the matter. The event's discussions crucially highlighted the **interconnection** between political and economic sectors, providing further incentive for the resolution of the Kurdish issue and encouraging the engagement of business and economy-orientated actors. Overall, participants recognised peace as a **unifying interest** of a broad array of stakeholders who attended the reverse ICRE.



Ambassador  
Pirkko Hämäläinen

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring and Evaluation Meeting

March 20, 2024 - London

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024, DPI held a Monitoring and Evaluation Meeting in its London office with remote access. DPI reviewed the completed and planned activities for the coming months, focusing on milestones, feedback, and actions.

Feedback highlighted DPI's effective promotion great levels of gender equality across its events. DPI was also mentioned in Aygün Atilla's piece on Bianet concerning the stereotypical and superficial portrayal of women in media and culture. The meeting focused on the outlook for funding surrounding DPI and how to measure its outcomes for future projects. Attendants reviewed DPI's social media engagement and best practices for engagement with DPI's target audience to publicise its events and peace.

### Monitoring and Evaluation Meeting

July 3, 2024 - London

On 3 July 2024, DPI held a Monitoring and Evaluation at its London office, with options for remote access. The meeting's agenda involved a thorough review of past activities and discussed DPI's upcoming events. The focus was primarily on assessing milestones through analysing feedback and determining actionable steps based on these insights. During the review of activities, DPI highlighted several key achievements and areas for improvement.

A notable accomplishment was the promotion of gender equality across various events organised by DPI. The feedback gathered from these events indicated a positive reception and acknowledged the efforts made to ensure inclusive participation. Looking ahead, the meeting covered strategic discussions about future collaborations and partnerships. These discussions aimed to identify potential stakeholders and interlocutors who could enhance DPI's reach and effectiveness. The meeting emphasised the importance of robust outcome measurement for future projects.

DPI aims to implement effective Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks that not only track the progress of its initiatives but also measure their impact. By refining these measurement tools, DPI hopes to provide unambiguous evidence of success, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability to stakeholders and donors. Through reviewing DPI's activities, the meeting concluded that DPI remains on track with its targets and continues to achieve meaningful outcomes in its future endeavours.





## BRIEFING AND MENTORING

DPI carried out its Briefing and Mentoring efforts in London, Europe, Türkiye, and online throughout 2024. These efforts focused on creating an atmosphere that would support the development of a strong and thorough peace process and allowed DPI to share valuable information and have discussions on divisive issues related to the peace process.

2024 began with DPI travelling to Türkiye ahead of the local elections to meet with a range of influential individuals, including policymakers, high-ranking politicians, MPs from several political parties, and representatives of civil society from the media, women, youth groups, and arts and culture. The visit sought to assess the prospect for dialogue on the Kurdish issue post-election and to broaden support for a peaceful solution. The meetings were informative and promoted better understanding of the political environment in Türkiye.

A highlight of DPI's work during this period was a meeting with Istanbul Mayor, Ekrem İmamoğlu, with DPI being joined by its Council of Member experts. The focus of the Briefing and Mentoring work in the region entailed creating an environment

that supported the development of a robust and all-encompassing peace process. DPI remained dedicated to inclusivity by maintaining dialogue between these diverse actors; in facilitating conversation between these groups and ensuring diversity and inclusivity as essential to the peace process.

DPI's briefing and mentoring efforts continued to make noteworthy progress as the year progressed and Türkiye's political landscape continued to evolve following the local elections in March, which triggered intense debates and shifting dynamics within the main political parties. The post-election period saw the governing AK Party and opposition CHP enter a historic normalisation process, marked by a significant meeting between their leaders after years of strained relations. Against this backdrop, DPI focused on fostering dialogue with political figures, policymakers, and civil society representatives, facilitating discussions on critical issues such as justice, migration, and human rights—key concerns amid growing public dissatisfaction with the government. DPI closely monitored the role of other political parties, such as the DEM Party, to ensure diverse voices were included in these discussions.



From left to right: Co-Mayor of Diyarbakır Serra Bucak, Kerim Yıldız, Vegard Ellefsen, Co-Mayor of Diyarbakır Doğan Hatun



From left to right: Zeynep Ardiç, Kerim Yıldız, İstanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, Aleka Kessler, Vegard Ellefsen



DPI's activities focused on providing targeted briefings and facilitating one-on-one mentoring sessions with key stakeholders, including political figures, policymakers, and civil society representatives. Representatives of DPI met with figures from both the government and the opposition party, including Members of Parliament, mayors, and local political party representatives. Specifically, the pair had discussions with representatives from DEM, CHP, AK PARTY, and HÜDA-PAR, including senior policymakers and the mayors of Diyarbakır and Mardin. These meetings were part of DPI's ongoing efforts to engage key political actors, evaluate the situation and promote dialogue across all levels of government and opposition.



From left to right: Kerim Yıldız, Ömer Serdar, Zeynep Ardiç, Vegard Ellefsen, Aleka Kessler

From left to right: Esra Elmas, Ambassador John McCullagh, Kerim Yıldız, Ronan Cuniffe



*As Türkiye navigates a pivotal time in 2025, DPI remains committed to fostering an inclusive and comprehensive peace process, building on the past year's briefing and mentoring efforts. The Briefing and Mentoring activities undertaken in 2024 played a vital role in contributing to DPI's positive impact on the peace initiative and conflict resolution process in Türkiye. By identifying constructive and high-priority discussion topics and subsequently staging opportunities for high-level dialogue, DPI provided actors with practical tools, ideas, and skills needed to advance the peace and democratisation initiatives. These discussions maintained and promoted communications between politicians, diplomats, and stakeholders to support conflict resolution.*



## INTERACTIVE SEMINARS

### Youth Perception of Peace in Türkiye Today

Ankara - April 2-3, 2024



On April 3, 2024, DPI held an Interactive Seminar at Bilkent University in Türkiye titled “**Youth Perception of Peace in Türkiye Today**”, bringing together a diverse group of participants drawn from the student body to discuss the country’s ongoing peace process and the challenges it faces in addressing internal conflicts and the refugee crisis. The seminar provided a platform for open dialogue and exchange of ideas, with participants from various political backgrounds and ideologies coming together to explore these complex issues.

The discussion covered a wide range of topics related to the peace process, including the **evolving perceptions of peace** among Türkiye’s younger generation, the challenges posed by the **Syrian refugee crisis**, and the **role of media** in shaping public opinion. Participants engaged in thought-provoking conversations about what peace means to them and explored the importance of addressing **structural inequalities** and promoting **social justice** as essential components of lasting peace.

Throughout the seminar, the need for a **comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to the peace process** was emphasised. Participants recognised that achieving sustainable peace requires not only addressing the immediate challenges of armed conflict but also

tackling the root causes of tension and inequality. The discussion then moved to the valuable lessons Türkiye can share with the international community based on its own experiences in peace processes, while acknowledging the unique challenges it faces domestically.

One of the key points highlighted during the discussion was the importance of bringing together individuals from different political backgrounds and ideologies; Esra emphasised that DPI made a **conscious effort to create a space where people who might not otherwise interact could come together and discuss critical issues**. This approach allowed participants to **recognise the humanity** in one another and **break down stereotypes and prejudices**. The discussion also touched upon the evolving perceptions of peace among the younger generation in Türkiye. Participants shared their views on what peace meant to them, with some focusing on the **absence of armed conflict**, particularly in relation to the Kurdish issue, while others emphasised the importance of **social justice, equal representation, and the ability to express one’s identity freely**.

The refugee crisis emerged as a significant topic during the discussion. Participants acknowledged the challenges posed by the large influx of Syrian refugees. They highlighted the need for a **well-planned approach** that considers the long-term presence of refugees and addresses issues such as **education, employment, and social cohesion**.

The discussion also shed light on the role of media in shaping public opinion and the prevalence of **negative stereotypes and fear-mongering narratives** surrounding refugees. Participants recognised the importance of promoting a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the refugee crisis and the need for a more **compassionate and inclusive approach**.

### The Future of Conflict Resolution in Türkiye

Istanbul - October 19, 2024

On 19 October 2024, DPI held an Interactive Seminar in İstanbul titled “**The Road Ahead: The Future of Conflict Resolution in Türkiye**”. The seminar served as a small scale and in-depth brainstorming discussion to assess recent political developments in Türkiye and their potential impact on conflict resolution efforts. The discussion explored the **challenges and opportunities these changes present, focusing on how stakeholders can navigate this evolving landscape to foster peace and stability**. Participants collaborated to identify actionable strategies and solutions for addressing the complexities of conflict in the current context. The discussion finalised by focusing on tangible suggestions for DPI’s future strategy.

The Interactive Seminar provided participants with the opportunity to analyse recent developments in the Turkish political landscape and accordingly **identify potential steps to drive the current peace initiative forward and obstacles to overcome**. By providing participants with a platform to discuss the needed measures to promote peacebuilding and

Participants additionally explored the **concept of peace beyond the absence of violence**, emphasising the importance of addressing structural inequalities and promoting **social justice**. They acknowledged that true peace requires a **comprehensive approach** that considers the **diverse needs and aspirations of different communities**. Participants shared their views on what should be done differently in a potential new peace process including the need for **transparency, inclusivity, and a more bottom-up approach that engages all segments of society**.

One participant highlighted the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict and the need for a fundamental change in the state’s approach towards the Kurdish issue. They argued that the state’s **colonial perspective** and unwillingness to address issues raised by Kurdish people during the previous peace process led to its failure. They suggested that resolving the Kurdish issue would require a revolution and a **transformation of the state structure**. Another participant pointed out the need for the peace process to be **depoliticised** and treated as a **national policy** rather than being tied to a particular government or political party. They emphasised that the peace process should become a societal issue, **transcending political affiliations**.



From left to right: Zeynep Ardiç, Oral Çalışlar, Kerim Yıldız, Ufuk Uras, Ahmet Mümtaz Taylan, Sevtap Yokuş, Kezban Hatemi, Vahap Coşkun, Ali Bayramoğlu, Erol Katırcıoğlu, Katya Paus

democratisation in Türkiye, participants identified **common priorities** and requirements to take ongoing measures to the next level by highlighting **tangible and achievable steps**. In doing so, participants partook in an inclusive and collaborative dialogue that promotes innovative approaches to peacebuilding. The event’s collaborate focus encouraged knowledge sharing and collaboration across an array of actors with varying political affiliations.

The discussion touched upon the terminology used to describe the peace process. Participants debated whether the term “**peace process**” itself had become contentious and whether alternative terms such as “**reconciliation**” might be more appropriate moving forward. Throughout the discussion, participants grappled with the question of how to move forward and break the cycle of conflict that has persisted across generations in Türkiye. They acknowledged the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses the **root causes** of the conflict, promotes **social justice**, and **engages all segments of society** in the pursuit of lasting peace.

The discussion concluded with a recognition of the importance of engaging in these conversations and the transformative potential of working towards peace, both for individuals and for society as a whole. The seminar underscored the critical role that civil society organizations like DPI play in facilitating understanding and **bridging divides within society**. By bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and ideologies, **civil society organizations can contribute to breaking down stereotypes, fostering empathy, and building the foundations for a more cohesive and peaceful society**.



## The Role of Arts and Culture in Steps Towards Peace

Consulate General of Switzerland, Istanbul - September 28, 2024



On September 28, 2024, DPI held an Interactive Seminar titled **“The Role of Arts and Culture in Steps Towards Peace”**, hosted by the **Consulate General of Switzerland in Istanbul**. The event brought together a group of artists including authors, painters, dancers, and academics from the field, with the objective of fostering an in-depth conversation about the role arts and culture can play in encouraging and supporting conflict resolution and peace processes.

Art and cultural programmes can promote peace in all stages of the conflict cycle, from prevention to post-conflict recovery. Studies have shown that cultural projects can encourage community cohesion, challenge perceptions of identity, and provide a platform for dialogue, engaging a broader audience. Given the polarisation and current situation in Türkiye, arts and culture hold immense potential to soften rigid stances and encourage more open mindsets, **paving the way for imagining viable solutions and help broadening basis.**

During the interactive seminar, **our experts discussed the role that artists can play in conflict resolution in**

**Türkiye**. Participants discussed that arts and culture are sometimes instrumentalised by some actors to polarise the public. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the role that arts and culture play truly contributes to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The seminar also addressed that there are certain handicaps for arts and culture in the context of conflict resolution and peace. Arts and culture require a certain level of freedom and security to flourish. Thus, the lack of legal and physical safety negatively impacts artistic and cultural expression. Therefore, it is critical to provide a safe and independent platform for artists, to allow them to produce work that will contribute to peace.

In addition, financial and professional constraints pose challenges for artists from the region, who often lack the resources necessary to create art that could contribute to peace. Local artists need support, and it is important to avoid a top-down approach in the world of arts and culture. Cross-cultural meetings and exchanges between local and Western could further contribute to peace efforts.

Participants **discussed** the impact of official discourse on arts and culture. To effect change, mainstream artists also need to change. Negative discourses are prevalent in arts and culture circles, and this requires openness to changing opinions and perspectives. It was suggested that DPI should invite such artists to explain the importance of conflict resolution and peace, which could also have a wider societal impact. Participants discussed the importance of Türkiye and the Kurdish conflict and their role to help broaden the basis for the resolution of the Kurdish issue and democratisation in Türkiye. **Without addressing historical wrongs, participants agreed that achieving peace seems unlikely.**



## The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution

Embassy of Finland, Ankara - October 21, 2024

On 21 October 2024, DPI held an interactive seminar hosted by the Finnish Embassy in Ankara, titled **“The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution”**, with an emphasis on the role of civil society in the resolution of the Kurdish issues. The event focused on the role of civil society in conflict resolution, with a particular emphasis on the Kurdish issue in Türkiye. Finnish Ambassador H.E Pirkko Hämäläinen opened the meeting by highlighting the importance of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in amplifying marginalised voices and fostering social cohesion, drawing on **civil society and Finland’s cooperation with NGOs to protect the cultural and land rights of the Sami people** as a case study.

DPI’s Senior Regional Analyst Zeynep Ardiç discussed the **complexities of peacebuilding** in Türkiye, emphasising the need for sustained dialogue, even beyond active resolution processes. Participants explored challenges such as **polarisation, limited public trust, and state pressure on CSOs**, while underscoring the potential for civil society to rebuild trust and promote peace. Discussions concluded with a call for **structural reforms**, focussing on building trust, activism-driven approaches, and inspiration from women and environmental movements to address societal divides. DPI announced plans for future cross-sectoral discussions to expand social engagement and foster cohesion. Ambassador Hämäläinen encouraged perseverance in peacebuilding, offering support for continued dialogue initiatives.

Overall, this Interactive Seminar offered a platform for the discussion of a crucial component of successful peacebuilding efforts – the inclusion of civil society. Participants developed an understanding of the **complexities of peacebuilding** in Türkiye and the



Ambassador Pirkko Hämäläinen and Osman İşçi

importance of including civil society in such measures to accordingly foster a **sustainable peace**. The attending actors and stakeholders consequently were prepared for their roles in the developing peace initiative on practical level, unlocking insights pertaining to **building confidence and trust across differing political alignments through involving civil society**. Inclusive dialogue accommodating civil society actors and organisations was pinpointed as central to a successful and sustainable resolution of the Kurdish issue, alongside more generally in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. A critical understanding of peacebuilding and the necessary aspects was cultivated, specifically entailing the **inclusion of civil society, minorities, and structural reforms.** By drawing upon Finland’s experiences with CSOs and the Sami people, **international peacebuilding experiences** informed and provided additional insight and guidance on the situation in Türkiye. More generally, the discussion of the Finnish case study indicated the relevance of international peacebuilding experiences to the resolution of the Kurdish issue, highlighting utility of foreign experiences and insights to peacebuilding efforts in Türkiye.





# ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

*Navigating the Political Landscape:*

## An Analysis of the Upcoming Elections and their Impact on Conflict Resolution in Türkiye

Online - January 24, 2024

On January 24, 2024, DPI convened an Assessment Meeting titled “Navigating the Political Landscape: An Analysis of the Upcoming Elections and their Impact on Conflict Resolution in Türkiye”.

Moderated by DPI’s Senior Regional Strategy Analyst, Dr Esra Elmas, the event welcomed political scientist Kemal Can as keynote speaker and brought together a wide array of participants including representatives from political parties and civil society, the law, business, and international conflict resolution experts. The panel provided a forum for analysing the multifaceted political landscape of Türkiye and aimed to observe these dynamics at play during the upcoming local elections, assessing the broader implications for the nation’s political stability and conflict resolution efforts.

The discussion underscored the **pervasive and interrelated challenges of Türkiye’s entrenched electoral cycle, alliance politics, and the outsized role of nationalism**, which, together, contribute to **narrowing the political discourse and limiting the capacity for addressing fundamental societal issues**. Can’s analysis highlighted the strategic engineering and exclusionary tactics employed by the ruling establishment, characterised by the **“controlled conflict model.”** The model deliberately **restricts the political space**, systematically marginalising certain opposition groups to ensure the continuity of the government’s dominance while stifling democratic engagement and debate.

The event focused on the ideological positions taken by political parties in Türkiye, including the İYİ Party’s attempt to modulate between **centrism** and **nationalism**, and the Victory (Zafer) Party’s extreme nationalist stance. The discussions revealed **extremism’s potential to infiltrate**



**diverse social domains** and illustrated the need for a unified strategy to counter nationalism’s appeal and legitimacy in Türkiye. The dialogue was illuminated by local and global examples of the mechanisms through which societies can be reinvigorated to embrace **democratisation**, especially in times when **economic growth no longer directly translates into democratic advancement**. The plight and prospects of opposition parties such as the İYİ and the DEM Party received considerable attention. Participants diagnosed the İYİ Party’s identity crisis as exacerbated by alliance politics, noting implications of Meral Akşener’s decision to maintain the party’s independence ahead of the 2024 elections. The Kurdish movement was also discussed, focusing on the fallout from the cessation of the peace process and the subsequent alliances formed, highlighting the



DPI Staff with Amy Austin Holmes

## The Current Situation in Northern Syria: Implications for the Region

London - March 6, 2024

On 6 March 2024, DPI hosted an in-person assessment in London titled “The Current Situation in Northern Syria: Implications for the Region”. The event’s keynote speaker was Dr. Amy Austin Holmes who discussed her recent book **Statelet of Survivors: The Making of a Semi-Autonomous Region in Northeast Syria**. In her book, Dr. Holmes discusses and analyses the creation and condition of the

**Autonomous Administration zone** in North-eastern Syria which emerged out of the Syrian Civil War, and the territory previously controlled by the Islamic State. Following Dr. Holmes’ presentation, there was a Q&A and discussion session, focusing on the possible implications of the situation in the region on the Kurdish issue and conflict resolution efforts in Türkiye.

balance required between **negotiation and political positioning**.

Amid these discussions, a consensus emerged on the **need to broaden political dialogue within Türkiye** beyond the incentives of electoral pressures and alliance dynamics. Despite overwhelming scepticism about current political actors’ ability to leverage the forthcoming local elections for **democratic revitalisation**, participants acknowledged a theoretical **window of opportunity for substantial change**. DPI participants, in addition to analysing the prevailing situation in Turkish politics, also highlighted potential pathways towards a more inclusive, democratic, and solution-focused political environment. Especially stressed was the urgent

need for Türkiye’s political community to **engage in authentic dialogue and collaboration, addressing the underlying social and political challenges with a renewed emphasis on democracy and conflict resolution**.

The insights gleaned from this panel offer invaluable perspectives on the **interplay between electoral processes, nationalism, and the pursuit of democratic depth amidst ongoing and emerging challenges**. This comprehensive analysis served as a cornerstone for stakeholders aiming to navigate and influence Türkiye’s political trajectory towards greater inclusivity, stability, and peace.



# ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH REPORTS IN 2024

*DPI's panel of experts write leading briefings and assessments of the conflict resolution process in Türkiye and the wider region. Below is a selection of Assessments and Research reports that DPI published in 2024, all of which were shared widely with relevant policy makers in the EU and Türkiye, relevant institutions, funders, government donors and DPI activity participants. Please note that these assessments do not necessarily reflect DPI's official position and opinions nor those of DPI's funders.*

DPI Peace Table

***“Women in Peacemaking:  
UNSC Resolution 1325 & Women’s Meaningful  
Participation in Conflict Resolution.”***

13 March 2024

<https://www.democraticprogress.org/publications/reports/dpi-peace-table-women-in-peacemaking-uns-res-1325-womens-meaningful-participation-in-conflict-resolution-13-march-2024/>

DPI Reverse ICRE

***“Dividends of Peace:  
The Role of Business in Peacebuilding”***

13 June 2024

<https://www.democraticprogress.org/publications/reports/dpi-interactive-seminar-dividends-of-peace-dpi-interactive-seminar-the-role-of-business-in-peacebuilding-13-june-2024/>

DPI Interactive Seminar

***“The Role of Civil Society in Countering  
Polarisation”***

21 October 2024

<https://www.democraticprogress.org/publications/reports/dpi-interactive-seminar-the-role-of-civil-society-in-countering-polarisation-21-october-2024/>





# OUR STAFF

## DPI's STAFF

### Kerim Yildiz

Chief Executive Officer

Kerim is an expert in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, international human rights law, and minority rights, having worked on numerous projects in these areas over his career. Kerim has received several awards, including from the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights for his services to protect human rights and promote the rule of law in 1996 and the Sigrid Rausing Trust's Human Rights award for Leadership in Indigenous and Minority Rights in 2005. Kerim is also a recipient of the 2011 Gruber Prize for Justice. He has extensive experience in human rights and actively works to raise awareness of human rights violations worldwide, assisting with many cases to the European Court of Human Rights, conducting training seminars in Europe and the Middle East, and regularly contributing to seminars and conferences.

### Katya Paus

Senior Programmes Officer

Katya joined DPI in January 2020 as Programme Officer. She holds a BA in Social Sciences (main areas of focus Anthropology and Sociology) from University College Utrecht and an MA in Conflict Resolution in Divided Societies from King's College London. Her academic work mainly focused on the militarisation of education in Türkiye and the relationship between public space and collective memory in the Middle East. Katya had previously interned at Agos Newspaper and the Truth, Justice, and Memory Center in Istanbul. She is fluent in Turkish, English, and Dutch.

### Ali Bayramoğlu

Senior Advisor Türkiye Programme

Ali Bayramoğlu is a writer and political commentator. Since 1994, he has contributed as a columnist for a variety of newspapers. He is currently a columnist for the Daily Karar. He is a member of the Wise Persons Committee in Türkiye, established during the peace process between 2013 and 2015.

## Prof. Dr. Sevtap Yokuş

Senior Advisor Türkiye Programme

Professor Dr Sevtap Yokuş is a Law Faculty Member at İstanbul Altınbas University in the Department of Constitutional Law. She holds a PhD in Public Law from the Faculty of Law, Istanbul University, awarded in 1995 for her thesis which assessed the state of emergency regime in Türkiye with reference to the European Convention on Human Rights. She is a widely published expert in the areas of Constitutional Law and Human Rights and has multiple years' experience of working as a university lecturer at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level. She also has experience of working as a lawyer in the European Court of Human Rights.

## Dieu Nguyen

Finance Manager

Dieu Nguyen has worked in the UK's not-for-profit sector, managing finance and funding Development for the past ten years. Prior to that, she worked in the banking sector in Vietnam and Australia. In her current role as Finance Manager at DPI, Dieu works closely with the Board of Directors to recommend and implement improvements to financial policies and procedures, IT systems and facilities. Dieu has extensive experience in managing multiple complex international grants funded by the European Commission, the United Nations, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Government of Ireland, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs etc.

## Jannat Aktar Kalam

Funding and Development Officer

Jannat Aktar Kalam holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Law (PGDL) from the University of Law and a BA (Honours) in International Relations from King's College London. She is experienced in research, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement, cultivated through roles across non-profits and academic institutions. Her academic interests have focused on Mediterranean politics and migration as well as peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Her passion for fostering cross-border collaboration and driving impactful change aligns closely with DPI's mission.

## Saniye Karakas

Head of Legal Programme

Saniye has been working with DPI since 2011. She is a graduate of the Dicle University Law Faculty in Türkiye. Between 2000 and 2006, she practised as a lawyer in the areas of criminal and human rights law in Diyarbakir, Türkiye. During this time, she also participated in numerous voluntary activities of the Diyarbakir Bar Association, the Contemporary Lawyers Association and the Human Rights Association's Diyarbakir branch. After completing an LLM in Human Rights at Birkbeck College, University of London in 2007, Saniye worked at the Kurdish Human Rights Project as a Legal Associate until 2011. She has been a researcher at the International State Crime Initiative, where she was involved in a project titled 'Civil Society Resistance to State Violence and Corruption-Comparative Study'. She has also contributed to failibelli.org, a website that monitors cases opened against perpetrators of crimes committed by state security officers in Türkiye.

## Akinola Williams

Operations Manager

Akinola Williams joined DPI in March 2019 as the Operations Manager with 20 years of law, training, recruitment, and management experience. He has worked in private legal practice, as well as at the Nigerian Ministry of Justice and RG World (also trading as Rail Gourmet UK Ltd).



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# Board Members

## Nicholas Stewart KC

Chair

Nicholas Stewart, KC, is a barrister and Deputy High Court Judge (Chancery and King's Bench Divisions) in the United Kingdom. He is the former Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and the former President of the Union Internationale des Avocats. He has appeared at all court levels in England and Wales, before the Privy Council on appeals from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Bahamas, and in the High Court of the Republic of Singapore and the European Court of Human Rights. Stewart has also been the chair of the Dialogue Advisory Group since its founding in 2008.

## Owen Bowcott

Owen Bowcott is a journalist and was the Guardian's legal affairs and Ireland correspondent. He has previously been a general news reporter, foreign news editor and was the Ireland correspondent during The Troubles. He studied history at Birmingham University and journalism at Cardiff University. He started off working for the Birmingham Post and later joined the BBC, working as a researcher and producer for BBC News and the current affairs programme Panorama. He has also been a reporter for The Daily Telegraph. He is the co-author of a book, *Beating the System*, about the early years of computer hacking and the criminalisation of online activity.

## Priscilla Hayner

Priscilla Hayner is co-founder of the International Center for Transitional Justice and is currently on the UN Department of Political Affairs Standby Team of Mediation Experts. She is a global expert on truth commissions and transitional justice initiatives and has authored several books on these topics, including *Unspeakable Truths*, which analyses truth commissions globally. Hayner has recently engaged in the recent Colombia talks as transitional justice advisor to Norway, and in the 2008 Kenya negotiations as human rights advisor to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the United Nations-African Union mediation team. Hayner has also worked significantly in the implementation stages following a peace agreement or transition, including Sierra Leone in 1999 and South Sudan in 2015.

## Arild Humlen

Arild Humlen is a lawyer and Director of the Norwegian Bar Association's Legal Committee. He is widely published within many jurisdictions, with an emphasis on international civil law and human rights, and he has lectured at the law faculty of several universities in Norway. Humlen is the recipient of the Honor Prize of the Bar Association of Oslo for his work on the rule of law and in 2015 he was awarded the Honor Prize from the international organisation Save the Children for his efforts to strengthen the legal rights of children. He has also been presented with the Honor Prize from the Student Foundation at the University of Oslo, Legal Academy, for his work within the field of protection of Human Rights standards. He is also a former leader of the disciplinary Board in the Oslo branch of the National Bar Association and the former chair of the National Bar Association Legal Committee.

## Antonia Potter Prentice

Antonia Potter Prentice is currently the Director of Alliance 2015 – a global network of humanitarian and development organisations. Prentice has wide-ranging experience on a range of humanitarian, development, peace-making and peacebuilding issues through her previous positions, including interim Senior Gender Adviser to the Joint Peace Fund for Myanmar and providing technical advice to the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General to the Yemen peace process. Prentice has also been involved in various international organisations including UN Women, Dialogue Advisory Group, and Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. Prentice co-founded the Athena Consortium as part of which she acts as Senior Manager on Mediation Support, Gender, and Inclusion for the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) and as Senior Adviser to the European Institute for Peace (EIP).

# Council of Experts

## Bertie Ahern

Bertie Ahern is the former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland, a position to which he was elected following numerous Ministerial appointments as well as that of Deputy Prime Minister. A defining moment of Mr Ahern's three terms in office as Taoiseach was the successful negotiation of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998. Mr Ahern held the Presidency of the European Council in 2004, presiding over the historic enlargement of the EU to 27 member states. Since leaving Government in 2008 Mr Ahern has dedicated his time to conflict resolution and is actively involved with many groups around the world. Current roles include Co-Chair of The InterAction Council; Member of the Clinton Global Initiative; Member of the International Group dealing with the conflict in the Basque Country; Honorary Adjunct Professor of Mediation and Conflict Intervention in NUI Maynooth; Member of the Kennedy Institute of NUI Maynooth; Member of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin; Member of the Varkey Gems Foundation Advisory Board; Member of Crisis Management Initiative; Member of the World Economic Forum Agenda Council on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution; Member of the IMAN Foundation; Advisor to the Legislative Leadership Institute Academy of Foreign Affairs; Senior Advisor to the International Advisory Council to the Harvard International Negotiation Programme; and Director of Co-operation Ireland.

## Dermot Ahern

Dermot Ahern is a former Irish Member of Parliament and Government Minister and was a key figure for more than 20 years in the Irish peace process, including in negotiations for the Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement. He also has extensive experience at the EU Council level, including as a key negotiator and signatory to the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties. In 2005, he was appointed by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to be a Special Envoy on the issue of UN Reform.

## Professor Dr. Mehmet Asutay

Professor Dr. Mehmet Asutay is a Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Political Economy & Finance at the Durham University Business School, UK. He conducts research, teaches, and supervises research on Islamic political economy and finance, Middle Eastern economic development and finance, and the political economy of the Middle

East, including Turkish and Kurdish political economies. He is the Director of the Durham Centre for Islamic Economics and Finance and the Managing Editor of the Review of Islamic Economics, as well as Associate Editor of the American Journal of Islamic Social Science. He is the Honorary Treasurer of the BRISMES (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies); and of the IAIE (International Association for Islamic Economics).

## Ali Bayramoğlu

Ali Bayramoğlu is a writer and political commentator. Since 1994, he has contributed as a columnist for a variety of newspapers. He is currently a columnist for the daily Karar. He is a member of the Wise Persons Committee in Türkiye, established during the peace process between 2013-2015.

## Professor Christine Bell

Professor Christine Bell is a legal expert based in Edinburgh, Scotland. She is a Professor of Constitutional Law and Assistant Principal (Global Justice) at the University of Edinburgh, Co-director of the Global Justice Academy, and a member of the British Academy. She was chairperson of the Belfast-based Human Rights organization, the Committee on the Administration of Justice from 1995-7, and a founder member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission established under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. In 1999 she was a member of the European Commission's Committee of Experts on Fundamental Rights. She is an expert on transitional justice, peace negotiations, constitutional law, and human rights law. She regularly conducts training on these topics for diplomats, mediators, and lawyers has been involved as a legal advisor in several peace negotiations and acted as an expert in transitional justice for the UN Secretary-General, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UNIFEM.

## Cengiz Çandar

Cengiz Çandar is currently a columnist for Al-Monitor, a widely respected online magazine that provides analysis on Türkiye and the Middle East. He is an expert on the Middle East and a former war correspondent. He served as special adviser to former Turkish president Turgut Ozal. Cengiz Çandar is a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Stockholm University Institute for Turkish Studies (SUTS).



## Oral Çalışlar

Oral Çalışlar completed his studies at the Ankara University Faculty of Political Sciences. He was the President of the Club of Socialist Thought at the university, as well as Secretary-General of the Ankara University Student Union. He wrote for the Türk Solu journal which was launched in 1967 and for the Aydınlık journal which was launched in 1968. He was a member of the editorial board of Aydınlık journal. He was arrested after the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1971 military coup and remained imprisoned for three years until the Amnesty law was adopted in 1974. He was Editor in Chief for the Aydınlık daily newspaper launched in 1978. He was arrested again after the 12th of September 1980 military coup and released in August 1988 after four years in prison. Then, he lived in Hamburg between 1990 and 1992 upon the invitation of the Senate of Hamburg and worked for Cumhuriyet daily between 1992 and 2008. He broadcasted television programmes on different channels, including TRT, 24TV, 360, and SKYTÜRK before being transferred from Cumhuriyet daily to Radikal daily in 2008. Between 2004-2007, he was in the board of the Turkish Journalists Association. He has a permanent-press card. He became Editor in Chief for Taraf daily in 2013 and was part of the Wise People Committee in the same year. Later, he had to leave Taraf daily alongside Halil Berktaş, Alper Görmüş, Vahap Coşkun, Erol Katırcıoğlu, Mithat Sancar, and Yıldırım Oğur, among others, after the intervention of the Gülen Congregation. He returned to Radikal daily and started writing for Posta daily after 2016 when Radikal was discontinued. He continued to work as a commentator on TV news channels. Overall, he has 20 published books, including The Leaders' Prison, Hz. Ali, Mamak Prison from the 12th of March to 12th of September, The Kurdish issue with Öcalan and Burkan, My 68 Memoirs, The Alevis, When Deniz and Friends Were Executed, My Childhood in Tarsus, The History of Gulenism. These were the recipient of many journalism and research awards. Married (1976) to the author and journalist İpek Çalışlar, he is also the father of the author Reşat Çalışlar.

## Andy Carl

Andy Carl is an independent expert on conflict resolution and public participation in peace processes. He believes that building peace is not an act of charity but an act of justice. He co-founded and was Executive Director of Conciliation Resources. Previously, he was the first Programme Director with International Alert. He is currently an Honorary Fellow of Practice at the School of Law, University of Edinburgh. He serves as an adviser to many peacebuilding initiatives including the Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative at the Graduate Institute in Geneva, the Legal Tools for Peace-Making Project in Cambridge, and the Oxford Research Group in London.

## Dr. Vahap Coşkun


Dr. Vahap Coşkun is a Professor of Law at the University of Dicle in Diyarbakır where he also completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in law. Coşkun received his PhD from Ankara University Faculty of Law. He has written for Serbestiyet and Kurdistan 24 online newspapers. He has published books on human rights, constitutional law, political theory, and social peace. Coşkun was a member of the Wise Persons Committee in Türkiye in the team that was responsible for the Central Anatolian Region.

## Dr. Esra Çuhadar

Dr. Esra Çuhadar currently works on the United Nations standby team of senior mediation advisers as a process design and inclusion expert. She has worked with various civil society and governmental actors and supported numerous dialogue and mediation initiatives in S. Caucasus, Ukraine, Türkiye, Cyprus, and between Israel-Palestine, Greece-Türkiye, Türkiye-Armenia, and Somalia-Somaliland. She has more than twenty years of experience in researching, teaching, and practicing dialogue facilitation, mediation, and conflict assessment. She is a thought leader on designing inclusive peace processes with her extensive research and applied work in this area. She worked to advance the inclusion of civil society and women in places including Afghanistan, Cameroon, Türkiye, and Venezuela. She contributed to women's capacity building in peacebuilding and co-founded the Türkiye antenna of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network in 2019. Prior to joining the standby team, Esra worked as a senior expert on dialogue and inclusion at the United States Institute of Peace, as a regional mediator for the World Bank, advisor to the mediation support unit of the OSCE, senior research fellow at Inclusive Peace, and associate professor at Bilkent University in Türkiye. Esra received and managed numerous research grants, received awards and fellowships, and published extensively in leading journals and books on inclusive peace process and dialogue design, and evaluation of peacebuilding. Esra Cuhadar received her MA and Ph.D. from Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University in the USA. She speaks English and Turkish.

## Ayşegül Doğan

Ayşegül Doğan is a journalist who has conducted interviews and created news files and programmes for independent news platforms. She studied at the Faculty of Cultural Mediation and Communications at Metz University and the Paris School of Journalism. As a student, she worked at the Ankara bureau of Agence-France Presse (AFP), the Paris bureau of Courier International and the Kurdish service of The Voice of America. She worked as a programme creator at Radyo Ekin, and as a translator-journalist for the Turkish edition of Le Monde Diplomatique.



She was a lecturer at the Kurdology department of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations in Paris. She worked in political communications for a long time. From its establishment in 2011 to its closure in 2016, she worked as a programme coordinator at IMC TV. She prepared and presented the programme “Gündem Müzakere” on the same channel.

## Vegard Ellefsen

Vegard Ellefsen is a Norwegian diplomat who retired on the 31st of August 2019 from the foreign service when he left his last posting as ambassador to Ankara. He has been twice posted to NATO both as a Permanent representative on the North Atlantic Council and as deputy to the same position. He has earlier been posted to the Norwegian mission to the U.N. in New York and to the Embassy in Ottawa. In the Norwegian Ministry of foreign affairs, he has been Political Director, Director General for the Regional division, Director of the Minister’s secretariat and special envoy to the Sudan peace talks and special envoy to Syria and Iraq. Mr. Ellefsen has a master’s in political science from the University of Oslo.

## Professor Dr. Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem

Professor Dr. Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem is a Professor of Constitutional Law and Head of the Department of Constitutional Law at Dicle University, Diyarbakır. In 2007, Erdem was a member of the commission which was established to draft a new constitution to replace the Constitution of 1982 which was introduced following the coup d’état of 1980. Erdem was a member of the Wise Persons Committee in Türkiye, established by then Prime Minister Erdoğan, in the team that was responsible for the southeastern Anatolia Region.

## Professor Salomon Lerner Febres

Professor Salomon Lerner Febres is Docteur en Philosophie by the Université Catholique de Louvain and BA in Law by the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) School of Law. He has been the Rector (President) of the PUCP from 1994 to 2004. Currently, he is Rector Emeritus and President emeritus of the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (IDEHPUCP), and Professor of Philosophy, Education, Ethics and Methodology at the same university. Furthermore, he is the Chairman of the Board of the Peruvian Film Institute and the President of the Lima Philharmonic Society. Also, Doctor Lerner has been the President of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru (2001-2003), and he is the author of several publications linked to human rights issues and some articles and essays on philosophy, high education, globalization, and government.

## Professor Mervyn Frost

Professor Mervyn Frost is a Professor of International Relations in the Department of War Studies at King’s College, London and is an Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. In 2019 he spent three months as the Distinguished Visiting Professor of International Ethics at the University of New South Wales in Canberra, Australia and at the Australian Defence Force Academy. He has written extensively on ethics and international relations. His recent work, with Dr. Silviya Lechner, is focused on the “practice turn” in International Relations resulting in two publications: “Two Conceptions of International Practice: Aristotelian praxis or Wittgensteinian language-games?” Review of International Studies Volume 42 / Issue 02 / April 2016, pp 334-350. “Understanding international relations from the internal point of view” July 2015, Journal of International Political Theory. p. 1-21. Their co-authored book Practice Theory and International Relations was published by CUP in September 2018. His earlier books include Ethics and International Relations (CUP, 1996), Human Rights in a World of States (Routledge, 2002); Global Ethics (Routledge, 2009); and an edited 4 volume reference work International Ethics (Sage 2012).

## David Gorman

David Gorman, Director, Eurasia, David has more than 25 years of experience in the field of peace-making. He started his career in the Middle East, and he went on to work for international organisations on a wide range of conflicts around the world. David has been based in the Philippines, Indonesia, Liberia, and Bosnia as well as the West Bank and Gaza and has been working in Eurasia for the last several years. He graduated from the London School of Economics, was featured in the award-winning film ‘Miles and War’ as well as several publications and has published several articles on mediation.

## Martin Griffiths

Martin Griffiths is a senior international mediator and currently the UN’s Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) after previously serving as the UN’s Envoy to Yemen. From 1999 to 2010 he was the founding Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva where he specialised in developing political dialogue between governments and insurgents in a range of countries across Asia, Africa, and Europe. He is a co-founder of Inter Mediate, a London-based NGO devoted to conflict resolution, and has worked for international organisations including UNICEF, Save the Children, Action Aid, and the European Institute of Peace. Griffiths has also worked in the British Diplomatic Service and for the UN, including as Director of the



Department of Humanitarian Affairs (Geneva), Deputy to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (New York), Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes, Regional Coordinator in the Balkans, and Deputy Head of the Supervisory Mission in Syria (UNSMIS).

## Kezban Hatemi

Kezban Hatemi received her bachelor's degree in law from the Istanbul University Faculty of Law. She, as a registered lawyer to the Istanbul Bar Association, started to work as a self-employed lawyer. She has published several articles in the field of law. Her areas of interest are human rights, women's rights, minority rights, children's rights, animal rights and the fight against drugs. She participated in various conferences and symposiums on these subjects. Moreover, she has been participating in various national and international conferences and symposiums as a speaker regarding Türkiye's democratisation, women's rights, and Türkiye's main problem Kurdish issue. She was involved in drafting the Turkish Civil Code and Law of Foundations. She was particularly involved in preparing the legal groundwork for the Christian and Jewish Community problems, Community Foundations, and its problems. She submitted individual reports. She was involved in drafting Religious Freedoms and Minorities and Community Foundations within the Framework Law of Harmonization prepared by Türkiye alongside with Secretariat General for European Union Affairs and European Union Commission Türkiye Desk. She sits on the Board of Trustees of the Technical University and the Darulacaze Foundation. In 1995, she joined the "Humanity Initiative for Bosnia" and after her return from Bosnia, she participated in various conferences and symposiums as a speaker to keep the problem on the agenda and speed up the aid process. She took an active role in aid campaigns for Bosnia. In Türkiye National Commission for UNESCO's XXIII term, she worked as the vice president of the Specialized Dialogue Committee on Dialogue of Civilizations studies. She was appointed as the deputy president of the former Türkiye Wise Persons Committee Southeast Group, which was one of the important mechanisms established to achieve a sense of lasting peace in the democratization and solution process. She is a member of the Democratic Progress Institute's Council of Experts, and she is the president of the Democracy Platform.

## Nazan Haydari

Nazan Haydari is Professor of Media Department at İstanbul Bilgi University, Türkiye. Her research area consists of intercultural communication, feminist media studies, and critical media pedagogy with a particular interest in communication for peace building, community media, participatory action research and gendered radio histories. She is the director of Center for Conflict Resolution Studies

and advisory board member for the Center for Intercultural Dialogue ([https:// centerforinterculturaldialogue.org/](https://centerforinterculturaldialogue.org/)) She was involved in the development of various participatory media projects with street-involved children, and disadvantaged youngsters. She is the co-editor of Case Studies in Intercultural Dialogue (2015, Kendal Hunt). Currently working towards the completion of a co-authored book manuscript on an oral history project with women radio broadcasters of 1970s in Türkiye. She holds PhD in Telecommunications and MAIA in Communications and Development from Ohio University.

## Dr. Edel Hughes

Dr. Edel Hughes is a Lecturer in Law at the School of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway. Before joining NUI Galway, Dr. Hughes was a Senior Lecturer in Law at Middlesex University and previously worked at the University of East London and the University of Limerick. She was awarded an LL.M. and a PhD in International Human Rights Law from the National University of Ireland, Galway, in 2003 and 2009, respectively. Her research interests are in the areas of international human rights law, public international law, and conflict transformation, with a regional interest in Türkiye and the Middle East. She has published widely in these areas.

## Kadir İnanır


Kadir İnanır was born in 1949 in Fatsa, Ordu. He is an acclaimed actor and director and has starred in well over a hundred films. He has won several awards for his work in Turkish cinema. He graduated from Marmara University Faculty of Communication. In 2013 he became a member of the Wise Persons Committee for the Mediterranean region.

## Professor Ahmet Insel

Professor Ahmet Insel is a former faculty member of Galatasaray University in Istanbul, Türkiye and Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne University, France. He is the Managing Editor of the Turkish editing house, İletişim, and a member of the editorial board of the monthly review, Birikim. He is a regular columnist at Cumhuriyet newspaper and an author who published several books and articles in both Turkish and French.

## Aleka Kessler

Aleka Kessler works as Project Officer at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD). Having joined HD in 2017 to work on Syria, Aleka has been coordinating mediation projects in complex conflict settings. Previously, Aleka also worked with Médecins Sans Frontières and the



United Nations Association Mexico. She holds a degree in International Relations from the University of Geneva and a master's degree in development studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, where she specialized in humanitarian affairs, negotiation, and conflict resolution.

## Avila Kilmurray

Avila Kilmurray is currently managing the Migration Learning Exchange programme with The Social Change Initiative ([www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org](http://www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org)) and working on philanthropy and peacebuilding. Avila was previously Director of Policy & Strategy with the Global Fund for Community Foundations (2014-2016), having held the position of Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (1994-2014). Avila was born and educated in Dublin, completing her BA (History & Politics) at University College Dublin. She received a MA (International Relations) from Australian National University and completed a PhD (Department of Law) at Queens University Belfast, where she was later awarded a Hon. Doctorate in Social Science. Avila is involved in community development, the Women's Movement, and philanthropy in Northern Ireland since 1975. Prior to her position with CFNI, Avila was the first Women's Officer with the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union (Ireland), serving on the Board of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (1994-1997), the Industrial Development Board (NI) and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). She has long been involved with a range of peacebuilding initiatives, as well as work on poverty, women's issues, and social needs. A founder member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition in 1996, Avila served on the Coalition's Negotiating Team for the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. She was a founder member of the Foundations for Peace Network and currently serves as Director of the St. Stephen's Green Trust as well as a co-optee on the Ireland Committee of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and a Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland. Avila has written extensively on community action, peacebuilding, and women's rights. She has published a book – 'Community Action in a Contested Society: The Story of Northern Ireland' (Peter Lang, 2016) and 'Conflict-Affected Environments: Notes for Grantmakers' – ([www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org](http://www.thesocialchangeinitiative.org)). Avila lives in Belfast and is married with three children and two grandchildren.

## Professor Ram Manikkalingam

Professor Ram Manikkalingam is the founder and director of the Dialogue Advisory Group, based in Amsterdam. He also teaches politics at the University of Amsterdam. He has been involved in efforts to reduce violence and promote reconciliation in Northern Iraq, Libya, the Basque Country, and Northern Ireland, among other

situations. Following the Easter bombings in Sri Lanka, he served as an independent expert to the National Security Advisory Board by the then President. He was also assisting the government in Sri Lanka with reconciliation. Previously, he was Senior Advisor on the peace process to then President Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka. He has served as an Advisor with Ambassador rank at the Sri Lanka Mission to the United Nations in New York. Before that, he led the Rockefeller Foundation's programme on international security.

## Bejan Matur

Bejan Matur is a renowned Türkiye-based author and poet. She has published ten works of poetry and prose. In her writing, she focuses mainly on Kurdish politics, the Armenian issue, minority issues, prison literature and women's rights. She has won several literary prizes, and her work has been translated into over 28 languages. She was formerly the Director of the Diyarbakır Cultural Art Foundation (DKSV). She is a columnist for the Daily Zaman, and occasionally for the English version, Today's Zaman.

## Professor Monica McWilliams

Professor Monica McWilliams teaches at the Transitional Justice Institute at Ulster University in Northern Ireland. She currently serves on a three-person panel established by the Northern Ireland government to make recommendations on the disbandment of paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland. During the Northern Ireland peace process, Prof. McWilliams co-founded the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition political party and was elected as a delegate to the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations, which took place from 1996 to 1998. She was also elected to serve as a member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly from 1998 to 2003. Prof. McWilliams is a signatory of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and has chaired the Implementation Committee on Human Rights on behalf of the British and Irish governments. For her role in delivering the peace agreement in Northern Ireland, Professor McWilliams was one recipient of the John F. Kennedy Leadership and Courage Award.

## Roelf Meyer

Meyer is currently a consultant on international peace processes having advised parties in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Burundi, Iraq, Kosovo, the Basque Region, Guyana, Bolivia, Kenya, Madagascar, and South Sudan. Meyer's experience in international peace processes stems from his involvement in the settlement of the South African conflict in which he was the government's chief negotiator in constitutional negotiations with the ANC's chief negotiator and current South African



President, Cyril Ramaphosa. Negotiating the end of apartheid and paving the way for South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, Meyer continued his post as Minister of Constitutional Affairs in the Cabinet of the new President, Nelson Mandela. Meyer retired as a Member of Parliament and as the Gauteng leader of the National Party in 1996 and co-founded the United Democratic Movement (UDM) political party the following year. Retiring from politics in 2000, Meyer has since held some international positions, including membership of the Strategy Committee of the Project on Justice in Times of Transition at Harvard University.

## Mark Muller KC

Mark Muller, KC, is a senior advocate at Doughty Street Chambers (London) and the Scottish Faculty of Advocates (Edinburgh) where he specialises in public international law and human rights. Muller is also currently on the UN Department of Political Affairs Standby Team of Mediation Experts and is the UN Special Envoy to Syria in the Syrian peace talks. He has many years' experiences of advising numerous international bodies, such as Humanitarian Dialogue (Geneva) and Inter-Mediate (London) on conflict resolution, mediation, confidence-building, ceasefires, power-sharing, humanitarian law, constitution-making, and dialogue processes. Muller also co-founded Beyond Borders and the Delfina Foundation.

## Ahmet Mümtaz Taylan

Ahmet Mümtaz Taylan is a well-known Turkish actor and director. He graduated from the Hacettepe University State Conservatory of Theatre's Department. He also worked at the Diyarbakir State Theatre from 1989 to 1993. He later worked in theatres with Roberto Cioli and Der Ruhr in Germany from 1993 to 1994. Since then, he has been in several dramas alongside Yucel Erten. He rose to the rank of general secretary of Devlet Tiyatrolar Sanatçılar Derneği, or DETS (Association of State Theatre Artists), which he held until 2006. He also appeared in various well-known films. He starred in Nuri Bilge Ceylan's film "Once Upon a Time in Anatolia," which earned the Cannes Film Festival's highest honour, the Golden Palm. At the 15th Golden Ball Film Festival in 2007, Talan won the Film Writers' Association Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in Inan Temelkuran's "Made in Europe". In addition, in 2002, he received the Ismet Küntay Award for Best Director for the play "Misafir". In 2018, he won the "Best Actor in Drama" award at the 23rd Sadri Alışık Theatre & Film Awards.

## Avni Özgürel

Mehmet Avni Özgürel is a Turkish journalist, author, and screenwriter. Having worked in several newspapers such as Daily Sabah and Radikal, Özgürel is currently the editor-in-chief of Yeni Birlik and a TV programmer at TRT Haber. He is the screenwriter of the 2007 Turkish film, Zincirbozan, on the 1980 Turkish coup d'état, Sultan Avrupa'da (2009), on Sultan Abdülaziz's 1867 trip to Europe; and Mahpeyker (2010): Kösem Sultan, on Kösem Sultan. He is also the screenwriter and producer of the 2014 Turkish film, Darbe (Coupe), on the 07th of February 2012, Turkish intelligence crisis. In 2013 he was appointed a member of the Wise Persons Committee in Türkiye established by then Prime Minister Erdoğan.

## Professor John Packer

Professor John Packer is an Associate Professor of Law and Director of the Human Rights Research and Education Centre (HRREC) at the University of Ottawa in Canada. Prof. Packer has worked for inter-governmental organisations for over 20 years, including in Geneva for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Labour Organisation, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. From 1995 to 2004, Prof. Packer served as Senior Legal Adviser and then the first Director of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in The Hague. From 2012 to 2014, Prof. Packer was a Constitutions and Process Design Expert on the United Nations Standby Team of Mediation Experts attached to the Department of Political Affairs, advising in numerous peace processes and political transitions around the world focusing on conflict prevention and resolution, diversity management, constitutional and legal reform, and the protection of human rights.

## Jonathan Powell

Jonathan Powell is the founder and CEO of Inter Mediate, an NGO devoted to conflict resolution around the world. In 2014, Powell was appointed by former Prime Minister David Cameron to be the UK's Special Envoy to Libya. He also served as Tony Blair's Chief of Staff in the opposition from 1995 to 1997 and again as his Chief of Staff in Downing Street from 1997 to 2007. Before his involvement in British politics, Powell was the British Government's chief negotiator on Northern Ireland from 1997 to 2007 and played a key part in leading the peace negotiations and their implementation. His books include: 'Great Hatred, Little Room: Making Peace In Northern Ireland', 'The New Machiavelli, How to Wield Power in the Modern World' and 'Talking To Terrorists, How To End Armed Conflict'.

## Sir Kieran Prendergast

Sir Kieran Prendergast is a former British diplomat who served as the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations from 1997 to 2005, as High Commissioner to Kenya from 1992 to 1995 and Zimbabwe from 1989 to 1992. Sir Kieran was also British Ambassador to Türkiye from 1995 to 1997. He speaks Turkish. Since he retired from the UN, he has conducted research at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (Harvard) and is a member of the Advisory Council of Independent Diplomats (United States). Prendergast also holds many positions, including President of the British Association of Former UN Civil Servants, Trustee of the Beit Trust, and Senior Adviser at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

## Rajesh Rai

Rajesh Rai is a barrister called in 1993 to Lincolns Inn and practices at the Chambers of John Benson Q. C. where he is joint deputy head of chambers ([www.1mcb.com](http://www.1mcb.com)). During this time, he has been the Director of the Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants ([www.jewi.org.uk](http://www.jewi.org.uk)), Director and treasurer of the Kurdish Human Rights Project ([www.khrp.org](http://www.khrp.org)), founded and acted as a director of Global Legal Technologies Ltd (“GLT”) pioneering LPO, which he exited in 2006. As a social entrepreneur, Rajesh founded and acted as a director of Human Energy (Uganda) Ltd (“HEU”). He is a founder and director of HIC ([www.hicameroun.org](http://www.hicameroun.org)), an NGO based in NW Cameroon. He was an executive director of an AIM listed Company, where he managed the company’s renewable energy portfolio. He helped found “BEEBE”, a Mexican renewable energy company, devising its strategy and acting as director. Rajesh has taught meditation since 2012 and is the Executive Director of Poulstone Court Retreat Centre ([www.poulstone.com](http://www.poulstone.com)). In 2016, he founded and is promoting his annual initiative; a global nonstop 7-day meditation for Unity ([www.meditateforunity.com](http://www.meditateforunity.com)).

## Sir David Reddaway

Sir David Reddaway is a retired British diplomat currently serving as Chief Executive and Clerk of the Goldsmiths’ Company in London. During his previous career in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, he served as Ambassador to Türkiye (2009-2014), Ambassador to Ireland (2006-2009), High Commissioner to Canada (2003-2006), UK Special Representative for Afghanistan (2002), and Charge d’Affaires in Iran (1990- 1993). His other assignments were to Argentina, India, Spain, and Iran, where he was first posted during the Iranian Revolution.

## Professor Naomi Roht-Arriaza

Professor Naomi Roht-Arriaza is a Distinguished Professor of Law at the Hastings College of Law, University of California (San Francisco) and is renowned globally for her expertise in transitional justice, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law. She has extensive knowledge of, and experience in, post-conflict procedures in Latin America and Africa. Roht-Arriaza has contributed to the defence of human rights through legal and social counselling, her position as academic chair, and her published academic works.

## Dr. Mehmet Ufuk Uras

Dr. Mehmet Ufuk Uras is a co-founder and member of the social liberal Greens and the Left Party of the Future, founded as a merger of the Greens and the Equality and Democracy Party. He was previously a former leader of the now-defunct University Lecturers’ Union (Öğretim Elemanları Sendikası) and was elected the chairman of the Freedom and Solidarity Party in 1996. Ufuk resigned from the leadership after the 2002 general election. Ufuk ran a successful campaign as a “common candidate of the Left”, standing on the independents’ ticket, backed by the Kurdish-based Democratic Society Party and several left-wing, environmentalist and pro-peace groups in the 2007 general election. He resigned from the Freedom and Solidarity Party on 19 June 2009. After the Democratic Society Party was dissolved in December 2009, he joined forces with the remaining Kurdish MPs in the Peace and Democracy Party group. On 25 November 2012, he became a co-founder and member of the social liberal Greens and the Left Party of the Future, founded as a merger of the Greens and the Equality and Democracy Party. Ufuk is a member of the Dialogue Group and is the writer of several books on Turkish politics.

## Professor Dr. Sevtap Yokuş

Professor Dr. Sevtap Yokuş is a Law Faculty Member at İstanbul Altınbas University in the Department of Constitutional Law. She holds a PhD in Public Law from the Faculty of Law, İstanbul University, awarded in 1995 for her thesis which assessed the state of emergency regime in Türkiye with reference to the European Convention on Human Rights. She is a widely published expert in the areas of Constitutional Law and Human Rights and has multiple years’ experience of working as a university lecturer at the undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels. She also has experience working as a lawyer in the European Court of Human Rights



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# GET IN TOUCH

Remember to visit our website for up-to-date reports on DPI's activities as well as research briefings and articles from members of our Council of Experts that provide a unique and useful perspective on many aspects of democratisation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Türkiye. We also welcome your views and opinions on DPI's activities so do not hesitate to get in touch through any one of the following mediums:



11 Guilford Street, London WC1N 1DH United Kingdom

[democraticprogress.org](https://democraticprogress.org)

+44 (0) 207 405 3835

[info@democraticprogress.org](mailto:info@democraticprogress.org)

Democratic Progress Institute

@DPI\_UK & @DemokratikGeli1

@dpi\_democraticprogressinst

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