



Solidarity with Turkish Anti-War and Human Rights Activists

July 9, 2026

We stand in solidarity with the activists, journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders being detained and silenced across Türkiye ahead of the 36th NATO Summit, taking place in Ankara on July 6th and 7th 2026. In the last weeks, Turkish authorities have been systematically targeting anti-war, anti-imperialist and human rights activists.

The Ankara Governor's Office announced a ban on the collective use of public spaces between June 28th and July 10th. As a result, planned protests and events such as the [Anti-NATO Peace Conference](#) had to be cancelled or moved online.

Moreover, last week police carried out early morning raids across Ankara, arresting more than 200 people. Authorities stated the operation targeted suspected members of armed groups. However, those detained included LGBTQI+, women, and feminist rights defenders, as well as lawyers, academics, revolutionary youth, labour union representatives, and human rights activists. Around 100 people remain in pretrial detention.

The Turkish Journalists' Association has also reported that journalists from news organisations seen as opposition-leaning or independent have been excluded from covering the NATO Summit, with no explanation given.

Together, these measures show how the rights to peaceful assembly and demonstration, as well as press freedom are being suspended in Türkiye, and how the exercise of democratic rights is being restricted. Carried out under the guise of security concerns, this repression is yet another example of the domestic face of militarisation.

The targeting of activists opposing the war machine in Türkiye is not an isolated case. Governments across the world are using intimidation and criminalisation to suppress dissent. Striking examples in Europe include the United Kingdom and Germany, where activists taking direct action against weapons companies are facing unprecedented trials and charges for terrorism. These cases show a pattern: the same forces driving militarisation are criminalising those who resist it. International solidarity is therefore fundamental in the struggle against militarisation.

Since the 2025 The Hague Summit, NATO is forcing its member states to increase military spending by 5% of their GDPs, a threshold that has come to be known as the "Trump 5% norm", following months of pressure by the U.S. President to push



members toward the figure. NATO's nature as an institution promoting war and militarisation has thereby become clear once again.

Similarly, EU institutions are promoting increased investment and spending towards militarised security, from the proposed €131 billion for "defence, security and space" in the new Multiannual Financial Framework, to the €800 billion ReArm Europe plan, financed primarily through national-level debt. However, the notion that increased military budgets make us safer is an illusion: deterrence has never prevented escalation. More military spending will only deepen our social, environmental and political problems:

- It diverts resources from healthcare, education, climate action, and welfare
- It erodes workers' rights
- It fuels arms races which in turn lead to more conflicts and violence, human rights violations, and displacement

This is why it is so urgent to collectively oppose the plans to ReArm Europe, the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework proposal allocating €131 billion to military spending, and all military alliances, including NATO.

The struggle against militarisation and war can only be won when we stand in solidarity with each other. We call for:

- The immediate release of all those detained in Türkiye,
- An end to the criminalisation of anti-war activism everywhere,
- Collective resistance to NATO and the plans to ReArm Europe.

As leaders in Ankara are gathering to prepare for war, activists are preparing for peace. We support the organisers of the [Istanbul Anti-imperialist Peace Summit](#) that took place on July 4th and the [Anti-NATO Peace Conference](#) (online) on July 5, 2026.