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Turkey

# Abortion ban: attempted femicide

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**On 28 December 2011, the jet forces of Turkish Army killed 37 Turkish citizen Kurdish people - most of whom were children - residents of Uludere village at the border of Northern Iraq.**

While we were thinking about who would pay the political cost of Uludere massacre we found ourselves in the dock for committing murder. Prime Minister Erdogan said “every abortion is another Uludere” in his closing speech at the 2012 International Parliamentarians Conference on the application of the Action Plan decided by the International Population and Development Fund. With his speech, he equated killing Kurds by the hands of the State and the rights of women over their own bodies. Instead of rendering the account of massacre, he used it as a tool to realize the expected attack of neoliberal fundamentalist capitalism.

## Malthus is dead, long live Erdogan!

This was not the first attack of the prime minister against women’s bodies. He made it tradition to tell us what to do with our pudendum. He celebrated the Women’s’ Day in 2008 by saying that he is urging woman to give birth at least three children for the “wealth of the nation”.

The right of abortion up to ten weeks into pregnancy gained by women in 1983 will be an area of harsh struggle between women and State once again. In fact, in the following days it was announced in the newspapers that a bill is being prepared by the Ministry of Health which decreases the legal period of abortion from 10 to 4 weeks. It is even being discussed publicly that the exemptions like rape and other health reasons will not be included in the amendment. By the same token, the Minister of Health declared that if women do not want to look after children born as incidents of rape, the State can care for them.

## What will happen now?

It is expected the bill will be discussed in Parliament until the end of June. Given the reality that the AKP is the majority of the Parliament, there is no reason for it not to become law except a strong mass movement. Women's organizations are organizing rallies and demonstrations in cities from the beginning of this discussion and raise their voices against the attempt of the ban of abortion in the axis of the social rights of women and women’s control over their own bodies. The demands of the movement are:

- Free, secure, easy and accessible abortion;
- Free, wide, secure contraception both for men and women.

Unfortunately, the latest rallies held on the 17th of June in the three biggest cities were below expectations. But enraged and steely participants show that the final round has not been played and the final words have not been said yet. The day the bill will be taken into agenda of the Parliament all women around Turkey will be in front of the Parliament to defend our abortion right.

## On the axis of the struggle

As we all know, any kind of fundamentalism, either Islamic or Buddhist is a spare key of neoliberalism in all world. AKP is one of the logical results of this changing concept. So the struggle against AKP should also be seen as a part of struggle against neoliberalism here in Turkey as in elsewhere without demoting to it.

This attack against women's bodies is another manifestation of the route of capitalism to the "holy family". We are facing with one of the cruelest forms of tyranny on our bodies. Repositioning women's bodies as a tool for reproduction of cheap labor force and ejecting the female workforce from the market are two of the incorporated reasons of this attack.

Capitalism is internally linked with patriarchy as it is with racism and ecological destruction. Women have been struggling against patriarchy for hundreds of years. Sexual "freedom" was one of the successes of the second wave of feminism. We won't give it back by our own hands. "We don't have the luxury to go back since our gains are not even the half of our hopes".