



Speech by Kemal Okuyan, Secretary General of Communist Party of Turkey, for the 20th IMCWP

How had the Great October Socialist Revolution, whose 100th anniversary we celebrated last year, reached success? We may reverse this question and ask ourselves, “Why have a revolutionary breakthrough not occurred for a long period of time?”

It would not be accurate to provide simple answers to these kinds of questions and explain the phenomenon of such sophisticated historical processes with only a single factor. However, today during a meeting which we discuss the current agenda of the working class movement, we may address a very critical problem which limits the influence of the International Communist Movement.

We are obliged to state that, today, the claim and goal of creating a society without classes or exploitation does not hold a significant place in the perception of toiling masses. Socialism, as a social system, has somewhat greater traces in some countries, whereas in some others the historical traces are completely covered. However, if we make a general evaluation, socialism is not recognized as a tangible alternative in the globe.

This is only an assessment of the current situation. We do not intend to spread pessimism; on the contrary, we want to point out to the duties of the communist movement in order to eliminate this obstruction.

It has been 170 years since the Communist Manifesto was published. When all this historical period is taken into consideration, if the goal of a “society without classes or exploitation” never had such a limited place in humanity’s agenda as today, we need to reconsider our situation. In this period of time, bourgeoisie lost all of its progressive character, capitalism reached its final and imperialist phase, the capitalist establishment put humanity through 2 world wars and the statement “either socialism or barbarity” was confirmed countless times.

There are several reasons that result in communism not being adequately grasped as a current liberation agenda by the toiling masses. However, if we are going to argue about the role of the communist and workers' parties, we need to state that, today, this situation is valid also within the ranks of the International Communist Movement. We are living through the years in which the communist and workers parties are most far away from the socialist revolution from a programmatic and strategic perspective in the last 170 years.

We are going through a period in which capitalism cannot even provide false hopes to the people, the sleaziness of bourgeois politics is so apparent, and millions of people are lost in a cycle of desperation. It is said that 4 million immigrants live in my country, Turkey. Over 5, 5 million people have migrated from the same country, Turkey, to Europe for a hope to find employment or for political reasons. However, most of these people are miserable in countries like Germany, France, Belgium and Netherlands, some of these people migrate to countries like Australia which is far away from Europe. This means that capitalism, which contaminates the world with wars, crises, ethnic conflicts, and nationalism, causes people to leave their homelands.

At this point the question is: What are we doing?

Does the way to provide a realistic route of liberation or to show a convincing option, go through claiming that capitalism may be less violent or that imperialism and peace can coexist or that democracy and freedom may blossom step by step?

As we continue to tell ourselves that the emphasis on communism is not convincing alternative after 170 years and to try to build a strategy through unrequited demands or goals, we will move away from the goal of a society without classes or exploitation.

I am afraid we are significantly mistaken here. The objective conditions may not be suitable for a revolutionary upheaval; we know that this is independent of our intentions. However, it is apparent that the idea of adopting different programs in revolutionary and non-revolutionary times has been falsified both theoretically and empirically by the substantial experience of 170 years. The idea of overshadowing socialism with phenomena like human rights, democracy, independence, freedom, peace and aiming to make the fatal blow for the power of the working class only when the circumstances have become convenient has no validity.

Especially, it is apparent that, drawing a new road map which will "sell" better and justifying it by saying "people do not credit the goal of socialism" will only result in handing over the toiling masses to the hands of bourgeois parties. People would not prefer the imitations of things when they have the genuine form of it.

We need to be creative; we need to stay away from sectarianism, sloganism and shortcuts. Because our way is long and our task is hard. However, we shall not forget that as communist and workers' parties our priority mission is to promote among the toiling masses the idea that socialist revolution is timely.

We are a family and this family shall discuss this issue in a transparent, honest, dedicated way as comrades and brothers and sisters. If we take the policy of not intervening to internal affairs of each other's parties to being totally indifferent to what we do or say, why are we holding these meetings? We had taken lessons from the past, not a single party would let others to interfere with its internal affairs, and no one would accept the large party-small party differentiation. However, we need to listen and understand each other and voice our thoughts when necessary. The priority mission of all of us is to raise the struggle in our own countries, but every single struggle is also a part of the world revolutionary process. We interact with each other, a success in the name of the working class in one country sets an example for struggle in another country, and vice versa. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Soviet people paid the biggest price, however, it was the proletariat all around the world who suffered from the counterrevolution. Can we say that this issue only concerned the Communist Party of Soviet Union?

Yes, we are a family and we are organizing as communist and workers' parties in order to realize the ideal of communism. All our current struggles and all the prices we pay are related to this final goal in the end. Fortunately, there are still hundreds of thousands of communists in the world. Regrettably, the necessity and timeliness of socialism have dropped behind humanity's agenda. Here we are talking about our mission. We believe that our mission is to reinsert the goal of socialist revolution and communism back to people's agenda. This is the priority mission. That our struggles for freedom, peace, independence are depending on this mission does not incapacitate these struggles, on the contrary, strengthens them.

Why should our daily struggle for bread and employment contradict the struggle for an establishment without hunger and unemployment? One is not prior to the other, both struggles shall be pursued at the same time. This is our approach.

Communist Party of Turkey continues its struggle with this approach. The party has reinforced its roots in the working class with the organizational reform in 2018. The experience gained through recently reorganized party cells in workplaces and workplace committees shows us that workers approach to struggle for daily demands and goals with greater enthusiasm when these struggles are linked with the goal of socialism. Our claim to create a new Turkey facilitates the rise of the working class of Turkey on the stage of history, considering the desperation of establishment's opposition against the perception of invincibility of Erdogan.

With our absolute faith in our future, the future of our movement...

Long live revolution, long live communism, and long live internationalism!