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JOINT CALL: THE KURDISH QUESTION IN TURKEY - NOW IS THE TIME FOR DIALOGUE

Talks which started at the beginning of 2009 between the Turkish Government and the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan have broken down for reasons insignificant to the conflict itself. In our opinion a dialogue needs to be reopened.

For any talks to succeed it has to be recognized that the Kurdish people are a permanent feature of the land they share with their fellow citizens. The fundamental realities cannot be denied forever, and genuine dialogue towards a lasting peace seems the only proper way forward.

Dialogue between the parties is the only way to secure a peaceful resolution to the conflict and peace is a precondition for establishing a democratic Turkey. Successful dialogue will make all other methods unnecessary.

Peace talks will bring hope to the Kurdish and Turkish people who have been living under the shadow of a protracted conflict with no apparent end in sight.

It is never too late to act for a better future. Now is the time to seize the moment to break the deadlock and lay the basis for a lasting peace.

It is for this reason that we call on the parties to take the necessary steps to restart the talks in good faith with the aim of giving democracy and peace a new chance for the sake of all the people of Turkey.

God bless you

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

This call is supported by the following signatories:

- *His Holiness Dalai Lama, Tibet*
- *President José Ramos-Horta, Former President of East Timor*
- *Mr. Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin President, Ireland*
- *President Jimmy Carter, United States of America*
- *Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Former Prime Minister of Norway*
- *Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, Former Prime Minister, Sweden*
- *Mr. Paavo Lipponen, Former Prime Minister, Finland*
- *Mr. Anker Jørgensen, Former Prime Minister, Denmark*
- *Mr. Kjeld Olesen, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Denmark*