

The Detention of the Mayor of Istanbul, and its Relationship to the Local and International Conflict

(Translated)

By: Asaad Mansour

Turkish police raided the home of the Mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu on March 19, 2025, to undertake an investigation regarding charges of corruption, bribery, fraud, leading a criminal organization and collaborating with a terrorist organization. Istanbul University revoked his university degree, a requirement for running in the presidential elections. The raids targeted approximately 100 suspects, including politicians, journalists, and businessmen, as part of a broad investigation.

This comes days before he announces his candidacy for the 2028 Turkish presidential elections. Imamoglu won by a large margin over his rival, the candidate of Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party (AKP), in the municipal elections, for the second time, last year. His rise is seen as paralleling Erdoğan's own rise from twice serving as mayor of Istanbul, to prime minister, and then president.

Imamoglu's Republican People's Party (CHP) considered the campaign of detentions to be tantamount to a coup, accusing the government of using the arrests to intimidate the opposition. Thousands of his supporters demonstrated in protest against the raids.

It appears that all of this is a plot to prevent İmamoğlu from running for president. He is now viewed as a strong contender, in the upcoming presidential elections. Erdoğan is working on a legal ploy to run for a third term, a move the constitution currently prohibits. This has become a tangible goal for him, promoted by some of his supporters. As his chief legal advisor, Mehmet Uçum, stated on November 28, 2024, Erdogan could run for president on May 7, 2028, exceptionally, through parliamentary ratification. Erdoğan stated after his second election, that this would be his last election. However, their laws are tyrannical, and subject to change at their whims and desires.

Erdoğan and his party's popularity in Turkey have plummeted due to his failed economic policies, based on a secular capitalist system. The currency continues to plummet, prices rise and inflation soars. He raised the interest rate at the Central Bank to 50%, and then banks lend people at even higher rates, plunging the country's Muslim population into a major sin. He also let down the people of Gaza, while watching their slaughter for over a year and a half. Erdoğan appeared to champion the Palestinian cause and support its people, but all of this was done with deceptive, sweetened words. In reality, Erdoğan affirmed his ties with the Jewish entity, and did not sever them. Erdoğan continued to trade with the Jewish entity, thus supporting it against the people of Palestine.

Erdoğan is orbiting in the American orbit, which does not allow him to harm the Jewish entity, except for a few loud, pathetic condemnations. Erdoğan strictly implements America's policies in the region, as happened in Libya, Syria and Azerbaijan, in order that America supports him in remaining in power. It is worth noting that his overthrow would be very easy, if the United States allowed creditor countries to demand return of their emergency foreign debts from Turkey. Turkey is unable to pay these loans within a year. These debts are continuously increasing, reaching \$175.6 billion, as he announced in the first month of this year. This is from a total of \$525.8 billion in external debt liabilities, as announced on September 30, 2024. As a result, Erdoğan's popularity declined, and his party lost the local elections on March 31, 2024, especially in the major cities, like Istanbul. Erdoğan used to say about Istanbul, that whoever wins the elections there, wins the governance of the country.

Erdoğan was helped to remain in power by his supporters' flimsy justifications for his inaction and betrayals, and by the spurious fatwas issued by pseudo-ulema permitting him to permit major sins, and implement the constitution and laws of the kuffar (disbelievers). Some still attempt to deceive the naïve, and mislead them, by claiming that Erdoğan is gradually working to implement Islam, despite 23 years of rule. Erdoğan affirms and promotes the Kufr ideas of secularism and democracy, both at home and abroad.

Ekrem Imamoglu began exploiting religion, just as Erdogan did, expanding his popular base and that of his party, the Republican People's Party (CHP), which was known for its prior hostility to Deen (Islam). It is the party of Mustafa Kemal, the destroyer of the Khilafah (Caliphate) and Shariah, the one who permitted all manner of sins, and fought the Deen (Islam) and its adherents. It is a British party, as Mustafa Kemal was linked to Britain, which supported him in his rise to the presidency. Britain made him a hero and enabled him to commit all those crimes, and sins. This is why this party remained loyal to Britain. The false hero and symbolic victor considers himself great, and gives himself the right to do whatever he wants to his people. He drafts whatever constitution he wants, even if it goes against the people's demands to adhere to, and implement, the Deen as is the case in all Islamic lands. He considers himself the one who saved the people, forgetting their sacrifices, whilst he cowered, hiding somewhere, tied to foreign forces that support him, and market him through false heroism.

Hence, it appears that this event is related to the Western conflict between its American and European factions, especially the British. The European media took a stance against Erdoğan, and in favor of İmamoğlu. This international conflict manifests itself in the form of a local conflict between the followers of these colonialist parties and their leaders, as they chase posts and personal gains. In addition to the massive American military presence in Turkey, Turkey is a member of the American-led NATO, as are Britain and the European countries, which are also quarreling members. Britain's alliances, such as the Saadabad Pact, which Mustafa Kemal supported, have collapsed. The Saadabad Pact was replaced by the Baghdad Pact, of which Turkey is a member. This pact subsequently also collapsed, and CENTO was established in its place, with its headquarters in Ankara. However, that too also collapsed. This is due to the strikes America launched against Britain to undermine its influence in Turkey and elsewhere, allowing America to replace Britain and consolidate its own influence. Nevertheless, America fears for its influence in Türkiye, as Britain still exerts significant influence through the People's Party and other smaller parties. It may form a coalition alliance against Erdogan and his party in the upcoming elections, as happened in the local elections, and attract various forces, especially the Kurdish nationalistic parties.

Therefore, Erdogan and his ally, Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), launched an initiative to release Öcalan from prison and demand that he dissolves the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which was dominated by British agents. It is the party he founded and led until his arrest in 1999. He was also called upon to lay down his arms and engage in the political process in Turkey. Erdogan sought to bolster his popularity by doing so.

Muslims in Turkey and elsewhere will not achieve liberation (tahrir) from the yoke of colonialism unless they reject its ideas, overthrow its regimes and agents, abandon its constitutions and laws, cut ties with it, and cling to the firm Rope of Allah (swt) and hold fast to the firmest Islamic bond that cannot be broken, through their rejection of the tyrants and their Iman in Allah (swt), and establish their parties and their state on this basis.