



31 August 2018

Mr Andrew Hastie MP  
Chair  
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Hastie

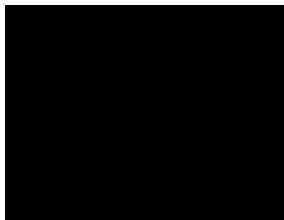
Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security on re-listing of the Kurdistan Workers Party as a terrorist organisation under the Criminal Code

Please find attached a submission from Australians for Kurdistan (AFK), an unincorporated solidarity group of non-Kurdish Australians drawn from all walks of life, to your Committee on its review of a re-listing of the Kurdistan Workers Party as a terrorist organisation under the Criminal Code Act 1995.

We would appreciate the opportunity to address our submission before the Committee, and respond to any questions Committee members might have on its contents, if this is possible.

I can be contacted on mob: [REDACTED] regarding an opportunity to address the Committee regarding the AFK's submission.

Yours sincerely



Fionn Skiotis  
Convenor

## AUSTRALIANS FOR KURDISTAN

Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

### De-listing the Kurdistan Workers Party as a terrorist organisation under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*

31 August 2018

#### 1. Australians for Kurdistan

Australians for Kurdistan (AFK) is an unincorporated solidarity group of non-Kurdish Australians drawn from all walks of life who come together to support the Kurdish liberation struggle in Australia. AFK liaises closely with members of the Kurdish community and is responsible for organising and undertaking a range of activities including public meetings and conferences; the preparation and distribution of written materials such as information brochures and longer publications; contributions to the media on relevant matters; and engagement with elected representatives and others in the Australian political system.

#### 2. The case for de-listing the Kurdistan Workers Party

The Kurdistan Workers Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* or PKK) has been listed as a terrorist organisation under Australian security legislation (the *Criminal Code Act 1995* and regulations made pursuant to the Act) continuously since 2006.

AFK believes listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation is wrong in fact and in law, is not in Australia's national interests or the interests of the Australian people, and is morally and ethically unsound. We respectfully call on the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS) to consider the arguments set out below against listing the PKK, and to recommend to Parliament that the recently approved 2018 Regulations listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation be disallowed.

##### *2.1 The PKK is not involved in terrorism*

The PKK and its armed wing, the HPG (*Hêzên Parastina Gel*), are clearly engaged in an armed conflict with the Turkish national state, particularly its military and security forces. This in itself does not constitute terrorism or satisfy the definition of terrorism or terrorist activity required for listing under the relevant legislation. The PKK has never deliberately targeted civilians or engaged in indiscriminate violence. Its targets have been limited to members of Turkey's armed forces or other police or security forces of the Turkish state engaged in violent oppression of the Kurdish population and its political organisations. As in all armed conflicts, civilian casualties may have occurred as a result of armed activity by the PKK, however this was never the PKK's deliberate policy or intention.

It must be kept in mind that the PKK's armed activity is in response to an extremely violent, indiscriminate and ongoing campaign against the Kurdish population of Turkey by the country's military and security forces. There was a significant upsurge in violent attacks against the Kurdish population following a unilateral decision in 2015 by then Prime Minister Erdoğan to end the 2013 ceasefire with the PKK. Simply by way of example, the February 2016 massacre of unarmed Kurdish civilians by Turkish military forces in Cizre involved the deaths of hundreds of civilians, many of whom were burned alive while sheltering in basements, and was widely reported in reputable media organisations at the time. This is just one example of a multitude of indiscriminately violent actions against the Kurdish population which have collectively resulted in tens of thousands of civilian deaths over many years.

There is a strong case that the PKK and its armed wing have the right to act in self-defence against these atrocities perpetrated against Turkey's Kurdish population by the military and security forces of what is ostensibly their own country. The current political environment in Turkey clearly shows the Erdoğan regime is becoming more dictatorial and brutal by the day, acting with complete disregard for international human rights standards and other international law and determined to pursue an extremist nationalist agenda at the expense of its own population. In this context, it would be naive in the extreme to expect the PKK and its associated bodies to simply cease all armed activity in defence of the Kurdish population; indeed to do so would arguably increase the risk of civilian deaths among Kurds in Turkey.

There are many armed conflicts in the world today and in recent history, and it is instructive to compare the treatment of the belligerent parties involved with that of the PKK. In East Timor for example, FALINTIL – the armed forces of the national resistance movement, seeking independence for East Timor and an end to the violent occupation of the country by Indonesia – was similarly engaged in an armed conflict with Indonesia's military and security forces over decades, and yet was never listed as a terrorist organisation in Australia. It is difficult to understand how the situation of the PKK could be considered different to that of FALINTIL, given the latter was actively involved in armed resistance causing numerous casualties among Indonesia's occupying forces, and that Australia recognised East Timor as part of Indonesia at the time of this activity.

As is well known, East Timor achieved independence in 2002 and FALINTIL subsequently transformed into the official armed forces of the new nation. FALINTIL's leader Xanana Gusmao, arrested and imprisoned as a terrorist by the Indonesian regime, went on to become President and later Prime Minister of the independent nation and a respected figure on the regional and world stage.

In South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) and its armed wing *uMkhonto we Sizwe* were involved for many years in armed action against the state of apartheid South Africa. The ANC was never listed or regarded as a terrorist organisation in Australia. While attempts were made in Britain and the US to depict the ANC as a terrorist organisation (the ANC's leader, Nelson Mandela, embarrassingly remained on a terrorist watch list in the US until 2008), in time the legitimacy of the ANC's struggle was widely accepted and Mr Mandela went on to become a respected and indeed revered international statesman.

Taking a longer historical view, armed resistance to Nazi Germany and the Axis Powers was widespread across Europe during the Second World War. A narrow and legalistic view of the armed groups involved in this resistance (such as the uprising of Jewish irregular forces in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943) would suggest that in most cases at least they had no standing or legitimacy as the armed forces of a recognised state, and as such could be labelled as terrorist using the same logic that has resulted in the listing of the PKK. In fact, these groups and their activities are now widely viewed as heroic and many of Europe's leading political figures are proud to have participated in resistance activities.

The general point that can be made here is that the definition of a movement or organisation as terrorist is very difficult to base on objective criteria and will inevitably involve some political and historical considerations. Depictions of the ANC as a terrorist organisation in Britain and the US were for example linked to the group's association with the Communist Party of South Africa and more generally to the politics of the Cold War era. Australia's failure to list FALINTIL as a terrorist organisation is likely to have been influenced by historical sympathies in Australia for the people of East Timor and recognition of their appalling and brutal treatment under Indonesian occupation.

The conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK is a long way from Australian shores and Australia's immediate interests in the Asia-Pacific region. The initial listing of the PKK as a terrorist organisation is likely to have been made at the behest of the Turkish state (the fact that the listing in 2006 followed closely after a December 2005 visit by Turkey's then Prime Minister Erdoğan, in which he was reported to have urged the need for better intelligence exchanges between Australia and Turkey in the fight against terrorism, is unlikely to have been a coincidence). Turkey is a NATO member and was at the time a close ally of the US and other Western nations with which Australia has strong ties and strategic affiliations. It is likely these considerations formed part of Australia's decision to list the PKK, even if they were not explicitly noted in the materials considered by Australian intelligence services and the PJCIS in the listing process.

## *2.2 Listing the PKK is based on erroneous evidence*

Given the remote nature of the Kurdish regions of south-east Turkey and the overall distance of the region from Australia, Australia's intelligence services are unlikely to have detailed information on the conflict between Turkey and the PKK from their own sources. It can be assumed in this situation that Australia's security services are provided with information by their equivalent bodies in Turkey, notably the National Intelligence Organisation (*Millî İstihbarat Teşkilatı* or MIT). The accuracy, reliability and impartiality of any information provided by the Turkish state on the question of the PKK's record of armed action and related matters is highly questionable. In fact the MIT is well known to engage in misinformation and similarly deceptive strategies on a systematic basis.

By way of example, the MIT's Chief Hakan Fidan was recorded stating at a 2014 meeting with Turkey's Foreign Minister, Deputy Chief of Staff and other military personnel that a false flag operation could be used to justify aggression by the Turkish military against the Kurdish areas of northern Syria. In the recording Fidan states "if legitimacy is an issue, I can simply send a few men there [across the Syria-Turkey border] and have them launch missiles over to us. Legitimacy is not a problem. Legitimacy can be manufactured." The recording was

leaked to YouTube and shared on Twitter, leading to the Turkish authorities blocking access first to Twitter, then YouTube, and finally the DNS servers of Google DNS and OpenDNS. This in no way addressed the issue of Fidan's recorded comments and the deceptive conduct they reveal. Fidan was and remains a close personal associate and loyal supporter of President Erdoğan.

Historical allegations made against the PKK include that they have kidnapped children, been involved in drug smuggling into Europe, and deliberately targeted civilians in their actions. None of these allegations have been substantiated following investigation by creditable media or other services, and no credible evidence has been made public by the Turkish security or police bodies or others. The practice of the Turkish state is clearly to make such allegations without credible evidence, see that they are circulated in the public domain, and then simply provide none of the evidence required to substantiate the allegations. In forming a view of the PKK and its activities, Australia should be extremely wary of giving credence to the lies and deceptions of a discredited and highly partisan foreign intelligence body.

### *2.3 The PKK poses no threat to Australia or Australians*

There are currently 25 organisations listed as terrorist groups under the provisions of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, 24 of which espouse extremist Islamist ideology (the PKK is the sole non-Islamist organisation). Many of these Islamist groups actively seek to harm Australians and Australian interests, both within Australia and overseas, and some have achieved this goal in heinous and indiscriminate attacks such as the Bali Bombings of 2002. In contrast, the PKK has never sought to harm Australians or Australian interests and has in addition never sought to bring its armed campaign in any form to Australian shores. It is clear the PKK poses no threat to Australia, the Australian people (including Australians travelling abroad) or Australian interests in any location. The Australian Parliament should acknowledge this reality by removing the PKK from the list of terrorist organisations.

Extreme right wing and nationalist Turkish groups, such as the notorious Grey Wolves, are known to operate in Australia and are likely to have been responsible for violent and potentially lethal attacks such as the firebombing of the Kurdish Democratic Community Centre of Victoria's building in Pascoe Vale, Melbourne in 2011. No action has been taken against these shadowy forces despite their propensity to violence and record of operating inside Australia. As the Turkish state moves on an almost daily basis further towards autocratic rule and dictatorship, its support for and links to extreme right wing and nationalist groups become correspondingly closer. Australia's security and intelligence agencies would be well advised to focus greater attention on these extremist groups and their presence in Australia, including the possibility of listing them as terrorist organisations, before their activities result in deaths or serious injuries on Australian soil.

### *2.4 The PKK is a legitimate popular liberation movement*

The PKK was formed in 1978 by a group of students led by Abdullah Öcalan. Its beliefs at the time have been described as a fusion of revolutionary socialism and Kurdish nationalism, and the PKK was later typically described as a Marxist or Marxist-Leninist group. Following Öcalan's capture and imprisonment in Turkey in 1999, after which he was heavily influenced by the writings of the American-Jewish libertarian and ecologist Murray Bookchin and others,

the PKK's ideology went through a significant transformation. Its principal commitment is now to Öcalan's model of democratic confederalism, which is expressed in three core principles of grassroots democracy, ecology and an absolute commitment to the rights and empowerment of women. The PKK can now be most accurately described as democratic, feminist, ecological and pluralist in its political views and in its everyday practice. These are views which may place the PKK to the left of the Australian political spectrum, but are clearly not of the extremist nature typically associated with terrorist organisations.

In the earlier stage of its political development, the PKK espoused and fought for an independent Kurdish nation state. Following the ideological transformation described above, the PKK no longer holds such beliefs or sees an independent nation as an aspirational goal. Indeed the nation state is now seen as one of the principal causes of the many decades of suffering and violent persecution experienced by the Kurdish people in Turkey and other countries of the Middle East. The PKK seeks liberation, autonomy and self-determination for Kurdish people and all the many other ethnic and religious groups living in the Middle East region, so that they can live together peacefully and with mutual recognition and respect.

In practical terms, this means the PKK no longer seeks to replace the Turkish state with a separate Kurdish state in the Kurdish-majority regions of Turkey; rather, it seeks autonomy within a democratised and transformed Turkey. Were a similar approach to be adopted in the neighbouring countries of Syria, Iraq and Iran, Kurds living in those countries would be free to peacefully associate, use their language and practice their culture across the international borders involved. This is a radical political position, unique to the Middle East, but once again not of the violent or extremist nature typically associated with terrorism.

Finally, it is clear the PKK enjoys very significant support among the Kurdish people. In the conflict situation that prevails today, it is of course impossible to assess the precise degree of support using the methods employed in peaceful and democratic countries. The fact that the PKK can continue to operate effectively in large areas of Turkey points to a significant level of support among the larger ethnic Kurdish population. The PKK also has strong links with Kurdish political organisations in neighbouring countries, and remains highly influential in ideological and strategic terms in the immediate region. Its interventions in specific events, such as facilitating the escape of an estimated 50,000 Yazidi people from genocidal attacks by ISIS in the Mt Sinjar region in 2014, have been decisive and successful.

### *2.5 The PKK is allied to the Syrian Democratic Forces*

The PKK has close ideological and organisational links to the Democratic Union Party (*Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat* or PYD), a predominantly Kurdish political movement in northern Syria. The PYD has been the driving force behind the dramatic transformation of this region (known as Rojava in Kurdish, and formally as the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria) in the period since the onset of the Syrian civil war in 2011. The region's defence militias, the People's Protection Units (YPG) and Women's Protection Units (YPJ) have been instrumental in defeating the scourge of ISIS terror gangs across this region. As recently as September 2014, virtually the entire area was under ISIS control with the city of Kobane under a punishing siege. With the aid of US military airstrikes and assistance, the Kurdish militias drove back ISIS forces and have since then virtually eliminated ISIS's presence in

northern Syria. This victory was achieved at significant cost in lives and injuries among the fighters of the Kurdish defence militias.

In 2015 the YPG and YPJ formed the Syrian Democratic Forces or SDF, a Kurdish-led but multi-ethnic alliance embracing Arab, Assyrian, Yazidi and other ethnic groups present in the region. This move reflects the PYD's fundamental commitment, as in the case of the PKK, to pluralism, multiculturalism and democracy. The US military have consistently described the SDF as a highly effective and principled force and have deemed it appropriate to provide it with arms, despite strenuous objections from Turkey which predictably labels the PYD, the YPG and YPJ militias and the SDF as terrorist groups. Turkey has in fact seriously undermined the fight against Islamist extremist groups in the region, including ISIS, through both open and covert support for groups the West regards as terrorist organisations. Turkey's dealings with ISIS, which include the involvement of President Erdoğan's son and the MIT intelligence service in the illegal purchasing and distribution of oil from ISIS-controlled groups, have been examined and extensively documented by reputable media organisations (although not in Turkey itself, where Erdoğan's regime deemed the matter of illegal oil trading to be of national security significance and was consequently able to avoid proper scrutiny and accountability).

If the PYD and its associated forces are indeed terrorist organisations, as Turkey alleges, it would seem strange that they have received support and backing from the US military over a period of several years, have encouraged and practiced a pluralist and democratic politics in the areas they control, and have been responsible for a momentous and hard-won victory over what is arguably the most brutal and evil manifestation of terrorism in the world today. If they are not, then Turkey's allegations are exposed as without foundation, and the same logic should be applied in the case of the PKK. The truth is that despite Turkey's systematic obfuscations and misinformation, it is the Kurdish political parties and their associated organisations who have been the only true and effective opponents of terror in the immediate region, in the form it is recognised in the West (ISIS and other Islamist groups). In this context, the listing of the PKK as a terrorist organisation by Australia, at the behest of an increasingly dictatorial and extremist regime which has at the very least had corrupt dealings with the terror groups, seems particularly unjust and inappropriate.

## *2.6 The PKK has significant support in the Australian community*

Many Australians, particularly those of Kurdish background, support the PKK as a legitimate and popular political organisation representing their ideals and aspirations. Listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation risks criminalising their political choice and potentially exposes a significant number of Australians to criminal prosecution. At the time the PKK was first listed as a terrorist organisation in 2006, PJCIS members the Hon Duncan Kerr MP and Senator John Faulkner issued a minority report (an unusual practice for the PCJIS) in which they called on the Australian Government to reassess its listing of the PKK. Duncan Kerr subsequently wrote: "The impact on Australia's Kurdish community of the enforcement of these laws [the Regulations listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation] could be far-reaching and disastrous, not just for those peaceable individuals who could unwittingly be caught up in terrorism trials, but more broadly for the relations between civic groups and the government".

Members of AFK are in regular contact with Kurdish community members who have commented on the impact that listing the PKK has on their daily lives as Australians. They speak of feelings of discrimination, fear and intimidation; the risk of ostracisation and abuse from others in the community, including in their workplaces, businesses and local communities, who may see their Kurdish colleagues and business associates or neighbours as terrorists simply by virtue of their support for Kurdish liberation and autonomy; and the indignity of being watched or kept under surveillance by Australia's domestic intelligence service (the Kurdish Democratic Community Centre of Victoria or KDCCV, for example, is periodically visited by ASIO officers who enquire about their activities and associations). This oversight by the authorities can at times take a more malign and even violent form, as for example when the KDCCV, and the homes of some of its leaders and members, were raided by the Australian Federal Police in 2010 (without any charges resulting from the exercise).

### *2.7 The PKK has been the key driving force for peace talks in Turkey*

In March 2013 the imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan initiated a peace process with the Turkish Government, known as the Solution Process (*Çözüm süreci*) in Turkish. In an open letter to the Kurdish people, Öcalan called for a ceasefire, an end to the PKK's armed struggle and the withdrawal of the PKK's guerrilla forces from Turkish soil. His call was embraced by the PKK and the ceasefire and other measures came into effect. This was followed by a series of confidence building measures on both sides and steps to take the peace process forward. Right wing and nationalist forces in Turkey vehemently opposed the ceasefire and the possibility of a peace process, and there were a number of violent provocations seemingly aimed at undermining the process, these were unsuccessful.

In early October 2014 a large number of Kurdish civilians were killed by the security forces in protests at the Turkish Government's policies during the Siege of Kobane. In the June 2015 general elections, the pro-Kurdish party HDP increased its support by 7.5%, while support for the ruling AKP fell by 9%. On 24 July 2015 the Turkish military commenced a large-scale military operation, Operation *Martyr Yalçın*, against the PKK, leading to the collapse of the ceasefire. President Erdoğan and AKP leaders began to fan nationalist and anti-Kurdish sentiment among the electorate and in the November 2015 snap elections, the AKP rebounded in popularity by 8.4%; support for the HDP, subject to systematic harassment and intimidation, fell by 2.4%.

It is clear from these facts that the PKK initiated the peace process in Turkey and was prepared to enter into a ceasefire and remove its armed forces from Turkish soil to pursue a real opportunity at a negotiated peace. The PKK's aim was to end decades of bitter conflict and create a lasting peace in a democratic and pluralist Turkey in which the rights and identities of all citizens could enjoy due respect. The PKK's peace initiative was destroyed by Turkish nationalist forces and specifically by the cynical actions of the Erdoğan regime, which used the Kurdish question to manipulate nationalist sentiment and to shore up political support at a time when Turkish voters were turning away from the AKP. Since the collapse of the ceasefire, Turkey has seen protracted violence, particularly in the Kurdish south-east regions, large numbers of civilian deaths, chiefly among Kurds, and the effective crushing of the HDP; responsibility for all these outcomes rests squarely with the Erdoğan regime. In light of this, for Australia to list the PKK as a terrorist organisation denies the historical facts and is arguably both inappropriate and morally unsound.



## 2.8 The Turkish state is moving rapidly towards autocracy and dictatorship

Though nominally a parliamentary democracy, Turkey under President Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) has moved steadily in the direction of autocratic rule and effective dictatorship. This trend was exacerbated by the regime's response to the July 2016 coup attempt, which has seen more than 77,000 people arrested and over 160,000 removed from their jobs, including 21,000 teachers, 2,745 judges and 10,000 soldiers. A free and independent media in Turkey has effectively been destroyed, with significant numbers of journalists arrested, charged and jailed on spurious allegations. Opposition politicians and political groups have been bullied, harassed and imprisoned on an unprecedented scale. The President's powers were significantly increased in the April 2017 referendum, supported by a narrow majority of voters after a highly irregular electoral campaign and voting process. Respect for international human rights standards is non-existent, with the documenting of human rights abuses on a mass scale. The Turkish regime has been criticised for, among other things, holding foreign citizens as effective hostages to pursue its own political agenda, abusing the Interpol "red notice" system to harass its political opponents and critics across Europe, and exporting its political ideology and the surveillance and harassment of opponents into foreign countries via the *Diyanet* religious network.

Hardly a week has gone by in the last two years in which Turkey's autocratic ruling regime has not been accused in the Western media of abuse of power, corrupt practices, economic vandalism, attacks on the independent press, the jailing of opposition politicians and the pursuit of a narrow and sectarian Islamist ideology. The regime is notoriously thin-skinned and has reacted to criticism with invective and a "doubling down" on its rhetoric and anti-democratic practices. Once seen as a loyal NATO member, Western ally and aspiring member of the European Union, Turkey under Erdoğan's AKP has been marginalised and has effectively "burnt its bridges" in terms of European Union membership; the regime's actions have, sadly, seen Turkey widely regarded with suspicion if not outright condemnation by many Western nations. Even the US, a longstanding supporter of Turkey, is now openly critical of the regime, its bullying pronouncements and divisive policies.

Australia's intelligence services may argue that listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation in this country is based entirely on objective criteria relating only to the PKK's policies and actions. As argued earlier in this submission, a broader examination of the selective use of the provisions of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* shows that political, historical and strategic considerations may also form part of the context in which listing occurs, even if there is no explicit reference to such considerations in the materials developed by the services and considered by the PJCIS. In the AFK's view, the initial listing of the PKK in 2006 may have occurred at a time when the PKK could be depicted as a violent separatist organisation with an extremist ideology, and Turkey as a moderate, democratic and pro-Western Islamic nation in the Middle East.

The 12 years that have elapsed since the initial listing have demonstrated just how inaccurate these views really are. The PKK is no separatist organisation, seeking liberation and autonomy for Kurds rather than an independent Kurdish state; its ideology is leftist but far from extremist, supporting women's liberation, ecology and pluralist democracy; and while engaged in an armed conflict with Turkey's military and security forces, its readiness to

accept a negotiated peaceful solution to the conflict is clear. Turkey, on the other hand, is now widely perceived as autocratic and undemocratic, with an extremist ruling regime entrenching its power by means of violent and repressive practices.

In this context, the time has truly come to ask: has Australia got it wrong, in listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation at the behest of an autocratic regime? Should Australia now take the courageous and morally correct step of allowing the listing to lapse? Doing so would in no way endorse the PKK, its ideology or its involvement in a protracted armed conflict; nor could it possibly be construed as critical of the Turkish people, who also suffer at the hands of the AKP regime. Allowing the terrorist listing to lapse would not make Australia or Australians any less secure, or act in any way against Australia's interests. It would however effectively redress an historical injustice and error, and put Australia in the correct position of watchful engagement with both sides in the conflict.

### 3. Conclusion and recommendation

When the PKK was first listed as a terrorist organisation in Australia in 2006, serious doubts were expressed by members of the PJCIS in a minority report, there were numerous submissions opposing the listing from a range of Australian civil society organisations, and the listing received significant media attention. Since then, re-listing of the PKK has been confirmed on each occasion the listing neared expiry, and now seems to have become almost an automatic process drawing little interest or opposition from Australian society.

This is unfortunate and very wrong. The listing of the PKK should be critically examined each time the listing nears expiry, and the arguments against listing given serious consideration by PJCIS members and ideally members of the Australian Parliament more generally. The rationale for listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation should be thoroughly tested and the broader context in which this listing takes place should be investigated and considered. Above all, it should be recognised that the PKK may be involved in an armed conflict with the forces of a national state without necessarily being a terrorist organisation, as in the case of many groups involved in liberation struggles across the globe, today and in the past.

The causes of democracy, non-violence, moderation, pluralism and tolerance, which Australia should rightly support, are not furthered or enhanced by listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation; in fact, the listing serves to strengthen the cause of a state and its ruling regime that are now increasingly associated with violence, autocracy, extremism and racist intolerance. Successive Australian Governments have erred in listing the PKK as a terrorist organisation, and Parliament should act now to correct this injustice by allowing the listing to lapse without renewal.

**Australians for Kurdistan recommends, based on the arguments outlined in this submission and other materials, that the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security exercise its powers to recommend to both Houses of Parliament that the listing of the Kurdistan Workers Party as a terrorist organisation under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* be disallowed.**