

## nts, not church law!



1993. Since then a pro-choice lobby has fought to un-restrict abortion. In 2010 the wave of protests was huge: it was bigger than anyone had anticipated. The government got scared, international media were all over them, and the wave of protest was so huge that they dropped the legislation. But there was another proposal, from pro-choice groups, which included legalising abortion until 12 weeks of pregnancy; and lots of other positive changes, like extra access to contraception and sex education in schools. Sexual education in schools at the moment is a joke, it consists of people who normally teach religious studies telling students that homosexuality is a sin and the best contraception is abstinence... This bill was rejected at the first reading. A few months ago the proposal to restrict eugenic abortion went to parliament and the pro-choice groups put together a new counter-proposal: it was pro-contraception,

sexual education and so on, and on 8 January it was rejected in the first vote again. But the liberal centre, with ten MPs from a centrist party which claims to be in opposition to the current government, abstained in the vote, and the proposal fell by exactly ten votes. The restriction on "eugenic abortion" hasn't yet been passed. But what has been restricted is access to the morning-after pill. The doctor can refuse to give you a prescription for the morning-after pill. This forces women to drive across country, shop around, and wind up waiting over 48 hours. Just before this bill came into effect, lots of women went into pharmacies and bought up morning-after pills. So there is now a network of self-help: a woman who needs a pill finds a woman who has got one, and then when she's taken it, she has a lot more time in which to try to obtain a replacement. The next wave of protests will start on 8 March, International Women's Day. In 2016, Polish feminists got in touch with feminists around the world to talk about joint activity on 8 March. After we defeated the last bill, a lot of the movement died back. But there is a large core of women who are still active. Involvement in the 2016 movement changed the way a lot of people thought: it turned people onto politics, made them understand that politics is about everyone, about you and me.

## Czechia: Kurdish leader arrested

Salih Musleem was formerly the co-president of the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, the political arm of the Kurdish Peoples Protection Units (YPG), in Syria. He was invited to take part in a conference on the Middle East, but was arrested in a hotel in Prague by Czech security forces following a request from the Turkish Government. He has now been released. The Turkish government accused Musleem of being a terrorist. As a matter of fact, it is Turkey and Erdogan who have backed ISIS and terrorist groups... who has victimised civilians in Syria, assassinated its political opposition within Turkey and abroad and filled its jails with politicians, journalists and citizens who oppose Erdogan's policies. The Turkish government is currently carrying out a major military campaign against the Syrian Kurdish area in the Afrin region of northern Syria. This has led to the killing and displacement of many innocent people. From a statement by Dabhy Jamal, Secretary of the International Federation of Iraq Refugees.

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particular reflects deep anger against the corruption and mismanagement of the Stalinist bureaucracy, sees the movement leading in the direction of genuine socialism, not a return to capitalism, congratulates the workers of the Soviet Union, particularly the striking miners of Vorkuta, in the Arctic Circle, who are leading the struggle for better pay and conditions and for an end to one-party dictatorship, notes that their fight has been in the face of vicious anti-strike laws of a type that even Her

## Syria: massacre in Ghouta

By Simon Nelson

Almost 400,000 people are trapped in Eastern Ghouta, the last enclave on the outskirts of Damascus that is still not under the control of Bashar al-Assad's Syrian regime. The UN Security Council has asked for a month-long ceasefire and for a humanitarian corridor to be opened up to allow civilians to

bombs on Eastern Ghouta while Iranian-backed militias controlled by Qasem Soleimani continued to try and drive out the last of the rebel forces. The 250,000 remaining members of Syrian al-Qaeda affiliate Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) are thought to have lost almost all control of the area. But their military efforts are keeping the army at bay. Eastern Ghouta fell early on in