

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

TUR 005 / 0717 / OBS 078

Arbitrary detention / Judicial harassment /
Obstacles to freedoms of association
and peaceful assembly

Turkey

July 7, 2017

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a partnership of FIDH and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **Turkey**.

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the arbitrary arrest and detention of nine human rights defenders, namely: Ms. **Nalan Erkem**, lawyer with the Citizens Assembly, Ms. **Özlem Dalkıran**, member of the Citizens Assembly, Ms. **İlknur Üstün**, member of the Women's Coalition, Ms. **Idil Eser**, Director of Amnesty International Turkey, Mr. **Güenal Kurşun**, lawyer with the Human Rights Agenda Association, Mr. **Veli Acu**, member of the Human Rights Agenda Association, **Mr. Nejat Taştan**, member of Equal Rights Watch Association, Mr. **Şeyhmuz Özbekli**, lawyer, and Mr. **Ali Garawi**, activist¹.

According to the information received, on July 5, 2017, the nine human rights defenders were arrested following a police raid during a digital security and information management workshop organised by the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly² in Büyükdada, Istanbul. As of publication of this Urgent Appeal, the nine human rights defenders were being detained in different police stations across town. Under State of Emergency provisions, they can remain in pre-trial detention for at least seven days. Under Turkey's state of emergency, they will not be given access to their lawyers and family for at least 24 hours.

It has been reported that they are accused of "membership of an illegal-armed organisation" under Article 314/2 of the Turkish Penal Code.

The Observatory expresses its deepest concerns over this new wave of arbitrary arrests targeting human rights defenders for the exercise of their legitimate and peaceful human rights activities and obstacles to freedoms of association and peaceful assembly³.

The Observatory urges Turkish authorities to grant Nalan Erkem, Özlem Dalkıran, İlknur Üstün, Idil Eser, Güenal Kurşun, Veli Acu, Nejat Taştan, Şeyhmuz Özbekli, and Ali Garawi as well as the two trainers and hotel owner arrested, immediate access to their lawyers and to immediately and unconditionally release them.

Actions requested:

Please write to the authorities in Turkey, urging them to:

i. Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Nalan Erkem, Özlem Dalkıran, İlknur Üstün, Idil Eser, Güenal Kurşun, Veli Acu, Nejat Taştan, Şeyhmuz

¹ Two foreign trainers - a German and a Swedish national - as well as the hotel owner were also arrested and remain detained to date.

² The Helsinki Citizen's Assembly is an NGO dedicated to peace, democracy and human rights in Europe, working on the notions of fundamental rights and freedoms, peace, democracy and pluralism.

³ Countless human rights defenders have been arrested since the 2016 failed coup. Among them, Mr. Taner Kılıç, chair founding member of Amnesty International Turkey remains in detention following his arrest on June 6, 2017. See the Observatory's Urgent Appeal TUR 003 / 0617 / OBS 064 published on June 16, 2017.

Özbekli, and Ali Garawi, the two trainers and hotel owner arrested, as well as of all human rights defenders in Turkey;

ii. Immediately and unconditionally release Nalan Erkem, Özlem Dalkıran, İlknur Üstün, Idil Eser, Günal Kurşun, Veli Acu, Nejat Taştan, Şeyhmuz Özbekli, and Ali Garawi, the two trainers and hotel owner arrested as their detention is arbitrary since it only aims at punishing them for their legitimate human rights activities;

iii. Immediately allow Nalan Erkem, Özlem Dalkıran, İlknur Üstün, Idil Eser, Günal Kurşun, Veli Acu, Nejat Taştan, Şeyhmuz Özbekli, and Ali Garawi, the two trainers and hotel owner arrested to access their family and lawyers and guarantee their right to due process and a fair trial;

iv. Comply with all the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1998, in particular its Articles 1, 6(a), 9, 11 and 12.2;

v. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Turkey.

Addresses:

- President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Fax: (+90 312) 525 58 31
- Prime Minister of Turkey Binali Yıldırım, Fax: +90 (312) 403 62 82 Email: ozelkalem@basbakanlik.gov.tr
- Minister of Justice, Mr. Bekir Bozdağ, Fax: +90 (0312) 419 33 70; E-mail: ozelkalem@adalet.gov.tr
- Minister of Interior, Mr. Süleyman Soylu ; Fax: +90 (312) 425 61 30
- Ambassador Izzet Selim Yenel, Diplomatic Mission of Turkey to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium; Fax: + 32 2 511 04 50
- Ambassador Mr. Ali Naci Koru, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41 22 734 08 59; Email: mission.turkey@ties.itu.int

Please also write to the diplomatic mission or embassy of Turkey in your respective country.

Paris-Geneva, July 7, 2017

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (the Observatory) was created in 1997 by FIDH and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT). The objective of this programme is to intervene to prevent or remedy situations of repression against human rights defenders. FIDH and OMCT are both members of ProtectDefenders.eu, the European Union Human Rights Defenders Mechanism implemented by international civil society.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org
- Tel and fax FIDH + 33 1 43 55 25 18 / +33 1 43 55 18 80
- Tel and fax OMCT + 41 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29