

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue No. 180 | Date November 27-December 3, 2023

## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 37 people over alleged links to the Gülen movement. In October 2020, a UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) [opinion](#) said that widespread or systematic imprisonment of individuals with alleged links to the group may amount to crimes against humanity. Solidarity with OTHERS has compiled a detailed [database](#) to monitor the Gülen-linked mass detentions since a failed coup in July 2016.

**December 1:** Turkey's Council of Forensic Medicine (ATK) [issued](#) a report that finds Makbule Özer, an 81-year-old Kurdish woman with serious disabilities and health problems, fit to serve her prison sentence.

## ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#), a former public sector worker who was sacked from his job by a decree-law during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who was reported missing as of August 6, 2019, in what appears to be one of the latest cases in a string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

**November 30:** The gendarmerie [intervened](#) the press statement in front of the workplace in Urfa to protest the dismissal of a worker on the grounds of union membership and detained BİRTEK-SEN President Mehmet Türkmen and union representatives Çayan Dursun and Mazlum Ayciçek.

**November 30:** Urfa Governorate [made](#) a declaration on November 29, 2023 and banned press declarations,

meetings, marches, hunger strikes, sit-in protests, rallies, opening stands, setting up tents, distributing leaflets, hanging banners and similar actions and activities for 3 days as of November 29, 2023.

**December 1:** Ninety-seven protestors who had gathered in Istanbul's Kadıköy district shortly after two powerful earthquakes hit Turkey's south earlier this year claiming that corruption was the cause of the ensuing devastation and high death toll were [indicted](#).

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**November 27:** Turkey's broadcasting watchdog, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), [imposed](#) fines totaling more than TL 22 million (\$760,982) on seven opposition television stations during the first 11 months of 2023.

**November 27:** 17 people were [detained](#) in house raids in Derik and Kızıltepe districts of Mardin on the grounds of making illegal organization propaganda in their social media posts.

**November 27:** During house raids in Urfa, 1 person was [detained](#) on the grounds of making illegal organization propaganda in social media posts.

**November 29:** Tuncay Özdamar, an editor for German public broadcaster Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln (WDR), was briefly [detained](#) in September in Ankara, where he had travelled to visit his ailing mother, due to tweets he posted in 2018.

**November 30:** At least 3 news articles about the 700 million TL loan given by the state bank Halkbank to a gang leader with the support of the Credit Guarantee Fund were [blocked](#) from access and ordered to be deleted by the

Istanbul Anatolian 5th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

**December 1:** Emine Şenyaşar, a woman who has been demanding justice for three of her family members murdered by people connected to a lawmaker from Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), [faced](#) up to two years in prison for allegedly insulting the MP İbrahim Halil Yıldız.

**December 1:** The news article titled "Everyone from the police to the prosecutor is involved!" published on birgun.net website was [banned](#) to access by Istanbul Küçükçekmece 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace on October 30, 20023 and the content is ordered to be deleted.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**November 28:** Turkish police [raided](#) an apartment in İstanbul belonging to Ali Yeşildağ, a former confidant of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who made shocking revelations about the president earlier this year, and detained his wife.

**November 30:** Members of Turkey's top appeals court [filed](#) criminal complaints against a prominent law professor, İzzet Özgenç, due to his remarks about a recent crisis involving the country's two top courts regarding the case of a jailed lawmaker.

**December 1:** A court in Ankara has ordered the dismissal of the executive board of Turkey's top doctors association, Turkish Medical Association (TTB), a year after the organization's chairwoman, Şebnem Korur Fincancı, was [arrested](#) for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda.

**December 1:** Lawyer Bülent Akbay had a quarrel in front of the courthouse in İskenderun district of Hatay with two people, reported to be the chief public prosecutor's bodyguard and driver, and [was](#) subjected to physical violence by them.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**November 30:** The Turkish court that retried Selçuk Mızraklı, the former co-mayor of the predominantly Kurdish province of Diyarbakır in southeastern Turkey who was dismissed and replaced by a trustee, [handed](#)

down the same sentence of more than nine years to the politician.

**December 1:** Former Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) district co-chairs Şiyar Koç and Dilan Çıtanak were [detained](#) in Nusaybin district of Mardin by the police who stopped the car they were in through a Muş based investigation.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**November 30:** 2 people who were detained in Göllüce village of İznik district of Bursa were [subjected](#) to torture and ill-treatment at the gendarmerie station.

**November 30:** 3 prisoners (Yusuf Bulga, Çeçen Kilkaya and Doğan Özbahçeci) were [transferred](#) to other prisons against their will.