

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue No. 168 | Date September 4-10, 2023

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 61 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.

September 4: A former judge, [Hüsamettin Uğur](#), serving a prison sentence on conviction of “terrorist organization membership” has been denied parole despite being eligible since May 2023.

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

September 7: Bursa Governorate [made](#) a declaration on September 6, 2023 and banned all demonstrations and events across the province for 6 days as of September 5, 2023, citing the march from Istanbul to Ankara by the Association for Solidarity with Families of Prisoners and Convicts (TAYAD).

September 8: In Izmir, 39 workers were [beaten](#) and detained after resisting their dismissal for being union members.

September 8: The police [intervened](#) with the people protesting the demolition of 411 workplaces in Suruç district of Urfa by the municipality appointed with trustees and detained 4 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

September 5: Turkish prosecutors have [launched](#) an investigation into the organizers of an art exhibition in İstanbul after the exhibition has been targeted by religious and nationalist groups since its opening for containing nudes and promoting LGBT propaganda.

September 5: An Erzurum court [ruled](#) to block access to at least 3 news reports on the allegations that bureaucrats at the Erzurum Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services under the Ministry of Family and Social Services.

September 6: A Rize Criminal court [ruled](#) to delete at least 3 news made during the lawsuit filed against the journalist who reported the harassment and mobbing allegations against Assoc. Prof. Dr. Serkan Hacıcaferoğlu on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

September 6: 3 news articles mentioning MHP's 27th term Van MP candidate Şahin Yağar were [blocked](#) from access with the decision of Erciş Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

September 6: At least 3 news reports on Muammer Sarıdoğan, the sub-governor of Karayazı district and municipal trustee in Erzurum were [blocked](#) from access by the decision of the Karayazı Criminal Judicature of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

September 8: An Istanbul court [ordered](#) the blocking of access to and deletion of at least 3 news reports mentioning the names of Istanbul Deputy Police Chiefs Hakan Bolat and Cevdet Hürol Öztürk on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

September 7: A Turkish court has [imposed](#) a travel ban on two journalists, Faruk Eren and Furkan Karabay, as part of a case launched over a complaint filed against them.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

September 5: Law Office of the Oppressed (EHB) lawyer Sezin Uçar and Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) Co-Chair lawyer Özlem Gümüştas were [detained](#) at the Çağlayan Courthouse where they went to testify.

September 8: Ankara Branch of the Chamber of Architects [announced](#) that their Board Member Muteber Osmanpaşaoğlu was dismissed 35 days before her retirement while on medical leave and without a defense.

KURDISH MINORITY

September 5: 5 Amedspor fans, including a disabled child, who came to the stadium with their uniforms to watch the Saryerspor-Amedspor match in Istanbul were [attacked](#) by a racist group.

September 8: Kurdish political activist [Amir Kahrizi](#) faced a deportation threat to Iran despite being entitled to protection as a refugee.

OTHER MINORITIES

September 6: Turkey's broadcasting watchdog, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), has [approved](#) the broadcast of an anti-LGBT public advertisement.

September 6: The [investigation](#) against two students carrying the LGBTI+ flag at the METU graduation ceremony has been expanded. The Rectorate announced that it will take action against three more students carrying the rainbow flag.

PRISON CONDITIONS

September 6: [Celalettin Can](#), a writer incarcerated in an İstanbul prison, was not given food or water for two days.

September 8: Fevzi Arslan, an ill prisoner in Urfa T Type Prison No 1, was not [given](#) a corset which is mandatory for him to use, and was not referred to hospital.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

September 7: A lawyer [died](#) of his injuries after being shot by Turkish border guards while trying to cross into Turkey from Syria via the northwestern region of Idlib.

September 8: Iranian theater actor [Ali Pouransari](#), who was imprisoned for a year for participating in the Mahsa Jîna Emînî protests and who came to Turkey planning to go to Canada, was arrested and transferred to Tuzla Repatriation Center (GMM). Turkish authorities want to hand Pouransari over to Iran.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

September 5: A Kurdish farmer in southeast Turkey's Muş province on Monday was allegedly severely [beaten](#) by soldiers in a detention center.

September 6: Lawyers Sezin Uçar and Özlem Gümüştas were detained at the Istanbul Courthouse where they had gone to give a statement. The prosecutor [asked for](#) a blood sample to be taken from them, but the lawyers refused to give a blood sample, and a hair sample was forcibly taken.

September 8: Oya Ş., who lives in Izmir, [stated](#) that the police officers at Bornova Çamdibi Police Station used pepper spray, beat her, and attacked her with sexist and racist remarks.

September 8: A person named Baki Kuzey was [subjected](#) to physical violence by the watchmen he had a quarrel with in Çankaya district of Ankara and was detained by being handcuffed behind his back.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

September 7: Thirty-one women were [murdered](#) by men in Turkey in August, while 20 died under suspicious circumstances.