

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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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.

August 22: Emel Çiftçi, a Kurdish musician who is undergoing treatment for cancer was [arrested](#) on terror-related charges in southeastern Turkey despite medical reports confirming her condition.

August 23: The Administration and Observation Board [postponed](#) the release of Sait Gürkan, an ill prisoner of 30 years in Aksaray T Type Closed Prison, who underwent bypass surgery 7 months ago, for 6 months.

August 23: Prison Administration and Observation Board [postponed](#) the release of Mehmet Hüseyin Öz, a prisoner in Gaziantep H Type Prison, for 6 months on the grounds of "high potential to reoffend".

August 23: Prison Administration and Observation Board [postponed](#) the release of Sait Gürkan, a prisoner in Aksaray T Type Prison who has been imprisoned for 30 years, for 6 months on the grounds of "lack of remorse".

August 24: Turkey's Justice Ministry [stated](#) in its opinion to the Constitutional Court that the continued imprisonment of an opposition lawmaker, Can Atalay, is appropriate despite his parliamentary immunity.

August 24: The Ministry of Justice [decided](#) that Mustafa Said Türk, an 86-year-old disabled man who was convicted

of links to the faith-based Gülen movement, will be able to return to his home in western Turkey based on a report from Turkey's Council of Forensic Medicine (ATK).

August 24: The Administration and Observation Board of Silivri Closed Prison Directorate No. 5 [rejected](#) the application for probation made by poet İlhan Sami Çomak and his lawyers, who have been in prison for 29 years and are one year away from their conditional release date.

August 25: Human Rights Association (IHD) Diyarbakır Branch Co-Chair Ercan Yılmaz [revealed](#) that the release of at least 271 prisoners in prisons across Turkey is postponed by the decisions of Administration and Observation Boards in prisons.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunc](#), 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

August 22: The police [detained](#) a man who staged a protest in front of the Ministry for Family and Social Services in Ankara against the high cost of living in the country.

August 26: Istanbul police [detained](#) at least 25 rights defenders gathered on İstiklal Street to protest against law enforcement's refusal to recognize the Constitutional Court's (AYM) rulings on rights violations.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

August 22: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) [gave](#) a 72-hour deadline to the Turkish edition of US broadcaster Voice of America to obtain a broadcasting license or to face an access ban.

August 23: A court [ruled](#) that Kadir Koç, a local Turkish journalist, will begin serving a prison sentence on three convictions of insulting the president and two former ministers.

August 24: Istanbul Anatolian 4th Criminal Judicature of Peace [ruled](#) that a news report mentioning MET-GUN Construction company and other 3 news articles about the company must be deleted on the grounds of violation of personal rights and must not be associated with the requestors in search engines.

August 25: Furkan Karabay an editor at the Gerçek Gündem news website [faced](#) charges of insulting public officials in tweets that allegedly targeted two deputy ministers and a member of the country's top court.

August 25: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) [imposed](#) administrative fines on both channels due to the detection of "erotic content" in dance clips on NR 1 Türk and the inclusion of smoking images in a video broadcast by Power TV.

August 26: Erzurum 2nd Criminal Judicature of Peace [banned](#) access to 3 news reports on corruption and sexual abuse in the report prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Services on Erzurum Private Güzide Care Center on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

August 27: Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office [notified](#) Celalettin Can, the spokesperson of the 78'ers Initiative, of the 15-month prison sentence given to him for his work as an editor-in-chief of Özgür Gündem newspaper for one day in solidarity with the newspaper.

August 27: The Şanlıurfa 2nd Criminal Judicature of Peace [ruled](#) to block access to 3 news about the arrest of the father and uncle who allegedly tortured a 15-year-old boy in Şanlıurfa on the grounds of violation of personal rights upon the request of the Ministry of Family and Social Services.

KURDISH MINORITY

August 22: The Prosecutor's Office [released](#) the person who left flammable and explosive materials in the building shared by HDP and Green Left Party in Adana on judicial control conditions.

PRISON CONDITIONS

August 23: Reports [documented](#) overcrowding continues to be an issue, particularly in closed prisons.

August 25: Reports [revealed](#) that prisoners in Diyarbakır High Security Prison No. 1 were prevented from exercising their social, cultural and sportive rights, prisoners were not given the newspapers they wanted even though there was no recall order against them, the food given to prisoners was not nutritious and hygienic, and the prices of the products sold in the prison canteen were high.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

August 21: The Van 5th High Criminal Court [sentenced](#) two Turkish soldiers to a total of 69 years in prison after they were found guilty in January of raping an Afghan refugee during her pushback from Turkey to Iran.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

August 21: Republican People's Party (CHP) deputy Sezgin Tanrıku [released](#) a report stating that a total of 357 people were allegedly mistreated by Turkish police in June.

August 21: Police officers allegedly severely [beat](#) 2 men at Ankara police headquarters.

August 23: Reports [revealed](#) that Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) members Mihriban Aslan and Hatice Özaslan, who were detained in Antep, were subjected to a strip search at Antep Provincial Security Directorate Anti-Terror Department.

August 24: 2 police officers in civilian clothes and 1 watchman [subjected](#) women passers-by to physical and verbal violence in Çankaya district of Ankara.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

August 24: Justice Minister Yılmaz Tunç [stated](#) that the Turkish government has sought the extradition of 1,269

people living in exile in 112 countries over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

August 21: The We Will Stop Femicide Platform [published](#) that twenty-five women were murdered by men in Turkey in July, while nine died under suspicious circumstances.