

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 64 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.

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

October 20: The Governorate of Van [made](#) a declaration on October 19, 2023 and announced that all events such as press declarations, sit-ins, polls, opening/setting up tents and stands, organizing petitions, distributing leaflets, brochures and flyers and all kinds of protest actions and similar activities are banned for 2 days as of October 21, 2023.

October 20: Tunceli Governorate [made](#) a declaration on October 19, 2023 and announced that press declarations, meetings, demonstrations, rallies, protests, sit-ins, commemorations, hunger strikes, opening stands,

petitions, concerts, festivals, distributing flyers, leaflets, brochures and similar actions and activities throughout the province are subject to the permission of the local administrative chief for 5 days as of October 20, 2023.

October 21: Police [detained](#) 26 people, including activists and family members of the Saturday Mothers, during the group's 969th weekly demonstration in İstanbul's Galatasaray Square, where they were demanding justice for their loved ones who disappeared in police custody in the 1990s.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

October 16: At least 2 news articles on the torture of children during "zikir" in Şanlıurfa were [blocked](#) from access by the Şanlıurfa 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

October 16: At least 3 news articles on the allegation that Mehmet Sait D., a public prosecutor in Mardin's Midyat district, beat Dr. Gözde Bağcı, the director of the Forensic Medicine Branch in the district, were [blocked](#) from access by the Midyat Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

October 17: A correspondent, journalist Elif Akkuş, from public broadcaster Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) who was suspended from her job in April was [detained](#) in Ankara.

October 17: An Ankara court [blocked](#) access to 17 tweets in which Turkish Gendarmerie General Commander Arif Çetin was criticized for meeting with individuals associated with criminal organizations.

October 17: A court in İstanbul [ruled](#) to block access to 59 pieces of online content, including news articles, columns,

social media posts and videos covering bribery allegations implicating prominent judges.

October 17: At least 3 news articles about the engagement ceremony for an 8-year-old girl and her 9-year-old uncle's son in Mardin's Kızıltepe district were [blocked](#) from access after the Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services launched an investigation.

October 18: Social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, [faced](#) the threat of subsection to a 50 percent bandwidth reduction in Turkey in the event it fails to comply with a Turkish social media law that requires platforms to designate a representative in the country.

October 18: The police in eight provinces [detained](#) at least 15 people on accusations of disseminating terrorist propaganda at a Newroz celebration in 2022.

October 19: At least 12 news articles were [ordered](#) to be deleted by the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds that the news on the sanctions imposed on the news on the bribery ring in the courthouse violated personal rights.

October 19: A news article on the EngelliWeb website was [ordered](#) to be deleted by the Istanbul 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

October 19: Turkey's broadcasting watchdog, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), [launched](#) an investigation into the Turkish edition of German broadcaster Deutsche Welle due to what it said is its "biased reporting" on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.

October 20: A high criminal court in İstanbul [rejected](#) a request for the release from prison of journalist Barış Pehlivan, who was put behind bars for a fifth time this summer.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

October 18: Mesut Türkmen, a member of Kurtuluş Church in Malatya, was first [threatened](#) with a note saying "This is a Muslim neighborhood, watch your feet" and then on August 21, 2023, an armed attack was organized against the car he was in by unknown person or persons.

October 19: A city council member from the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) [made](#) antisemitic remarks, including praise for Adolf Hitler for killing Jews, to condemn a hospital strike in the Gaza Strip.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

October 19: Greens and Left Party for the Future (Green Left Party) Diyarbakır MP Ceylan Akça Cupolo [submitted](#) the Law on the Recognition and Protection of Human Rights Defenders to the Parliament.

October 19: Green Left Party Diyarbakır MP Serhat Eren [demanded](#) an investigation into the deaths of children hit by armored vehicles in Kurdish provinces in the Child Rights Sub-Committee of the Human Rights Investigation Commission of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, but the AKP and İYİ Party opposed the request.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

October 18: Turkey's Constitutional Court [received](#) 551,156 individual applications between 2012 and Sept. 30, 2023.

KURDISH MINORITY

October 21: Wedding singers and 23 people were [detained](#) in Eskişehir on the allegation that 4 songs sung by 2 wedding singers at a wedding in Eskişehir contained lyrics containing "illegal organization propaganda".

OTHER MINORITIES

October 16: University students living in tent cities in Turkey's earthquake disaster zone [have](#) been grappling with flooding, contagious disease outbreaks and vermin infestations.

PRISON CONDITIONS

October 19: The Human Rights Foundation (İHD) has [received](#) eight complaints alleging rights violations in a Diyarbakır prison in southeastern Turkey over the course of a single day.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

October 20: It is learned that five prisoners in Yozgat T Type Prison No 1 were [subjected](#) to physical violence of the wardens and then were put in solitary cell.