

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

October 13: Mithat Tanrıtanır, a HDP executive in İstanbul, [alleged](#) that he was briefly abducted on Oct. 7 by people who introduced themselves as police officers, and taken to a remote location where he was coerced into becoming an informant for the authorities.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

October 12: The police and the gendarmerie [blocked](#) protest marches organized by mineworkers in Manisa and Karaman, injuring one worker and briefly detaining another one.

October 13: Prosecutors in Tunceli [launched](#) a probe into mayor Fatih Mehmet Maçoğlu and 80 people over an environmental protest.

October 13: The Governor's Office in Tunceli [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

October 14: The police [raided](#) the İdil Cultural Center in İstanbul, detaining five members of the leftist music band Grup Yorum.

October 14: The police [blocked](#) a press statement held by a work safety union in Ankara, using excessive force and detaining eight people.

October 15: The police [raided](#) the headquarters of an İstanbul-based NGO for solidarity with the families of detainees, briefly detaining three members of the group.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

October 12: Two of the four journalists who were arrested on last week after reporting on two Kurdish villagers allegedly tortured and thrown from a military

helicopter were [subjected](#) to ill-treatment in prison, according to their lawyer.

October 13: An İstanbul court of appeals [upheld](#) the prison sentences handed down to Sözcü journalists, executives and employees on terrorism-related charges.

October 13: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalist Arafat Dayan to 5 years, 10 months in prison on multiple terrorism-related charges.

October 13: A lower court [resisted](#) a ruling by the Constitutional Court ordering the retrial of opposition politician and journalist Enis Berberoğlu, who was sentenced to imprisonment over a 2014 news report about Turkey's involvement in arms shipments to Islamist groups in Syria.

October 13: A district governor in İstanbul [banned](#) the performance of a Kurdish-language rendition of an Italian play at the state-owned Istanbul City Theatre, citing alleged terrorism propaganda.

October 13: Four executives of the BirGün newspaper who were put on trial for reporting on the tweets of a government whistleblower were [acquitted](#) of terrorism-related charges.

October 13: A quarterly media monitoring [report](#) released by Bianet said that at least four journalists were detained and 89 journalists stood trial between July and September 2020.

October 13: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports on allegations implicating President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's lawyer, citing violation of personal rights.

October 13: Authorities [blocked](#) access to Armenian government websites amid the ongoing military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

October 14: An online freedom [report](#) released by Freedom House ranked Turkey in the 'not free' category, noting decline in the Internet freedom.

October 14: An İstanbul prosecutor [demanded](#) up to 35 years in prison for exiled journalist Can Dündar on espionage and terror charges. The court overseeing the case previously declared Dündar as "fugitive" and ruled for a confiscation of his property.

October 14: Tunceli prosecutors [indicted](#) journalist Özgür Boğatekin over a video and a comment he posted on Facebook in 2017.

October 15: Media watchdog RTÜK [imposed](#) a fine against the government-critical Halk TV broadcaster over the remarks of a guest about nationalist MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli who is an ally of the ruling AKP.

October 15: An İstanbul court [rejected](#) an appeal lodged by the Yeni Yaşam newspaper against an access block imposed on its online edition.

October 16: Media watchdog RTÜK [announced](#) that audio streaming service Spotify applied for a license for online broadcasting in Turkey, in compliance with new regulations recently imposed on online providers. A cabinet member in an interview [vowed](#) to proceed with the implementation of the new regulations and to severely penalize social media companies which resist. [Facebook](#), which last week told Turkish authorities that it would not comply with the legislation, will face an initial TL 10 million (\$1.3 million) fine in November for defying the rules. The penalties will increase as non-compliance continues.

October 18 Some 2,500 academics worldwide [signed](#) a petition calling on Turkey to release Cihan Erdal, a researcher at Carleton University in Canada and an LGBT activist who was detained in İstanbul in September as part of a prosecution against widespread Kurdish protests in 2014.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

October 14: President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan verbally [targeted](#) prominent human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı, calling her a "terrorist."

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

October 13: A lower court [resisted](#) a ruling by the Constitutional Court ordering the retrial of opposition politician and journalist Enis Berberoğlu, who was sentenced to imprisonment over a 2014 news report about Turkey's involvement in arms shipments to Islamist groups in Syria.

October 13: The lawyers of Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) were [prevented](#) from seeing their client, on account of a 6-month lawyer ban imposed against Öcalan.

KURDISH MINORITY

October 12: Two of the four journalists who were arrested on last week after reporting on two Kurdish villagers allegedly tortured and thrown from a military helicopter were [subjected](#) to ill-treatment in prison, according to their lawyer.

October 12: Kurdish political activists Hazal Taş and Ferit Yıldız were [detained](#) by the police in Antalya.

October 13: A district governor in İstanbul [banned](#) the performance of a Kurdish-language rendition of an Italian play at the state-owned Istanbul City Theatre, citing alleged terrorism propaganda.

October 13: Mithat Tanrıtanır, a HDP executive in İstanbul, [alleged](#) that he was briefly abducted on Oct. 7 by people who introduced themselves as police officers, and taken to a remote location where he was coerced into becoming an informant for the authorities.

October 13: Provincial HDP executives Değer Yorgun and Osman Metindir were [detained](#) as part of a terrorism-related investigation in Antalya. The two were released on probation on Oct. 16.

October 14: A Şanlıurfa court [ruled](#) to arrest local HDP politician İsmail Kaplan for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda. Kaplan was initially detained on Oct 6.

October 14: A criminal investigation report [submitted](#) to the parliament demanded the lifting of the parliamentary immunities of five HDP MPs.

October 14: A court ruled to [arrest](#) six people, including a HDP provincial executive in Malatya, on terrorism-related charges, as part of an investigation into the Democratic Society Congress (DTK).

October 16: An Ankara court [remanded](#) in custody Kurdish politicians Gültan Kışanak and Gülser Yıldırım as part of a prosecution over the widespread protests in Kurdish-majority cities back in 2014.

October 18 Some 2,500 academics worldwide [signed](#) a petition calling on Turkey to release Cihan Erdal, a researcher at Carleton University in Canada and an LGBT activist who was detained in İstanbul in September as part of a prosecution against widespread Kurdish protests in 2014.

MILITARY OPERATIONS ABROAD

October 13: A lower court [resisted](#) a ruling by the Constitutional Court ordering the retrial of opposition politician and journalist Enis Berberoğlu, who was sentenced to imprisonment over a 2014 news report about Turkey's involvement in arms shipments to Islamist groups in Syria.

OTHER MINORITIES

October 18 Some 2,500 academics worldwide [signed](#) a petition calling on Turkey to release Cihan Erdal, a researcher at Carleton University in Canada and an LGBT activist who was detained in İstanbul in September as part of a prosecution against widespread Kurdish protests in 2014.

PRISON CONDITIONS

October 12: A prisoner named Yunus Gökgöz who tested positive for Covid-19 [lost](#) his life behind bars after his treatment was belated.

October 14: A [news report](#) revealed the postmortem photos of former police officer Mustafa Kabakçioğlu who on August 29 was found dead in a quarantine cell in a prison in the northeastern province of Gümüşhane. According to the report, Kabakçioğlu was placed in a quarantine cell after showing symptoms of Covid-19. In his last petition to the prison administration, he complained about his health condition getting worse. While the authorities [claim](#) that Kabakçioğlu had asked in writing not to be hospitalized, they have not been able to produce his written demand. Serving a prison sentence for alleged ties to the Gülen movement, Kabakçioğlu was also excluded from an [early release law](#) enacted back in April 2020 to ease overcrowding in prisons, and he would have been released if the law did

not discriminate against political prisoners held behind bars over non-violent activities.

October 15: Six sick inmates in a Samsun prison were reportedly [denied](#) necessary treatment.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

October 12: Turkmen activist Dursoltan Taganova was detained for a few days in a migrant detention center in Turkey. Rights groups [called on](#) the Turkish government to halt plans to deport Taganova, who, if deported to Turkmenistan, is likely to face severe political persecution over her peaceful criticism of the Turkmen government.

October 13: A 20-year-old Afghan migrant was reportedly [thrown](#) off a building by human traffickers in the eastern province of Van. The man was hospitalized.

October 15: Interior Minister Süleyman Soyly [claimed](#) that Turkey's cross-border military operations in Syria allowed for the voluntary return of more than 400,000 Syrian refugees. Last year, rights groups [raised](#) allegations that Turkish authorities were coercing Syrians into signing voluntary return forms.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

October 12: Two of the four journalists who were arrested on last week after reporting on two Kurdish villagers allegedly tortured and thrown from a military helicopter were [subjected](#) to ill-treatment in prison, according to their lawyer.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

October 14: A woman named Hatice Tusu was abducted and [killed](#) by a man despite a previous restraining order imposed against him.