

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 10: Family members of former police chiefs who led corruption operations in 2013 against high-level government officials, have been arbitrarily [denied](#) release despite being eligible for parole, according to the statements of their lawyer.

August 14: Arzu Nur Özkan, a seven-month-pregnant teacher imprisoned for alleged links to the Gülen movement, [said](#) in a letter she wrote from prison that she is afraid for her baby's life because of the health problems she is experiencing due to abysmal prison conditions.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#) and [Hüseyin Galip Küçüközyiğit](#), former public sector workers who were sacked from their jobs by decree-laws during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who were reported missing respectively as of August 6, 2019 and December 29, 2020, in what appear to be the latest cases in a string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

August 9: The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) activist Nursel Tanrıverdi while staging a sit-in to protest her summary removal from her public sector job in the aftermath of a 2016 coup.

August 10: The police in Bolu [blocked](#) a workers' protest march, briefly detaining two labor union activists.

August 11: The police in Şanlıurfa [detained](#) 18 farmers who were protesting a local energy distributor over power cuts.

August 12: The Şırnak Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

August 13: The police in Ankara [blocked](#) a workers' protest, detaining 14 people.

August 14: The police in Bitlis [intervened](#) in a protest, detaining 70 people.

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

August 15: The Van Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days. The ban has been in effect uninterruptedly since November 2016.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

August 9: Antalya prosecutors and a local gendarmerie command [launched](#) an investigation into 66 people over their social media posts about the wildfires that ravaged the region since July 28.

August 9: A media monitoring [report](#) said that a total of 179 journalist appeared in court in 81 separate cases during the second quarter of this year, while 16 journalist were detained.

August 9: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the pro-Kurdish JinNews website.

August 10: İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into Ekşi Sözlük, a popular online debate network, accusing the platform of inciting hatred and enmity in society and inciting people to commit crimes due to a post on the network.

August 10: Broadcasting watchdog RTÜK [imposed](#) fines on six TV stations due to the way they covered wildfires in the southern and western provinces.

August 11: An Adana court [sentenced](#) journalist İbrahim Karakaş to nine years, nine months in prison on charges of membership in a terrorist organization. Karakaş denied the charges and said he was being prosecuted for his journalistic work at the pro-Kurdish newspaper Yeni Yaşam.

August 11: A ruling party member with radical jihadist links [threatened](#) journalist Murat Ağirel.

August 12: The police in several southern, southeastern and eastern provinces [detained](#) 59 people in connection with their social media posts allegedly containing terrorist propaganda.

August 12: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the pro-Kurdish Etkin news agency.

August 12: The authorities [blocked](#) access to news reports about allegations implicating a prominent businessperson.

August 13: A Van court [sentenced](#) journalist Hikmet Tunç to eight months, 22 days in prison for insulting the trustee appointed by the government to replace the elected mayor of a local district.

August 13: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) journalist Beritan Canözer who works for the pro-Kurdish JinNews.

August 13: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that lower courts violated the freedom of expression of university administrator Oğuz Demirkaya by sentencing him to one

year, two months in prison over a comment he posted under an online news article.

August 15: The police in Bursa [detained](#) four people due to their social media commentary.

August 15: An Ardahan court [ruled](#) to block access to the Twitter account of a popular user.

KURDISH MINORITY

August 9: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the pro-Kurdish JinNews website.

August 10: The police in Kars [detained](#) five members and executives of the HDP on terrorism-related charges.

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August 13: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) journalist Beritan Canözer who works for the pro-Kurdish JinNews.

August 13: The police in Mardin briefly [detained](#) local HDP youth member Çektar Ermiş.

August 15: The police in Batman [detained](#) three local HDP executives.

August 15: The police in Mardin [detained](#) seven people including local HDP executives.

OTHER MINORITIES

August 11: Apple [removed](#) the app for Hornet, the world's leading gay social network with more than 30 million users, from its Turkey store in line with a verdict delivered in August 2020 by a Turkish court.

August 13: Unknown individuals in İstanbul [attacked](#) an Alawite prayer house (Cemevi). Two people were later detained in connection with the attack.

PRISON CONDITIONS

August 11: Hatice Özçelik, the wife of sick inmate İsmet Özçelik who is held behind bars in Denizli, [tweeted](#) that the prison administration continued to deprive her husband of critically important heart and diabetes medication.

August 13: A prison administration in Kocaeli [denied](#) treatment to inmate Bülent Kaya after he refused hospitalization in handcuffs.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

August 9: Fred Kajjubi, a Ugandan dissident residing in Turkey, was [arrested](#) on unidentified charges. Ugandan rights groups rallied their colleagues to petition the Turkish government and the United Nations to block any potential extradition of Kajjubi to Uganda where he is likely to face persecution due to his criticism of the Ugandan government.

August 10: A group of individuals in Ankara [attacked](#) houses, shops and vehicles owned by Syrian refugees.

August 10: According to [media reports](#), Turkey was unable to provide education for 397,253 Syrian refugee children during the 2019-2020 academic year.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

August 9: [Orhan İnandı](#), a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator rendered from Kirgызstan by Turkey's intelligence agency, was tortured and his right arm broken in three places by security officers, his wife announced on Twitter.

August 9: The police in Ağrı physically [assaulted](#) two people during a house raid.

August 11: The guards in a Bayburt prison physically and verbally [assaulted](#) inmate Neslihan Çetin.

August 12: The guards in a Diyarbakır prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Kurbanî Özcan.

August 13: The police in Adana [held](#) a gun to a 12-year-old girl's head during a house raid.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

August 9: Berlin-based Turkish boxer Ünsal Arık [announced](#) in a video on Twitter that he was attacked by several assailants. In the past, the government-critical boxer was the target of several attacks and protests from pro-government individuals and groups.

August 10: A German court [rejected](#) asylum applications lodged by academic Sinem Mut and graduate student Anıl Kaya both of whom are sentenced by Turkish courts to six years, three months in prison over their attendance in demonstrations. Mut and Kaya are faced with a potential deportation to Turkey.

August 12: Turkish army fire [killed](#) an Iraqi Kurdish farmer in northern Iraq.