

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 87 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.

**January 9:** Reports revealed that Hamdin Örddek, a sick inmate incarcerated in Giresun, [lost](#) his life on January 4, shortly after he was released on December 29.

## 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

**January 9:** The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that the conviction of a man on terrorism charges over his membership in an association violated his rights.

**January 10:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit 40 people who stood trial over their participation in a workers' protest.

**January 13:** Tunceli prosecutors [indicted](#) 19 people who were detained for participating in Newroz celebrations in the province.

**January 13:** The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, briefly detaining two party executives.

**January 13:** The police in Van [intervened](#) in a folk celebration organized in a university campus, briefly detaining seven people.

**January 13:** The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days. The ban has been held in effect in the province since January 2022.

**January 15:** The police in İstanbul [detained](#) 14 people who were returning from a demonstration.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**January 9:** The Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) [released](#) a report which said that one Turkish journalist was killed and 65 others were physically assaulted in 2022. The report also noted that 39 journalists were sent to jail throughout the year.

**January 9:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) in favor of journalist Bülent Kılıç who was subjected to police violence in June 2021, ordering the state to pay him damages.

**January 10:** The police in İstanbul [detained](#) journalist Sezgin Kartal. On January 13, Kartal was arrested by a court on terrorism-related charges.

**January 10:** An Ankara court [ordered](#) opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu to pay damages to the presidents for insulting him in public remarks.

**January 10:** At least 171 journalists [appeared](#) before courts, 11 journalists were detained and eight journalists were assaulted in the last quarter of 2022, according to a new monitoring report.

**January 10:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Ender İmrek who stood trial on charges of insulting the president due to his reporting.

**January 11:** A court [sentenced](#) human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı to two years, eight months and 15 days in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda in remarks where she urged an investigation into allegations that the Turkish military had used chemical weapons in northern Iraq. The court also ruled to release Fincancı from prison.

**January 11:** The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), the broadcasting regulator, [imposed](#) a monetary fine on the Halk TV channel due to a program in which RTÜK was criticized. The agency also imposed temporary broadcast suspensions on the TV5 channel for hosting former footballer and MP Hakan Şükür and on Radio Sputnik over a program that highlighted allegations of mistreatment in prisons.

**January 11:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports covering allegations of judicial misconduct implicating İrfan Fidan, a member of the Constitutional Court.

**January 11:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to at least two news reports as well as an opinion column about allegations involving a military consulting firm headed by a former presidential aide.

**January 11:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports covering corruption allegations implicating presidential aide Metin Kıratlı.

**January 11:** German prosecutors in Darmstadt [rejected](#) a Turkish court's request for judicial assistance in the trial of singer Ferhat Tunç, on the grounds that it would violate his right to freedom of expression. Tunç is on trial for insulting the Turkish president due to his social media posts in 2018.

**January 11:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit opposition politician Canan Kaftancıoğlu of charges of insulting presidential aide Fahrettin Altun. Kaftancıoğlu stood trial over her comments about allegations that Altun had construction done in his İstanbul home without a permit.

**January 12:** An appellate court in Diyarbakır [upheld](#) the conviction of photojournalist Abdurrahman Gök, who stood trial on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda

for taking pictures of a university student being shot to death by the police in 2017.

**January 12:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit Mika Can Raun who was tried due to a video she shared on social media where she was seen throwing banknote down the toilet.

**January 13:** An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) opposition politician Nurullah Efe to one year, nine months and 26 days in prison on charges of insulting the president in an opinion article.

**January 13:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to at least two news reports and an opinion column about prosecutor Alev Ersan Albuz who was reportedly removed from a femicide investigation for being too slow.

**January 13:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports covering allegations about a religious group with ties to the Ministry of Health.

**January 13:** An Aydın court [ruled](#) to acquit musician Kadir Çat, who stood trial on terrorism-related charges over a song that he sang at a HDP rally.

**January 14:** The police in Van [summoned](#) journalist Oktay Candemir for a questioning as part of an investigation launched into him due to his news reporting.

## **FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**

**January 13:** Airport police in İstanbul [prevented](#) HDP MP Kemal Bülbül from travelling abroad, citing an administrative measure against him.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

**January 11:** A court [sentenced](#) human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı to two years, eight months and 15 days in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda in remarks where she urged an investigation into allegations that the Turkish military had used chemical weapons in northern Iraq. The court also ruled to release Fincancı from prison.

## **JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW**

**January 9:** Ankara prosecutors [declined](#) to prosecute prison guards accused of strip-searching five jailed journalists in a women's prison in the province.

**January 11:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports covering allegations of judicial misconduct implicating İrfan Fidan, a member of the Constitutional Court.

**January 11:** The Constitutional Court [delivered](#) a landmark decision in favor of an applicant who claimed that she was blocked from withdrawing money from her account at the now-closed Bank Asya on suspicion of membership in the Gülen movement.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**January 9:** An Ankara prison [imposed](#) disciplinary sanctions on inmates Rojdan Eraz and Ayşe Yağcı, suspending their visitation rights for a month for chanting Kurdish-language slogans about women's rights.

**January 13:** Airport police in İstanbul [prevented](#) HDP MP Kemal Bülbül from travelling abroad, citing an administrative measure against him.

**January 13:** Tunceli prosecutors [indicted](#) 19 people who were detained for participating in Newroz celebrations in the province.

**January 13:** The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a demonstration organized by the HDP, briefly detaining two party executives.

**January 13:** An Aydın court [ruled](#) to acquit musician Kadir Çat, who stood trial on terrorism-related charges over a song that he sang at a HDP rally.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**January 9:** An Ankara prison [imposed](#) disciplinary sanctions on inmates Rojdan Eraz and Ayşe Yağcı, suspending their visitation rights for a month for chanting Kurdish-language slogans about women's rights.

**January 10:** A women's prison in Mersin reportedly [excluded](#) political prisoners from joint activities and imposed restrictions on the number of books that inmates can possess. The same prison facility also transferred an inmate due to her comments during a phone call with her family.

**January 12:** A Bursa prison [imposed](#) disciplinary sanctions on inmates Abdullah Öcalan, Ömer Hayri Konar,

Veysi Aktaş and Hamili Yıldırım, suspending their visitation rights for three months.

**January 14:** The guards in an Ankara prison [prevented](#) inmates from talking to each other during a joint sportive activity.

**January 14:** Reports [revealed](#) that a Rize prison had not been supplying tap water to inmates for the last two weeks.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**January 11:** A Norwegian NGO [reported](#) that a total of 988 incidents of pushback were registered in the Aegean sea last year, representing an increase of 57.1 percent over 2021.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**January 9:** Ankara prosecutors [declined](#) to prosecute prison guards accused of strip-searching five jailed journalists in a women's prison in the province.

**January 9:** Kurdish singer Hozan Canê [gave](#) an interview in which she recounted the mistreatment she faced during her imprisonment in Turkey. She also revealed the mistreatment of jailed members of the Gülen movement, which she had witnessed during the same time.

**January 12:** The guards in an Elazığ prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Mahsum Sarp, breaking his teeth.

**January 13:** The guards in a Giresun prison physically [mistreated](#) inmates İsmail Taylan and İsa Aslan and verbally threatened other prisoners held in their ward. The victims reportedly suffered injuries as a result of the physical violence.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

**January 11:** German prosecutors in Darmstadt [rejected](#) a Turkish court's request for judicial assistance in the trial of singer Ferhat Tunç, on the grounds that it would violate his right to freedom of expression. Tunç is on trial for insulting the Turkish president due to his social media posts in 2018.

**January 13:** The Swedish government [rejected](#) Turkey's request for the extradition of four Turkish citizens, including a former police chief who took part in a 2013

corruption investigation that targeted high-ranking members of the Turkish government. Turkey demands the extradition of 42 people, mostly political dissidents, as a precondition for ratifying Stockholm's NATO membership.