

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 98 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.

**June 11:** [Yusuf Özmen](#), a stage 4 cancer patient who was arrested in March to serve a sentence over his links to the Gülen movement, remains in prison despite a medical report stating that he is almost entirely disabled.

## ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

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

**June 7:** The police in Ankara briefly [detained](#) 15 people while holding a demonstration about Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention.

**June 7:** The police in Istanbul briefly [detained](#) activist Nursel Tanrıverdi while staging a sit-in to protest her summary removal from public service in the aftermath of a failed coup in 2016.

**June 9:** The police in Istanbul [blocked](#) a demonstration about a mob boss' online revelations, briefly detaining 26 people.

**June 11:** A court [sentenced](#) 15 businesspeople over their involvement in the activities of the now-closed Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON).

**June 11:** The police in Istanbul [blocked](#) a demonstration held by leftist activists, briefly detaining 10 people.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**June 7:** Prosecutors [launched](#) two separate investigations into journalist and opposition MP Ahmet Şık due to his remarks describing Turkey as a murderer state.

**June 8:** The European Court of Human Rights [faulted](#) Turkey over the imprisonment of journalist and writer Ali Bulaç, who was jailed for close to two years over alleged links to the Gülen movement. The Strasbourg-based court ruled that Turkey violated Bulaç's freedom of expression and right to security and ordered Turkey to pay 12,240 euros in damages.

**June 8:** An Istanbul prosecutor [demanded](#) prison sentences for journalists Canan Coşkun, Ali Açar and Can Uğur, who are standing trial for reporting about a police officer who fatally shot a 13-year old during the Gezi Park protests in 2013.

**June 8:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to nine tweets by mob boss Sedat Peker claiming that an Ankara judge stayed in a luxury hotel that costs more than 10,000 dollars a night.

**June 8:** Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into two senior figures of the Cumhuriyet daily on accusations of insult and libel for reporting on several photos implying a relationship between Turkish politicians and the mafia.

**June 8:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to overturn a prison sentence of one year, three months to journalist Sabiha Temizkan. The court acquitted Temizkan, who had received the sentence on terrorism-related charges over her social media messages.

**June 8:** An İzmir court [ruled](#) to acquit reporter Melike Aydın, who stood trial over her news reports.

**June 9:** A Diyarbakır prosecutor [demanded](#) a prison sentence of up to five years in prison for writer Nurcan Kaya, who is standing trial on terrorism-related charges due to her tweets in support of Kurdish militants in northern Syria.

**June 9:** An İzmir court [sentenced](#) Rifat Serdaroğlu, a former minister and the leader of a political party, to 23 months, 10 days in prison on charges of insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his far-right election ally, Devlet Bahçeli.

**June 9:** A Muğla court [sentenced](#) a 56-year-old man to one year in prison on charges of insulting the president on social media.

**June 10:** A mob in Gaziantep physically [assaulted](#) reporter Ahmet Atmaca while following up on news.

**June 11:** A Bursa court [sentenced](#) local journalist Ozan Kaplanoğlu to one year, 10 months, 15 days in prison for spreading terrorist propaganda, for reporting on a press statement critical of a Turkish military operation into Syria in 2018.

**June 11:** INTERPOL [announced](#) that it denied a Red Notice request from Turkey for journalist Can Dündar on the grounds that it was of a political character.

**June 11:** Actor Levent Üzümcü [announced](#) that he was summoned by the police for questioning over his social media posts from three years ago about the fluctuations in the value of the Turkish lira.

**June 11:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to 13 tweets by mob boss Sedat Peker that involved allegations implicating high-ranking members of the government, including the interior minister.

**June 11:** A Tekirdağ court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about a sexual assault allegations involving a religious association close to the government.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

**June 10:** The Council of Europe's (CoE) Council of Minister [threatened](#) to launch disciplinary proceedings against Turkey over its failure to implement a court order to release philanthropist Osman Kavala.

**June 11:** The United Nations special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders [called](#) on Turkey to stop using vague terrorism charges to detain and imprison human rights defenders.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**June 11:** The Constitutional Court [ordered](#) a retrial due to violation of the defendants' rights in a case in which a Diyarbakır court refused to abide by a European Court of Human Rights ruling.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**June 7:** A prosecutor [refiled](#) an indictment that seeks to close down HDP, accusing the pro-Kurdish party of having links to terrorism and posing a threat to the "indivisible integrity of the state."

**June 8:** The police in Van [detained](#) local politicians Mustafa Avcı, Zehra Güçen, Dilşa Kocakaya, Gazal Dilek and Tülay Demir. The detainees were released on probation on June 11.

**June 9:** The police in İstanbul [detained](#) 12 local HDP executives and members.

**June 11:** A Diyarbakır appeals court [upheld](#) a prison sentence of 22 years, three months handed down to former Kurdish lawmaker Leyla Güven on terrorism-related charges.

**June 11:** The police in Hakkari [detained](#) local HDP politicians Sipan Turan, Sinem Seven, Zeynep Kaya and Sozdar Atilla on terrorism-related charges.

**June 11:** The police in Şırnak [detained](#) a local HDP member.

## MILITARY OPERATIONS ABROAD

**June 6:** Turkish drone strikes in northern Iraq [killed](#) three civilians in a UN-supported refugee camp.

## MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS ABROAD

**June 12:** The United Nations Human Rights Committee [called](#) on Turkey to promptly take all measures necessary to establish the whereabouts of Orhan İnandı, a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator in Kyrgyzstan who is feared to have been abducted by Turkey. The US State Department [expressed](#) concern over reports about İnandı's disappearance.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**June 7:** A report revealed that a doctor in İstanbul [refused](#) to examine a trans woman due to her identity.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**June 7:** A man named Birol Yıldırım [died](#) after going to a police station in İstanbul about the detention of his employees. While the official statement by the Governor's Office said Yıldırım died due to health reasons, the family claimed that he was beaten to death after an argument with the officers.

**June 10:** The municipal police in İstanbul physically [assaulted](#) a street peddler.

**June 13:** The authorities [refused](#) to allow inmate Murat Can, a former military cadet jailed on coup-related charges, to participate in the funeral of his parents who both died in a traffic accident, citing security reasons.

**June 13:** İstanbul prosecutors [decided](#) not to prosecute an alleged incident of torture involving the presidential security detail on the grounds of lack of evidence.