

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 75 | November 22-28, 2021

November 28: Members and volunteers of our association joined a national mobilization in Belgium on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, organized by the Mirabal Belgium platform. The march in Brussels presented a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the widespread male violence as well as state violence threatening women in Turkey on a daily basis. The participants told the stories of prominent victims of violence and highlighted Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, which represented a significant setback in the fight against gender-based violence.

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 363 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.

November 23: Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu [announced](#) in a parliamentary meeting that since a failed coup in July 2016, Turkish authorities have detained a total of 391,587 people and arrested 99,962 on account of their alleged links to the Gülen movement.

November 26: Ayşe Özdoğan, who suffers from a rare form of cancer, was finally [released](#) after spending 56 days in prison despite hospital reports recommending her release.

November 26: An Istanbul court [ruled](#) to continue the imprisonment of businessman and civil society leader

Osman Kavala. Turkey has kept Kavala behind bars for more than four years despite a European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) order for his release. Amnesty International Europe Director Nils Muižnieks released an [open letter](#), calling on member states of the Council of Europe to launch infringement proceedings against Turkey for failing to implement the ECtHR ruling.

November 26: The police [detained](#) prominent opposition politician Metin Gürcan on charges of political espionage.

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

November 22: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist Nurcan Yalçın to three years, seven months and 22 days in prison on terrorism charges due to her membership in a women's association.

November 24: The police in Istanbul, Ankara, Çanakkale and Mersin [intervened](#) in demonstrations to protest the government's economic policies, detaining at least 91 people.

November 24: The Tunceli Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

November 24: An İstanbul court [rejected](#) a request for filing a criminal complaint against public officials responsible for the violent police attack on a demonstration in August 2018.

November 25: Kocaeli prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into a women's group for throwing headscarves on the ground in a protest against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

November 25: The police in İstanbul [fired](#) tear gas at hundreds of women protesting against male violence.

November 27: Gendarmerie forces in Şırnak [attacked](#) a protest against a local energy distributing company, detaining one person.

November 28: The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a demonstration to protest the government's economic policies, detaining 24 people.

November 28: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

November 22: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist Nurcan Yalçın to three years, seven months and 22 days in prison on terrorism charges due to her membership in a women's association.

November 23: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about municipal debt allegations implicating the ruling party.

November 23: Reporters Without Borders released a [statement](#), slamming what it called political influence in the trial of the murder case of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi who was murdered at the Saudi consulate in İstanbul.

November 24: The police in Van [detained](#) Hacı Tunç, a shop owner who was seen referring to Turkey's southeast as "Kurdistan" in a video with an opposition politician.

November 24: The authorities [announced](#) investigations into the users of 271 social media accounts over their comments about the depreciation of the Turkish lira.

November 24: The broadcasting watchdog, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), [fined](#) a radio

station over the remarks of a presenter alleging lack of financial transparency on the part of the government.

November 24: The authorities [released](#) Mezopotamya news agency reporter Emrullah Acar after six days in detention over his phone conversation with a news source.

November 25: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Fatih Gönül, who stood trial on terrorism charges over his work for a pro-Kurdish news agency that was shut down by a decree-law.

November 26: A Hakkari court [sentenced](#) former HDP deputy Leyla Güven to five years in prison for disseminating terrorist propaganda due to her statements critical of a Turkish military operation in Syria's Afrin province.

November 26: The police in Adana [detained](#) 17 people for disseminating terrorist propaganda on social media.

November 26: The Coalition for Women in Journalism released a [report](#) on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which found that Turkey led the world in terms of physical assaults on women journalists.

November 28: The police in Ankara [detained](#) reporter Öznur Değer while covering a protest.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

November 26: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to continue the imprisonment of businessman and civil society leader Osman Kavala. Turkey has kept Kavala behind bars for more than four years despite a European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) order for his release. Amnesty International Europe Director Nils Muižnieks released an [open letter](#), calling on member states of the Council of Europe to launch infringement proceedings against Turkey for failing to implement the ECtHR ruling.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

November 23: The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that Turkey had acted unlawfully by arresting more than 400 judges and prosecutors after a failed 2016 coup.

November 23: Reporters Without Borders released a [statement](#), slamming what it called political influence in

the trial of the murder case of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi who was murdered at the Saudi consulate in İstanbul.

November 25: A new [report](#) released by the UK-based NGO Statewatch documented the use of an algorithm by Turkey's authorities to profile and dismiss more than 13,000 military personnel on account of their links to the Gülen movement.

November 26: The Constitutional Court [issued](#) a second rights violation ruling concerning the application of a citizen after a local court refused to implement the first ruling.

KURDISH MINORITY

November 22: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist Nurcan Yalçın to three years, seven months and 22 days in prison on terrorism charges due to her membership in a women's association.

November 24: The police in Van [detained](#) Hacı Tunç, a shop owner who was seen referring to Turkey's southeast as "Kurdistan" in a video with an opposition politician.

November 24: The authorities [released](#) Mezopotamya news agency reporter Emrullah Acar after six days in detention over his phone conversation with a news source.

November 25: The police in Van [tortured](#) HDP youth member Çetin Temel who was visiting a police station to give his regular signature as part of a judicial control measure.

November 25: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Fatih Gönül, who stood trial on terrorism charges over his work for a pro-Kurdish news agency that was shut down by a decree-law.

November 26: A Hakkari court [sentenced](#) former HDP deputy Leyla Güven to five years in prison for disseminating terrorist propaganda due to her statements critical of a Turkish military operation in Syria's Afrin province.

November 26: The police in Batman, Kars, Kocaeli and Manisa [detained](#) 25 members and executives of the HDP on terrorism charges.

November 26: The police in Batman [detained](#) four members and executives of the HDP.

November 26: The police in Kars [detained](#) former HDP executive Ayhan Gezici.

PRISON CONDITIONS

November 24: MP Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu [announced](#) that the heating system in an İstanbul prison is not working despite extremely cold temperatures.

November 24: An Adana prison [launched](#) a disciplinary investigation into 52 inmates for staging a hunger strike to protest rights violations they suffered behind bars.

November 25: A Batman prison [subjected](#) inmate Gülgeş Tatlı to strip-searches. She was also deprived of necessary medical treatment.

November 25: Justice Minister Abdülhamit Gül [announced](#) that a ban on contact visitation in prisons that went into force in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic will soon be lifted. The statement came after widespread criticism about the practice, which continued despite the lifting of pandemic restrictions elsewhere.

November 27: A prison administration in Adana [denied](#) hospitalization to inmates who refused to undergo mouth searches.

November 28: Reports indicated that a sick inmate named Bangin Mohamed [died](#) in a Hatay prison on November 12. Local human rights lawyers said that the prison administration denied Mohamed medication and treatment.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

November 23: Bolu Municipal Council [approved](#) a discriminatory regulation that makes it more expensive for foreigners to get married in the province.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

November 23: [Orhan İnandı](#), a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator rendered to Turkey from Kyrgyzstan by Turkish intelligence, said at his first court hearing that he was tortured while in custody.

November 24: The police in İzmir physically [assaulted](#) two people over a parking dispute.

November 24: Reports revealed that three people who were detained in Şırnak on November 17 on terrorism charges were [subjected](#) to torture and ill-treatment in custody.

November 25: The police in Van [tortured](#) HDP youth member Çetin Temel who was visiting a police station to give his regular signature as part of a judicial control measure.

November 27: The guards in an İstanbul prison physically [assaulted](#) a person visiting an imprisoned relative. The prison administration imposed a visitation ban on the inmate and the relative.

November 27: Ağrı mayor Savcı Sayan and his security detail physically [attacked](#) workers at a construction site.

November 28: Police officers in Batman physically [assaulted](#) children and called them “traitors” during a raid into the house of journalist Dilbirin Turgut.

November 28: The guards in a Kahramanmaraş prison physically [assaulted](#) inmates.

November 28: The police in Ankara [mistreated](#) 25 people who were detained during a protest.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AND VIOLATIONS

November 23: [Orhan İnandı](#), a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator rendered to Turkey from Kyrgyzstan by Turkish intelligence, said at his first court hearing that he was tortured while in custody.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

November 25: On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Bianet released its gender-based violence [statistics](#) which showed that men killed at least 285 women and inflicted violence on at least 711 women between January 1, 2021 and November 23, 2021. Another report [found](#) that a total of 793 women have applied for legal assistance against sexual harassment and rape in custody since 1997. Another [report](#), published by the Coalition for Women in Journalism, found that Turkey led the world in terms of physical assaults on women journalists.

November 25: Kocaeli prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into a women’s group for throwing headscarves on the ground in a protest against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

November 25: The police in İstanbul [fired](#) tear gas at hundreds of women protesting against male violence.