

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 75 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.

October 4: A Konya prison [denied](#) parole to Nesip Yapıcı, a parole-eligible inmate suffering from throat cancer who recently underwent surgery.

October 4: Şerife Sulukan, a former teacher jailed for alleged links to the Gülen movement and not released despite suffering from severe paralysis, [underwent](#) a heart surgery. Media reports indicated that Sulukan was in intensive care and that the authorities were not informing her family about her state of health. On October 6, Sulukan was reportedly sent back to jail.

October 5: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that Kurdish politician Leyla Güven's re-arrest despite her election to parliament in 2018 violated her right to liberty and security.

October 6: The president [granted](#) amnesty to Bilal Konakçı, a former police officer and bomb disposal expert who was severely disabled due to a work accident and who was sentenced to more than seven years in prison on account of his alleged links to the Gülen movement.

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

October 3: The police in İstanbul and Diyarbakır [intervened](#) in demonstrations organized by the HDP to protest the assassination of a journalist in Iraqi Kurdistan, briefly detaining 36 people.

October 4: An İzmir court [acquitted](#) 11 people who stood trial over their participation in a Labor Day event in the province.

October 5: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a workers' protest, detaining 21 people.

October 5: The Van Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of eight days.

October 7: The police in İzmir and Manisa [detained](#) 13 people due to their participation in demonstrations.

October 8: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) three people for staging a protest about sick prisoners.

October 9: The police in İstanbul and several provinces across the country [intervened](#) in demonstrations held to call for the release of the jailed leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), detaining at least 170 people. Video footage of the police intervention showed HDP

MPs Habip Eksik and Sait Dede being battered on the ground. Eksik's leg and nose were broken.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

October 3: Deniz Önal, the editor of a local newspaper in Tekirdağ, was physically [assaulted](#) by a relative of a district mayor due to the news published on his newspaper.

October 4: Opposition MP and prominent human rights advocate Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu [announced](#) that Tiktok censored one of his videos on free speech.

October 5: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) reporter Mert Soydan, who was covering a workers' protest.

October 5: A court [ordered](#) opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu to pay damages to the president for raising allegations of corruption in a public tender.

October 5: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to at least six news reports about allegations implicating the owner of a luxury hotel group close to the government.

October 5: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about bribery allegations implicating the president's former lawyer as well as [two reports](#) published by a press freedom observer on previous access bans imposed on news reports with similar content.

October 5: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the Kızıl Bayrak news website.

October 5: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit Turgut Öker, the leader of a Europe-based Alevi platform who was standing trial for spreading terrorist propaganda on social media.

October 6: A Mardin court [sentenced](#) Kurdish journalist Çetin Kurşun to 13 years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

October 6: The police in Şırnak [detained](#) a man named Mehmet Şirin Demirtaş over his social media posts.

October 6: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three opinion pieces about allegations implicating the Capital Markets Board (SPK) as well as [three reports](#) published by a press freedom observer on previous access bans imposed on news reports with similar content.

October 6: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports about gendarmerie colonel Yılmaz Kirgel's verbal attack targeting a football club from a predominantly Kurdish province.

October 6: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Turkey's broadcasting regulator, [imposed](#) fines on TV stations Tele1, Halk TV and KRT TV for airing debate programs about a corruption allegation.

October 6: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit 10 members of the main opposition party who stood trial due to the distribution of a party brochure that raised corruption allegations.

October 7: An Ankara prosecutor [demanded](#) prison sentences of up to 12 years for 12 retired admirals who released a statement opposing a canal project supported by the government.

October 7: The police in Siirt [detained](#) Cemil Taşkesen, a man who was previously detained and released for referring to the region as Kurdistan in a video where he was talking to an opposition politician. Taşkesen was released under judicial control on October 9. He faces charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

October 7: The police in Tekirdağ [detained](#) six people on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda on social media. The detainees were arrested by a court the next day.

KURDISH MINORITY

October 3: The police in Erzurum [detained](#) local HDP executives Muammer Duman, Türkan Sümbül, Yüksel Kişi, Çetin Demir, Remziye Tosun and Emin Tosun. The detainees were released the next day.

October 3: The police in Van [detained](#) local Kurdish politician Ökkeş Kava. Kava was released the next day.

October 3: The police in İstanbul and Diyarbakır [intervened](#) in demonstrations organized by the HDP to protest the assassination of a journalist in Iraqi Kurdistan, briefly detaining 36 people.

October 4: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) former district mayor Belgin Diken to six years, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges. Diken was one of the elected mayors in the predominantly Kurdish southeast

who were removed from office by the interior ministry and replaced by government-designated trustees.

October 5: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that Kurdish politician Leyla Güven's re-arrest despite her election to parliament in 2018 violated her right to liberty and security.

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October 7: The police in Siirt [detained](#) Cemil Taşkesen, a man who was previously detained and released for referring to the region as Kurdistan in a video where he was talking to an opposition politician. Taşkesen was released under judicial control on October 9. He faces charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

October 9: The police in İstanbul several provinces across the country [intervened](#) in demonstrations held to call for the release of the jailed leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), detaining more than 130 people. Video footage of the police intervention showed HDP MPs Habip Eksik and Sait Dede being battered on the ground. Eksik's leg and nose were broken.

PRISON CONDITIONS

October 3: Some inmates in a women's prison in Diyarbakır were [hospitalized](#) due to food poisoning.

October 3: A Denizli prison [denied](#) healthcare to sick inmate Ekim Polat.

October 5: An Adana prison [denied](#) hospital referrals to inmates who refused to undergo mouth searches.

October 7: The guards in a Bolu prison [confiscated](#) clothes and a blanket belonging to sick inmate Civan Boltan.

October 7: A prison disciplinary board in Bursa [imposed](#) a three-month visitation ban on Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

October 7: The Interior Ministry [prohibited](#) foreign nationals from registering themselves in eight districts of İstanbul.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

October 3: The guards in a Kocaeli prison [battered](#) Ahmet Dizlek, an inmate suffering from stomach cancer.

October 7: The police in Hakkari [mistreated](#) two people, one of them a minor, during a house raid.

October 7: The police in İzmir and Manisa [mistreated](#) 16 people who were detained in house raids.

October 7: Reports revealed that the guards in a Kahramanmaraş prison physically [assaulted](#) 32 prisoners. Some of the prisoners were later transferred to other prisons and were subjected to strip-searches during their transfer.

October 7: The Human Rights Association (İHD) [released](#) a report which said that in 2021 a total of 5,488 people in Turkey were subjected to torture and ill-treatment in police custody, on the street or in prison.

October 8: Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu in a public speech [told](#) law enforcement officers to "break the legs" of caught drug dealers.

October 9: The police in Hakkari physically [assaulted](#) HDP MPs Habip Eksik and Sait Dede during a demonstration, breaking Eksik's leg and nose.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

October 5: Family members of Uğur Demirok, a Turkish businessman based in Azerbaijan, [announced](#) that he had been missing for a month. Eyewitnesses say they have seen Demirok being forced into a van by a group of masked individuals. Azeri authorities told the family that Demirok was taken to Turkey while Turkish authorities gave contradictory statements.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

October 6: Men killed 26 women and inflicted violence on at least 71 women in September, according to a monthly [report](#) published by Bianet.