

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue No. 187 | Date January 15-21, 2024

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 97 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.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

January 18: Onur Selim Y., a 20-year-old university student living and studying in the northeastern Turkish province of Erzurum, [died](#) by hanging himself from a pipe.

January 18: Abdullah Varışlı, an ill prisoner in Erzurum Oltu Prison who was being treated for cancer, [died](#) in hospital on January 16, 2024.

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 EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

January 15: At the 16th Çukurova Book Fair, the promotional poster of Nergiz Publications was [removed](#)

upon the instruction of the governor of Adana, who was disturbed by their book "Coup on National Education".

January 15: A content on the Engelliweb website dated November 14, 2023 and a post on the X account of the EngelliWeb project were [blocked](#) from access by the Diyarbakır 4th Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

January 17: A teacher who allegedly targeted "Turkey's Century," a campaign promise made by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to elevate Turkey to global prominence, was [fired](#) from her job and ousted from the civil service by the Education Ministry.

January 18: Turkish first division club Başakşehir on Thursday [ended](#) the loan of Israeli midfielder Eden Kartsev, who reposted a social media message calling for the release of hostages held by Hamas militants.

January 18: A court in the southeastern Turkish province of Diyarbakır has [decided](#) to keep a Kurdish journalist, Dicle Müftüoğlu, co-chairperson of the Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association and an editor at the Mezopotamya news agency, who was arrested in May on terrorism-related charges in jail.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

January 15: Turkish prosecutors have [found](#) no grounds to investigate public broadcaster Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) for airing an interview with the brother the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in the run-up to a critical election in İstanbul in 2019 although the man had been sought by Turkey on terrorism charges.

January 16: An İstanbul court has [handed](#) down a prison sentence of two-and-a-half years to a son of the Somali president who was involved in a deadly car accident in Turkey in November but converted it into a fine of TL 27,300 (\$906).

January 19: The Constitutional Court of Turkey [received](#) nearly 220,000 individual applications over the past two years from people who claim that they were subjected to rights violations in yet another sign of the deteriorating human rights situation in the country.

KURDISH MINORITY

January 15: A Turkish prosecutor has [demanded](#) the continued pretrial detention of Gültan Kışanak, a Kurdish politician and the former co-mayor of Diyarbakır who has been behind bars on terrorism-related charges since October 2016.

January 16: Turkish police on Tuesday [conducted](#) raids across 28 provinces and detained a total of 165 people, including peace activists and members of the Peoples' Democracy and Equality (DEM) Party, for alleged ties to terrorism.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

January 15: Emin Güler, a 94 percent disabled seriously ill prisoner in Urfa T Type Prison No 2, was [transferred](#) to Erzincan L Type Prison against his will.

January 17: Ferhat Günay, a detainee in İstanbul Marmara (Silivri) Prison was [subjected](#) to strip search and physical assault of the wardens.

January 19: 21 people who were [detained](#) in İstanbul were subjected to torture and ill-treatment at Provincial Security Directorate, and that Gönül Karaman and her father were subjected to physical violence of the police officers while they were detained in a house raid and their statements were tried to be taken unrecorded.