

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 725 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 18: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) [faulted](#) Turkey over the detention of 167 judges and prosecutors after a failed coup in July 2016, ordering the Turkish government to pay damages to each applicant. The ruling came in addition to six previous similar ones and the number of judges and prosecutors whose applications have been upheld by the ECtHR in their cases against Turkey has risen to 847.

October 18: The authorities [released](#) from prison Kurdish politician Gülser Yıldırım four months after she became eligible for parole.

October 21: The Turkish Medical Association (TTB) [released](#) a report stating that jailed Kurdish politician Aysel Tuğluk's state of health has rapidly deteriorated and that proper treatment cannot be provided in prison.

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

Provincial governors and other local authorities imposed the following blanket bans on outdoor gatherings:

Date	Governor's Office	Duration
October 19	Muş	15 days
October 19	Diyarbakır	1 day
October 20	Adıyaman	10 days
October 20	Şanlıurfa	3 days
October 20	Gaziantep	7 days
October 20	Tunceli	4 days
October 20	Bitlis	15 days
October 20	Şırnak	2 days
October 20	Bingöl	15 days
October 20	Elazığ	7 days
October 23	Şanlıurfa	15 days

The blanket bans were mostly issued in predominantly Kurdish cities, in apparent anticipation of potential protests that could be sparked by allegations that Turkey's military used chemical weapons in its fight against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in northern Iraq.

October 17: The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a workers' protest, briefly detaining 28 people.

October 19: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a students' protest, detaining two people.

October 20: The police in Gaziantep [detained](#) eight people over their participation in a Newroz celebration. The detainees were released the next day.

October 20: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest about allegations that Turkey's military used chemical weapons in northern Iraq, briefly detaining 37 people.

October 20: The gendarmerie in Amasya [detained](#) three villagers who were protesting the construction of an industrial complex.

October 21: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about sick prisoners, briefly detaining activists Fince Akman and Cemile Karakaş.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

October 17: An İstanbul court [ordered](#) journalist Yusuf Karadaş to pay damages to a defense company due to an opinion column he authored.

October 17: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to at least three news reports on public tenders awarded to a corporation close to the president.

October 17: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to acquit 11 members of the bar association who stood trial over their joint statement on the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

October 17: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report on the remarks of an opposition MP who criticized pro-government newspapers.

October 18: The president [signed](#) into law a bill stipulating up to three years in prison for those found guilty of spreading “misinformation” online.

October 18: İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Pınar Gayıp over her social media commentary about a mine explosion in northern Turkey. Gayıp was summoned by the İstanbul police for a questioning.

October 19: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), Turkey’s broadcasting regulator, [imposed](#) a three-day-long broadcast ban on the pro-opposition TELE 1 station, due to the remarks of an opposition politician who criticized the government’s agency for religious affairs (Diyanet). In the event that the sanction gets repeated in the future, it will lead to the channel’s broadcasting license being revoked.

October 19: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalists Görkem Kınacı, Uğur Şahin and Uğur Koç who stood trial due to a news report about a judge of the Constitutional Court.

October 20: A Van court [sentenced](#) Kurdish musician Şilan Dora to one year, three months in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda in a song she sang at a rally. The court suspended the execution of the sentence.

October 20: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into prominent human rights advocate Şebnem Korur Fincancı for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda and denigrating the state, over her remarks about allegations that Turkey used chemical weapons in its fight against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

October 20: İzmir prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Bahattin Seçilir over a news report about an armed attack that killed a HDP employee last year.

October 20: An İstanbul court [ordered](#) journalist Mehmet Kızmaz and the Cumhuriyet newspaper to pay damages to a pro-government foundation for publishing a news report on it.

October 20: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to an opinion column, a news report and a tweet about corruption allegations implicating ruling party MP Zehra Taşkesenlioğlu.

October 21: A court [sentenced](#) journalist Mehmet Emin Kurnaz to 11 months, 20 days in prison for insulting the president and his far-right ally in a May 2021 report on allegations of mafia-state collusion. The court suspended the execution of the sentence.

October 21: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) a person who shouted slogans against the president in front of a courthouse.

October 21: An İzmir court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about allegations that a ruling party member had 11 voters registered in his house.

October 21: The Freedom of Expression Association (İFÖD) [reported](#) that Turkey banned 107,706 websites and domains as well as 5,436 URLs containing news items in 2021.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

October 20: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into prominent human rights advocate Şebnem Korur Fincancı for allegedly spreading terrorist

propaganda and denigrating the state, over her remarks about allegations that Turkey used chemical weapons in its fight against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

October 18: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) [faulted](#) Turkey over the detention of 167 judges and prosecutors after a failed coup in July 2016, ordering the Turkish government to pay damages to each applicant. The ruling came in addition to six previous similar ones and the number of judges and prosecutors whose applications have been upheld by the ECtHR in their cases against Turkey has risen to 847.

October 21: The Council of State [ruled](#) to reinstate 178 judges and prosecutors who had been removed from their jobs due to their alleged links to the Gülen movement.

KURDISH MINORITY

October 17: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish politician Leyla Güven to 11 years, seven months, 15 days in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

October 18: The authorities [released](#) from prison Kurdish politician Gülser Yıldırım four months after she became eligible for parole.

October 19: The police in Van [detained](#) local HDP members Muhittin Üzümcüoğlu, Abdullah İşleyen, Şemsettin Esen and Mürsel Sayiner.

October 20: A Van court [sentenced](#) Kurdish musician Şilan Dora to one year, three months in prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda in a song she sang at a rally. The court suspended the execution of the sentence.

October 20: The police in Gaziantep [detained](#) eight people over their participation in a Newroz celebration. The detainees were released the next day.

October 21: The Turkish Medical Association (TTB) [released](#) a report stating that jailed Kurdish politician Aysel Tuğluk's state of health has rapidly deteriorated and that proper treatment cannot be provided in prison.

PRISON CONDITIONS

October 21: A Kocaeli prison [denied](#) proper healthcare to cancer patient Ahmet Dizlek.

October 21: A Diyarbakır prison [imposed](#) a disciplinary sanction on inmate Yunus Özak due to the contents of his letter, sending him to a one-person cell for 11 days.

October 21: The guards in a women's prison in Bayburt [confiscated](#) personal items of inmates Delila Roj Erkmen and Neslihan Çetin.

October 23: An İzmir prison [imposed](#) a three-month visitation ban on an inmate due to his remarks to a relative during a visitation.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

October 21: Turkish coast guard [rescued](#) 78 migrants that were pushed back by Greece at sea.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

October 18: The guards in a women's prison in Diyarbakır physically [assaulted](#) inmate Sariye Taşkesen for refusing to undergo a strip-search.

October 23: The police in Ankara [used](#) excessive force while intervening in a protest about a mine explosion in northern Turkey, breaking the ribs of a protester named Hasan Akman.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

October 18: Reports on the pro-Kurdish media [claimed](#) that Turkey carried out a chemical attack on militants of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), releasing video footage allegedly showing militants exposed to chemical weapons. The Turkish government denied the allegation.