

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

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

February 17: The police in Hatay [detained](#) three members of a Greek association who were in the area to assist with search and rescue efforts after the earthquakes.

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

February 13: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest about the government's handling of the earthquakes, briefly detaining 20 activists.

February 13: The governorates of Mardin, Hakkari and Siirt [issued](#) blanket bans on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

February 15: The police in Osmaniye [detained](#) 10 left-wing activists who attended an event for solidarity with the earthquake victims.

February 15: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit 57 people who stood trial due to their attendance in a demonstration.

February 17: The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a students' protest, briefly detaining 22 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

February 13: The police in Gaziantep briefly [detained](#) earthquake victim Hasip Türkmen who criticized the local mayor.

February 13: İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into YouTuber Oğuzhan Uğur on charges of spreading disinformation due to a social media post alleging that a dam wall in Hatay was cracked due to the earthquakes of February 6.

February 13: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Can Ataklı due to his comments about the government's handling of the earthquakes.

February 14: The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) NGO executive Mazlum Ortaç on charges of fomenting enmity and hatred among the public.

February 14: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit former military commander İlker Başbuğ who stood trial on charges of inciting hatred and enmity among the public due to his remarks in an interview.

February 15: The police in Hakkari [detained](#) three people due to their social media posts.

February 15: Reporter Hazal Güven and cameraman Umutcan Yitik were [assaulted](#) by unidentified assailants in Hatay.

February 15: A nurse who [complained](#) on live TV about the government's handling of the earthquakes is reportedly facing an investigation.

February 16: The Security Directorate General (EGM) [announced](#) that a total of 131 people were detained due to "provocative" social media commentary on the earthquakes, up from last week's number of 56. Of the detainees, 25 were arrested after appearing before courts.

February 16: The authorities [launched](#) an investigation into leftist politician Gamze Taşçı due to her media interviews about the earthquakes.

February 17: An Ankara court [handed down](#) a suspended monetary fine to a 70-year-old woman named Fahriye Malatyalı due to her social media comments about nationalist politician Devlet Bahçeli.

February 17: Diyarbakır prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Mir Ali Koçer on charges of spreading misinformation on social media. The journalist was summoned by the police for a questioning.

February 17: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Hayri Demir on terrorism-related charges.

KURDISH MINORITY

February 16: Local authorities [continued](#) to obstruct earthquake relief efforts initiated by the HDP in predominantly Kurdish provinces and to [seize](#) humanitarian aid. On February 17, the party [announced](#) that the authorities had confiscated 1500 tents, eight trucks, 30 containers and 120 generators.

PRISON CONDITIONS

February 15: Rights groups [reported](#) overcrowding, inadequate nutrition and insufficient water supply at a Mersin prison which received inmates transferred from earthquake-hit provinces.

February 17: [Alparslan Arslan](#), a convicted gunman and former lawyer who in 2006 killed a member of the Council of State, was found dead in prison. The authorities announced the cause of death as suicide.

February 17: [Serhat Arsu](#), an inmate transferred to an Ankara prison from the earthquake-hit areas is reportedly

being held in a one-person cell. The prison administration did not deliver to him personal items sent by his family.

February 17: A mouse was [detected](#) in the meals offered to inmates in a Diyarbakır prison. One inmate was briefly hospitalized.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

February 13: The police in Kahramanmaraş [battered](#) two migrant children who were waiting in line for food aid organized in the aftermath of the earthquakes. The children were reportedly injured.

February 14: Soldiers in Hatay physically [assaulted](#) a Syrian migrant who asked for help about his children who were trapped under the rubble after the earthquakes.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

February 13: The police in Kahramanmaraş [battered](#) two migrant children who were waiting in line for food aid organized in the aftermath of the earthquakes. The children were reportedly injured.

February 13: The guards in a Hatay prison [mistreated](#) seven inmates who were accused of starting a riot. The inmates were transferred to other prisons and some of them who wanted to document their injuries were prevented from obtaining medical reports.

February 14: Soldiers in Hatay physically [assaulted](#) a Syrian migrant who asked for help about his children who were trapped under the rubble after the earthquakes.

February 17: The police in İstanbul physically [assaulted](#) a person over an argument in traffic. The individual was injured as a result of the incident and his complaint about the incident was reportedly dismissed.

February 17: A Tekirdağ prison [interrupted](#) inmate Baki Yaş's weekly phone call with his family due to his remarks about the earthquakes and restricted his phone call rights for six months as a disciplinary sanction.

February 17: A women's prison in İstanbul [restricted](#) inmates Serpil Cabadan and Elif Yaş's phone call rights for six months due to their remarks during a visitation.

February 18: A number of inmates who were transferred to a Samsun prison were [strip-searched](#) and physically mistreated.

February 19: The police in Hatay physically [assaulted](#) a person who was wrongly suspected of looting in earthquake areas.

February 19: Soldiers in Adiyaman physically [assaulted](#) a person who was seeking earthquake aid.