

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 127 | November 21-27, 2022

## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 170 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 21:** The United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee [issued](#) an opinion which found rights violations in the case of Mukadder Alakuş, a teacher who was arrested in 2018 over alleged links to the Gülen movement. The opinion said Alakuş's detention was in violation of her rights under several articles of the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, calling for her release.

**November 25:** Kemal Mutlum, a jailed former brigadier general, [died](#) in prison of cancer after being denied release to seek proper medical treatment despite several appeals from his lawyers and family members.

## 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 21:** The police in İstanbul, Ankara, Van and Diyarbakır [intervened](#) in protests held against Turkey's airstrikes in Kurdish-majority areas in Iraq and Syria, detaining 125 people.

**November 21:** The Diyarbakır Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of seven days.

**November 22:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest held against Turkey's airstrikes in Iraq and Syria, detaining 10 people.

**November 22:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a women's rights protest, briefly detaining eight people.

**November 22:** İstanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) 12 people who took part in Boğaziçi University protests, demanding up to three years in prison for each defendant.

**November 22:** The Şırnak Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of seven days.

**November 23:** The Batman Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of eight days.

**November 24:** A Manisa court [handed down](#) prison sentences to four people for staging a protest against construction plans for a geothermal power plant. The court acquitted 29 other activists who faced charges in the same trial.

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

**November 25:** The police in İstanbul, Ankara, Ağrı, Erzurum and Şırnak [intervened](#) in women's rights demonstrations, detaining 260 people.

**November 25:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about sick prisoners, briefly detaining 11 people.

**November 25:** The Beyoğlu district governorate in İstanbul [banned](#) demonstrations for a day. The ban was issued prior to a planned women's rights march on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

**November 25:** The Gaziantep Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of seven days.

**November 25:** The Kilis Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of seven days.

**November 25:** Governors in Osmaniye, Bursa and Tunceli [refused](#) to authorize women's rights marches on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

**November 27:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a women's rights demonstration, briefly detaining 116 people.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**November 21:** The police in Van briefly [detained](#) reporter Şakir Bedir while he was covering a demonstration against Turkey's airstrikes in Iraq and Syria.

**November 22:** A court [acquitted](#) media executives Çağrı Sarı and Arif Koşar who stood trial due to a report on alleged police brutality.

**November 24:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on allegations of money laundering implicating a businessman close to the government as well as a [report](#) on a previous access ban imposed on news about the same subject.

**November 24:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to six news reports on allegations of misconduct and corruption implicating former presidential lawyer Mustafa Doğan İnal.

**November 24:** A regional appeals court in İstanbul [upheld](#) the sentences handed down to journalists Mahir Kanaat, Ömer Çelik, Tunca Öğreten, Eray Sargın and Metin Yoksu on terrorism-related charges due to their reporting on hacked emails belonging to former energy minister. The court also overturned the acquittal of journalist Derya Okatan who had stood trial on the same charges.

**November 25:** Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı, seeking up to seven-and-a-half years in prison on terrorism-related charges due to her remarks calling for an investigation into the Turkish army's alleged use of chemical weapons in northern Iraq.

**November 25:** The police in İstanbul [detained](#) reporter Yaren Çolak while she was covering a women's rights demonstration.

**November 25:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to two news reports and four tweets about a video where an animal shelter employee was seen killing a dog.

**November 25:** A Mersin court [acquitted](#) a municipal employee who stood trial on terrorism charges due to a social media post.

**November 27:** The police in Kocaeli briefly [detained](#) YouTuber Mehmet Koyuncu while he was conducting a street interview.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

**November 22:** The Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay) [overturned](#) the convictions of human rights defenders Taner Kılıç, İdil Eser, Özlem Dalkıran and Günal Kuşun who were previously sentenced to imprisonment on terrorism-related charges.

**November 25:** Ankara prosecutors [indicted](#) human rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı, seeking up to seven-and-a-half years in prison on terrorism-related charges due to her remarks calling for an investigation into the Turkish army's alleged use of chemical weapons in northern Iraq.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**November 24:** Van prosecutors [decided](#) not to prosecute police officers accused of physically assaulting an individual in August 2022.

**November 26:** Prosecutors [declined](#) to pursue the case of Garibe Gezer, an inmate who was reportedly beaten and sexually harassed by prison guards and found dead in her cell in December 2021, despite video footage clearly showing Gezer's mistreatment.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**November 26:** The police in Şırnak briefly [detained](#) nine people, including local HDP executive Sedat Soysal.

**November 27:** The police in Mardin [detained](#) six people, including local politician İsmail Asi. The detainees were released the next day.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**November 23:** Reports revealed that an Antalya prison was [holding](#) inmate Mehmet Mustafa Uzkar in a one-person cell.

**November 23:** Reports revealed that a Diyarbakır prison was [holding](#) inmate Seda Baykan in a one-person cell.

**November 23:** Reports revealed that a Kayseri prison was [holding](#) inmates Dilek Arsu and [Yaprak Ökdemir](#) in one-person cells. Ökdemir was also reportedly denied treatment for her health problems.

**November 25:** An Edirne prison reportedly [failed](#) to deliver nutrients for a baby that were ordered by the jailed mother, which led to nutritional problems.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**November 22:** Gendarmes in Şanlıurfa [mistreated](#) three minors who were detained for allegedly taking down a flag from a schoolyard flagpole.

**November 23:** The guards in an Elazığ prison [mistreated](#) inmate Güneş Akan.

**November 24:** Van prosecutors [decided](#) not to prosecute police officers accused of physically assaulting an individual in August 2022.

**November 26:** Prosecutors [declined](#) to pursue the case of Garibe Gezer, an inmate who was reportedly beaten and sexually harassed by prison guards and found dead in her cell in December 2021, despite video footage clearly showing Gezer's mistreatment.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

**November 25:** Vice President Fuat Oktay [said](#) in a speech in parliament that more than 100 people with alleged links to the Gülen movement were forcibly returned to Turkey by the National Intelligence Organization (MİT), thanks to what he called "intelligence diplomacy."

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

**November 25:** The Federation of Women's Associations of Turkey (TKDF) released a [report](#) on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which said that at least 327 women were killed by men from the beginning of the year to November 11.