

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 124 | October 31-November 6, 2022

## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 84 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 31:** Ehetin Kaynar, a jailed cancer patient, [lost](#) his life in a hospital in Iğdır two months after his release from a Karabük prison.

**November 1:** Ünal Üneş, a retired teacher jailed for alleged links to the Gülen movement, was [diagnosed](#) with Parkinson's disease. Already suffering from heart problems and diabetes, Üneş is kept alone in prison, according to his wife's remarks to the media.

**November 3:** [Güliden Aşık](#), a woman jailed for alleged links to the Gülen movement, is unfit to remain in prison according to a report issued by a hospital. Aşık is suffering from thyroid cancer and she urgently needs to undergo surgery. News reports pointed out that she has not been released despite the hospital report which was released in August 2022.

## ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

**November 4:** The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violations in a 2015-2016 curfew in Şırnak where 137 people were killed in counterterrorism operations.

## 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 31:** The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a demonstration staged against the arrest of leading rights defender Şebnem Korur Fincancı, briefly detaining 23 activists.

**October 31:** A district governor's office in Bursa [banned](#) a concert by musician İlkay Akkaya.

**October 31:** The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

**November 1:** The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in an exhibition organized by university students, detaining 20 students.

**November 1:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a students' protest, detaining four activists.

**November 1:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a labor union demonstration, briefly detaining two people.

**November 2:** The Şırnak Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 5 days.

**November 4:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest vigil about sick prisoners, detaining three activists.

**November 6:** The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about the military's alleged use of chemical weapons in northern Iraq, briefly detaining 121 people.

**November 6:** The gendarmes in Şırnak [intervened](#) in a protest about the military's alleged use of chemical weapons in northern Iraq, detaining 32 people.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**October 31:** Turkish authorities reportedly [arrested](#) 34 Egyptian dissident journalists.

**October 31:** A Kayseri prison [imposed](#) a 11-day solitary confinement on inmate Hasan Kılıç for allegedly disseminating terrorist propaganda in a letter he wrote.

**October 31:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to two news reports and an opinion piece about nepotism allegations implicating a presidential aide.

**October 31:** A Gaziantep court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about allegations that a relative of Gaziantep mayor had built illegal housing.

**October 31:** An Aydın court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on allegations that a former mayor had battered a female municipal employee.

**October 31:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on corruption allegations implicating an executive of Turkish Airlines, the national carrier.

**November 1:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to six news reports on allegations that a vehicle in which drugs were found had ties to a pro-government corporation.

**November 1:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on bribery allegations implicating a former chairperson of a pro-government foundation and the former executive of the national railway company.

**November 2:** An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalists Semiha Şahin and Pınar Gayıp to three years, one month, 15 days in prison on terrorism-related charges.

**November 2:** The pro-government Sabah newspaper [published](#) secretly taken photos of exiled journalist Levent Kenez, revealing his home address in Sweden. The same newspaper in recent weeks published secretly taken photos of two other Sweden-based dissidents as well as a journalist who lives in Germany.

**November 2:** A Hatay court [sentenced](#) a HDP supporter to three years in prison on terrorism charges for live-streaming Kurdish songs on social media.

**November 3:** The police in İzmir [detained](#) lawyer Aryen Turan due to a speech she gave during a bar association meeting in which she raised allegations that the military used chemical weapons in northern Iraq. Turan was released under judicial control and with a travel ban the next day.

**November 3:** An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report on allegations that the military used chemical weapons in northern Iraq.

**November 3:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on various allegations concerning the president's son.

**November 4:** An Ankara court [handed down](#) suspended prison sentences to 11 people on charges of insulting the president, due to slogans they chanted during a labor union meeting. Each defendant was sentenced to 11 months, 20 days in prison.

## JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

**November 4:** The Constitutional Court [annulled](#) a law that revoked the professional licenses of teachers who were dismissed from public sector by a post-coup decree-law after 2016. The legislation had drawn criticism as it prohibited teachers from pursuing their profession in the private sector.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**October 31:** The guards in a women's prison in Ankara [strip-searched](#) Kurdish journalists Diren Yurtsever, Berivan Altan, Ceylan Şahinli, Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer.

**November 2:** A Hatay court [sentenced](#) a HDP supporter to three years in prison on terrorism charges for live-streaming Kurdish songs on social media.

**November 4:** The Constitutional Court [found](#) no rights violations in a 2015-2016 curfew in Şırnak where 137 people were killed in counterterrorism operations.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**November 4:** An Alevi place of worship in Adana was [vandalized](#) by unidentified assailants who spray painted discriminatory and racial slurs on the walls and caused physical damage in the garden.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**October 31:** A Bolu prison [launched](#) disciplinary investigations into 136 inmates for protesting rights violations in the prison facility.

**October 31:** A Kayseri prison [imposed](#) a 11-day solitary confinement on inmate Hasan Kılıç for allegedly disseminating terrorist propaganda in a letter he wrote.

**November 2:** Reports indicated that some wards in a women's prison in Ankara were [flooded](#) due to a sewage malfunction and that the prison administration took no action to clean up the flooding.

**November 3:** The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a Bingöl prison violated the right to privacy of inmate Musa Küçükabacı by recording his meeting with his lawyer.

**November 3:** Ceylan Şahinli, a jailed Kurdish journalist, was [denied](#) healthcare for refusing to undergo treatment in handcuffs.

**November 5:** Reports [revealed](#) that an Ağrı prison has been denying hospital referrals to inmates for nearly a year.

**November 5:** A prison administration in İzmir [confiscated](#) the photos of an inmate due to his clothing in them.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**October 31:** Turkish authorities reportedly [arrested](#) 34 Egyptian dissident journalists, raising fears of deportation.

**November 3:** A migrant boat [capsized](#) in the Aegean sea, resulting in the death of 20 migrants and the disappearance of more than 30.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**October 31:** The guards in a women's prison in Ankara [strip-searched](#) Kurdish journalists Diren Yurtsever, Berivan Altan, Ceylan Şahinli, Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer.

**October 31:** The guards in a Bolu prison verbally [threatened](#) inmates during ward searches and confiscated items purchased from the prison cafeteria.

**November 2:** Gendarmes in Van [mistreated](#) two people during a house raid. One of the victims, a woman, was hospitalized due to the incident.

**November 3:** [Yakup Brukanlı](#), an inmate incarcerated in a Konya prison, set himself on fire to protest the rights violations in the prison facility. Reports indicated that the incident occurred after the prison administration imposed restrictions on inmates' right to visitation and outside communication for resisting strip-searches.

**November 5:** The guards in a Bolu prison physically [assaulted](#) disabled inmate Civan Boltan.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

**November 1:** The United States Supreme Court [declined](#) to hear Turkey's bid to dismiss two lawsuits filed by demonstrators who were assaulted by Turkish security forces during a presidential visit to Washington in 2017.

**November 2:** The pro-government Sabah newspaper [published](#) secretly taken photos of exiled journalist Levent Kenez, revealing his home address in Sweden. The same newspaper in recent weeks published secretly taken photos of two other Sweden-based dissidents as well as a journalist who lives in Germany.

**November 3:** [Hakan Şükür](#), a former footballer who lives in the US, revealed in an interview that Turkey's president demanded his extradition from the US in exchange for the release of American pastor Andrew Brunson who was incarcerated in Turkey.

**November 3:** Turkey's top appeals court [upheld](#) the prison sentence of three years, four months handed down to Selahaddin Gülen, a teacher who was abducted from Kenya last year.

**November 4:** Unidentified assailants [vandalized](#) a car belonging to Murat Çetiner, an ex-police chief living in exile in Sweden who was recently targeted by a newspaper close to the Turkish government that revealed his home address and secretly taken photos.

## **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

**November 4:** A women's rights platform [announced](#) that at least 275 women in Turkey were killed by men between January and October. A monthly monitoring report released by another group [said](#) that 32 women and four girls were killed in October.