

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 217 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.

September 13: A report released by the İstanbul Council of Forensic Medicine [found](#) that former HDP deputy Aysel Tuğluk, who has been behind bars since late 2016 on terrorism-related charges, is fit to remain in prison although her lawyers claim the politician is in poor health.

September 14: The European Court of Human Rights [condemned](#) Turkey for detaining Kurdish politician Tuncer Bakırhan, who was removed from his position as mayor of Siirt in November 2016 over alleged links to terrorism.

September 15: [Gülden Aşık](#), a mother of three who suffers from thyroid cancer, was arrested after being sentenced to six years, three months in prison for alleged links to the Gülen movement.

September 16: Media reports revealed that [Akif Sarı](#), a 46-year-old man kept in solitary confinement since January 2020 for alleged links to the Gülen movement is suffering from facial paralysis.

September 16: The police in Isparta detained [İbrahim Karakoç](#), a 59-year-old man suffering from severe

Parkinson's disease, over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

September 16: [Esmahan Demirhan](#), the wife of a former police chief who led corruption investigations in Turkey in 2013, was detained in the hospital where she was receiving treatment for Covid-19 and was handcuffed to her hospital bed for eight days.

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.

September 14: [Hüseyin Galip Küçüközyiğit](#), a former bureaucrat who had been missing since December 29, 2020, and was suspected of being a victim of enforced disappearance turned up in an Ankara prison. Küçüközyiğit's resurfacing was announced by his daughter, Nursena, who had been campaigning on social media since the alleged abduction. Küçüközyiğit's daughter also [reported](#) that her father had lost significant amount of weight.

September 17: Ayten Öztürk, a socialist activist, [said](#) she was subjected to severe torture and sexual harassment in a secret detention center in Ankara in 2018, in an interview she gave to member of parliament Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu. Prior to her detention in Turkey, Öztürk was detained at the Beirut airport while on her way to Europe and was handed over to Turkish authorities.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

September 13: Stage actor Orhan Aydın, known for his outspoken criticism of the government, [suffered](#) a physical attack following a leftist rally. In his social media messages, Aydın accused the authorities of failing to identify the assailants.

September 13: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

September 13: A court [ruled](#) to arrest three activists who were detained in Tekirdağ on September 6 for hanging banners demanding the release of a sick prisoner.

September 15: The police in İstanbul [attacked](#) a demonstration held by victims of a large-scale post-coup purge after 2016, briefly detaining eight people.

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

September 16: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) at least seven people for attending protests against a local energy distributor.

September 18: The police in Rize [detained](#) four people who protested the construction plans for a hydroelectric power plant in the province.

September 19: The police in Ankara briefly [detained](#) five people for holding an alternative graduation ceremony in a university.

September 19: The police in Kırklareli briefly [detained](#) nine leftist political activists for handing out flyers.

September 19: The Mardin Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

September 13: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) Etkin news agency reporter Tunahan Turhan.

September 13: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to news report about allegations that a fugitive businessman accused of money laundering was corresponding with a Constitutional Court judge.

September 13: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report about a man who attacked anti-government protesters with a machete in 2013.

September 15: A Şanlıurfa court [issued](#) an arrest warrant for Germany-based author Gökhan Yavuzel on charges of insulting the president on social media. Yavuzel's name recently appeared in a hit list targeting the Turkish government's critics living abroad and he was the target of a physical assault in July.

September 15: Batman prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into 13 people, including provincial HDP co-chairs Fatma Ablay and Ömer Kulpu, who danced to a Kurdish song during a rally in southeastern Turkey, on allegations of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

September 15: The Health Ministry [dismissed](#) a transgender doctor from her job at a public hospital, saying her social media posts were corrupting the morals of the public.

September 16: Adana prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into Yakup Ataş, a lawyer who is an executive at the local branch of the Human Rights Association (İHD), over a statement about the Armenian Genocide.

September 16: İzmir prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into Kemal Okuyan, the leader of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP), on charges of spreading panic among public, over his remarks in a television program.

September 16: A Bolu court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about two businessmen who were detained for alleged profiteering.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

September 17: Journalist İsmail Saymaz [revealed](#) that an alleged member of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) who issued a fatwa for the execution of two Turkish soldiers in Syria in 2016 was released from jail on bail. On September 19, the man was arrested after the outrage caused by the journalist's revelation.

September 17: The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe [failed](#) to start infringement proceedings against Turkey due to the country's non-compliance with European Court of Human Rights

orders for the release of Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtaş and businessman Osman Kavala.

September 17: The Constitutional Court [released](#) its statistics since the introduction of the right to file an individual application in 2012, revealing that the right to a fair trial is the most frequently violated right in the country, with 9,332 rulings concerning the violation of the right to a fair trial out of 14,973 decisions involving at least one violation.

KURDISH MINORITY

September 13: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) Etkin news agency reporter Tunahan Turhan.

September 13: A report released by the İstanbul Council of Forensic Medicine [found](#) that former HDP deputy Aysel Tuğluk, who has been behind bars since late 2016 on terrorism-related charges, is fit to remain in prison although her lawyers claim the politician is in poor health.

September 14: The European Court of Human Rights [condemned](#) Turkey for detaining Kurdish politician Tuncer Bakırhan, who was removed from his position as mayor of Siirt in November 2016 over alleged links to terrorism.

September 14: A Van court [arrested](#) local HDP executive Herdem Acar on terrorism-related charges.

September 15: Batman prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into 13 people, including provincial HDP co-chairs Fatma Ablay and Ömer Kulpu, who danced to a Kurdish song during a rally in southeastern Turkey, on allegations of disseminating terrorist propaganda.

September 16: An Elazığ judge [rejected](#) a request by imprisoned HDP politicians Leyla Güven and Hülya Alökmen to make their defense in Kurdish in their objection against a prison administration decision to restrict their external communications for singing in Kurdish behind bars.

OTHER MINORITIES

September 15: The Health Ministry [dismissed](#) a transgender doctor from her job at a public hospital, saying her social media posts were corrupting the morals of the public.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

September 16: The Interior Ministry [announced](#) that since 2016, a total of 2.3 million irregular migrants have been denied entry at Turkey's eastern and southern borders, and that 283,790 have been deported.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

September 14: Media reports said that the police in Adana [tortured](#) three members of the Furkan Foundation, an anti-government religious group, who were detained on September 10.

September 14: The police in Bingöl reportedly [tortured](#) two people during a house raid.

September 15: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) in favor of an applicant who claimed that he was tortured for 25 days during his detention at Afyon police headquarters in 2016, ordering the government to pay \$6,000 in non-pecuniary damages and to launch an investigation into the perpetrators.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AND VIOLATIONS

September 15: A Şanlıurfa court [issued](#) an arrest warrant for Germany-based author Gökhan Yavuzel on charges of insulting the president on social media. Yavuzel's name recently appeared in a hit list targeting the Turkish government's critics living abroad and he was the target of a physical assault in July.