

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 69 | October 11-17, 2021

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 207 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 11: Opposition MP Gülizar Biçer Karaca was not [allowed](#) to visit critically ill Ayşe Özdoğan, who was sent to prison despite her end-stage cancer.

October 12: [Bilal Danış](#), a disabled man jailed for alleged links to the Gülen movement, was issued a medical report saying he was healthy and was therefore ineligible for release from prison due to his disability.

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.

October 11: İstanbul prosecutors [decided](#) for non-prosecution in the case of Gökhan Güneş, a socialist activist who was abducted for six days in İstanbul in January 2021.

October 11: The United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in its annual

[report](#) urged Turkey to prevent and terminate enforced disappearances, expressing concern about the continued justification of extraterritorial abductions and forced returns under the pretext of combating terrorism and protecting national security.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

October 11: The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a gathering to commemorate the victims of a 2015 bomb attack, detaining 22 people.

October 12: Şırnak prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into an event held to commemorate a 7-year-old child who was killed by an armored police vehicle. A local politician and a musician were summoned by the police for questioning.

October 12: Adana prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into 25 people over their participation in a gathering held in commemoration of a leftist activist.

October 13: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration to call for the release of a sick prisoner, detaining eight people.

October 13: A publishing house was [forced](#) to discontinue its Kurdish-language literary events in Mardin following police obstruction under the pretext of Covid-19.

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

October 13: An İstanbul court ruled to [release](#) five Boğaziçi University students who were detained last week for protesting the appointment of a new rector.

October 14: The police in Ankara [detained](#) five opposition party members who were handing out flyers about a corruption allegations implicating a businessman with ties to the government.

October 14: A district governor's office in Şırnak [banned](#) an event planned by the HDP to commemorate the party's foundation anniversary, citing the Covid-19 pandemic. Reports revealed that the same office had granted permission to a two-day-long event organized by the ruling party in October.

October 15: An İzmir court [ruled](#) to acquit some 30 labor union members who stood trial on terrorism charges over union activities.

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

October 16: The police in İstanbul [blocked](#) a protest march organized by HDP members. Ten people were briefly detained.

October 16: A district governor's office in İstanbul [banned](#) a concert organized by a pro-Kurdish cultural organization, citing national security reasons.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

October 11: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports about bribery allegations implicating high-ranking police chiefs.

October 11: A Denizli court [ruled](#) to release Tugay Odabaşoğlu, an opposition party executive who was arrested on September 28 for allegedly insulting the president in a speech.

October 12: An Antalya court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report about a female university student who was found dead in a hotel room under suspicious circumstances.

October 12: A Van court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Ruşen Takva of terrorism charges. Takva faced up to 19 years in prison for covering an event held by pro-Kurdish political parties.

October 12: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to acquit Kurdish journalist Roza Metina of terrorism charges.

October 13: A Tunceli court [ruled](#) to block access to two tweets and a news report about a previous access bans imposed on a news report.

October 13: A Tunceli court [ruled](#) to block access to an article published by a freedom of expression monitor about a previous access ban against a news report.

October 13: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a column and two news articles about a forgery allegations involving a coal company in northern Turkey.

October 14: A Malatya court [sentenced](#) Kurdish writer and poet Meral Şimşek to one year, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

October 14: A Mersin court [sentenced](#) Kurdish musician Dilan Demir to nine years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

October 14: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalist Doğan Ergün to 11 months, 20 days in prison on charges of insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, over a news report about a 2014 leaked audio recording that featured then-Prime Minister Erdoğan.

October 14: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a URL used by the pro-Kurdish Özgür Gelecek news website.

October 15: A Bitlis court [ordered](#) journalist Sinan Aygül to pay a monetary fine for disseminating terrorist propaganda, over an interview he published on a news website.

October 15: An Osmaniye court [ruled](#) to block access to a news report about a foundation set up by one of the president's sons, which allegedly ensured the recruitment of its members to government positions through unethical ways.

October 16: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on misconduct allegations about Hamit Kocabey, a member of the Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK).

October 15: Voice of America News [reported](#) that in a single week, 18 journalists, most of whom work for pro-Kurdish media outlets, stood trial at hearings across the country.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

October 14: [Sait Güney](#), a former public sector worker summarily dismissed from civil service in the aftermath of a 2016 coup attempt, was not allowed to obtain a passport and have his travel ban lifted despite a recommendation by the chief ombudsman.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

October 14: Turkey was ranked 117th out of 139 countries in the rule of law [index](#) published by the World Justice Project. In the index, Turkey ranked 134th in terms of constraints on government powers and 133rd in terms of fundamental rights.

October 16: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on misconduct allegations about Hamit Kocabey, a member of the Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK).

KURDISH MINORITY

October 12: A Van court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Ruşen Takva of terrorism charges. Takva faced up to 19 years in prison for covering an event held by pro-Kurdish political parties.

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October 14: A district governor's office in Şırnak [banned](#) an event planned by the HDP to commemorate the party's foundation anniversary, citing the Covid-19 pandemic. Reports revealed that the same office had granted permission to a two-day-long event organized by the ruling party in October.

October 14: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a URL used by the pro-Kurdish Özgür Gelecek news website.

October 15: A Van court [sentenced](#) HDP politician Aysel Tuğluk to one year, eight months in prison on terrorism charges.

October 15: A Bitlis court [ordered](#) journalist Sinan Aygül to pay a monetary fine for disseminating terrorist propaganda, over an interview he published on a news website.

October 15: Voice of America News [reported](#) that in a single week, 18 journalists, most of whom work for pro-Kurdish media outlets, stood trial at hearings across the country.

October 16: The police in İstanbul [blocked](#) a protest march organized by HDP members. Ten people were briefly detained.

October 16: A district governor's office in İstanbul [banned](#) a concert organized by a pro-Kurdish cultural organization, citing national security reasons.

October 16: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) a woman for carrying flag featuring the colors yellow, red and green while on her way to a demonstration.

OTHER MINORITIES

October 12: The Council of State [upheld](#) an administrative court decision ordering the Interior Ministry to compensate the family of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink who was murdered in İstanbul in 2007, on the grounds that the ministry should have taken necessary measures to protect Dink's right to life.

PRISON CONDITIONS

October 12: A study by the Right to Life Association [found](#) that 345 children under the age of 6 who are accompanying their mothers in Turkish prisons receive the same treatment as inmates and that they are traumatized by strip-searches.

October 12: A Van prison [blocked](#) the delivery of a book sent to jailed journalist Nedim Türfent. The prison administration also censored parts of a letter that Türfent sent to his colleagues outside prison.

October 14: Reports revealed that an İzmir prison [imposed](#) extra restrictions on inmates' visitation rights despite a new regulation issued by the Justice Ministry in September to improve the visitation rights of prisoners.

October 15: A prison administration in İstanbul [denied](#) treatment to Aydın Budak, a former district mayor in Şırnak.

October 17: A Gaziantep prison [denied](#) treatment to inmate Adnan Yalçın.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

October 12: Eurostat data [showed](#) that the number of asylum applications in EU countries from Turkish nationals saw a 494 percent increase over the past 12 years, rising from 2,815 in 2008 to 13,905 in 2020.

October 14: Kurdish writer and poet Meral Şimşek, who in June 2021 was violently [pushed back](#) by the Greek border forces when she attempted to flee Turkey, was [sentenced](#) to imprisonment on terrorism-related charges.

October 15: Human Rights Watch said in a [statement](#) that the Turkish authorities are summarily pushing back Afghan asylum seekers at the Iranian border, in violation of international law.

October 16: A migrant woman living in İstanbul [announced](#) that she was beaten up and threatened by her neighbors and that when she went to a police station to file a complaint about the incident, she was insulted by police officers.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

October 13: [Misra Sapan](#), a student who was detained by the police during Boğaziçi University protests, told the media that officers intentionally hit the students in their faces.

October 13: The guards in a Bayburt prison [mistreated](#) inmate Barış Tüter.

October 14: [Orhan İnandı](#), a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator who was kidnapped in Kyrgyzstan on May 31 and extrajudicially brought to Turkey by the National Intelligence Organization (MİT), revealed during a court hearing in İstanbul that a statement previously given to the police was false because he had spoken under torture by security officers.

October 14: Prison guards in Kocaeli physically and verbally [assaulted](#) inmates.

October 15: [Serhat Öztemel](#), a member of the Revolutionary Party, announced he was coerced by the into becoming an informant for the authorities during his detention in late September.

October 16: The police in Diyarbakır physically [assaulted](#) lawyer Elif İpek Tirenç Ulaş during an ID check.

October 16: The police in İstanbul [mistreated](#) two people while detaining them upon a detention order.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION AND VIOLATIONS

October 14: [Orhan İnandı](#), a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator who was kidnapped in Kyrgyzstan on May 31 and extrajudicially brought to Turkey by the National Intelligence Organization (MİT), revealed during a court hearing in İstanbul that a statement previously given to the police was false because he had spoken under torture by security officers.

October 14: Reports revealed that the Turkish Embassy in Manila [spied](#) on Turkish citizens in the Philippines and forwarded an illegal profiling list to Ankara, which led to their prosecution in Turkey.