

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

TUR 002 / 1210 / OBS 144

Burglary

Turkey

December 9, 2010

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **Turkey**.

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by the Centre of Social Action, Rehabilitation and Readjustment for the Victims of Torture (SOHRAM-CASRA) about the burglary of their Secretariat offices in Diyarbakir, south-eastern Turkey. SOHRAM-CASRA is an organisation that aims to assist victims of violence and to contribute in the improvement of the situation related to the abuse of human rights, the prevention of torture and rehabilitation of victims in Turkey.

According to the information received, on December 5, 2010, the SOHRAM-CASRA offices were burglarised. The perpetrators stole one computer, one video camera, one photographic camera, the petty cash for everyday expenses, two silver medals and two flash disks. The computer contained files that registered the work of the organisation. Recently, SOHRAM-CASRA has been working on a multi-cultural and multi-religion project that aims to promote respect and tolerance towards the ethnic and religious minorities in Turkey.

According to the same information, three similar break-ins had happened before at the SOHRAM-CASRA offices. The first occurred in 2006 and the other two in 2008. The repeated burglaries of the organisation makes clear to its members that they are being harassed in relation with their human rights activities. After each of the four burglaries, a complaint has been filed at the police but no investigations have been conducted.

The Observatory denounces the burglaries against SOHRAM-CASRA, which seem to merely aim at sanctioning their human rights activities. Accordingly, the Observatory calls upon the Turkish authorities to undertake a prompt, effective and impartial investigation in this regard, in order to bring those responsible before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal and apply adequate sanctions as provided by law.

Actions requested:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the members of SOHRAM-CASRA as well as all other human rights defenders in Turkey;
- ii. Undertake a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned facts, in order to bring those responsible before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal and apply adequate sanctions as provided by law;
- iii. Conform in any circumstances with the provisions of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted on December 9, 1998 by the United Nations General Assembly, in particular:
 - o article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to promote the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”,

- article 9.2 which notably states that “everyone whose rights or freedoms are allegedly violated has the right [...] to complain to and have that complaint promptly reviewed in a public hearing before an independent, impartial and competent judicial or other authority established by law and to obtain from such an authority a decision, in accordance with law, providing redress”,
 - and article 12.2 which provides that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;
- iv. More generally, ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Turkey.

Addresses:

- President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül, Cumhurbaşkanlığı 06100 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: +90 312 468 5026; Email: cumhurbaskanligi@tccb.gov.tr
- Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Office of the Prime Minister Basbakanlik 06573 Ankara, Turkey, Fax: + 90 312 417 0476; receptayyip.erdogan@basbakanlik.gov.tr
- Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for Human Rights, Mr. Cemil Çiçek Fax: 00 90 312 417 42 06
- Interior Minister, Mr. Beşir Atalay, Ministry of Interior, İçişleri Bakanlığı, 06644 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95 / +90 312 418 7696, besir.atalay@icisleri.gov.tr
- Justice Minister, Mr. Sadullah Ergin, Ministry of Justice/ Adalet Bakanlığı, 06659 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: + 90 312 414 62 26
- Foreign Minister Mr. Ahmed Davudoglu , Office of the Prime Minister, Basbakanlik, 06573 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: +90 312 287 88 11
- Ambassador, Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations in Geneva, Ch. du Petit-Saconnex 28b - CP 271, CH-1211, Geneva 19, Switzerland, E-mail: mission.turkey@ties.itu.int, Fax: +41 22 734 08 59
- Diplomatic Mission of Turkey to the European Union in Brussels, avenue Louis Lepoutre, 99, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium, Fax: + 32 2 340 98 79.

Please also write to the embassies of Turkey in your respective country.

Geneva-Paris, December 9, 2010

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org
- Tel and fax FIDH + 33 (0) 1 43 55 25 18 / +33 1 43 55 18 80
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