

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

TUR 001 / 0911 / OBS 114
Arbitrary arrest / Raids
Arbitrary detention / Harassment
Turkey
September 28, 2011

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

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by the Human Rights Association (*İnsan Hakları Derneği* - İHD) about the arbitrary arrests of 31 members and executives of İHD Şanlıurfa Branch, the Education and Science Workers Trade Union (Eğitim-Sen), the Health and Social Service Workers Trade Union (SES) as well as the searches by the police of the houses of the chairpersons and executives of the above mentioned organisations and their offices.

According to the information received, in the morning of September 27, 2011, law-enforcement officers raided İHD, Eğitim-Sen and SES Şanlıurfa Branch offices as well as the houses of their chairpersons and executives and arrested 31 members of these organisations. The police was in possession of a warrant from the Şanlıurfa Chief Public Prosecution Office mentioning allegations of “propaganda for an illegal organisation” and “participating in activities in line with the action and aims of that organisation” and, on the date of publication of this appeal, has denied to release information on the reasons of the raids and arrest, on the basis of legal provisions pertaining to the fight against terrorism.

Among those arrested were İHD Şanlıurfa Branch President **Cemal Babaoğlu**, İHD executives **Müslüm Kına** and **Müslüm Çiçek**, Eğitim-Sen Branch President **Halit Şahin**, Eğitim-Sen former Branch President **Sıtkı Dehşet** and Eğitim-Sen executive **Veysi Özbıngöl**. At the time of publication of this appeal, the 31 remained in detention, without access to their lawyers not their families.

The Observatory denounces the continuing policy of arbitrarily arresting human rights defenders in Turkey, and particularly İHD members and members of trade unions, which seems to merely aim at sanctioning their human rights activities. To that extent, the Observatory recalls that other İHD members are in pre-trial detention, notably Mr. **Muharrem Erbey**, İHD General Vice Chairperson and Chairperson of its Diyarbakir Province branch who had been detained since December 2009, Mr. **Arslan Özdemir** and Ms. **Roza Erdede**, İHD members in Diyarbakir, or that others remain in provisional release pending the outcome of criminal trials on alleged terrorism charges.

Accordingly, the Observatory calls upon the Turkish authorities to put an end to the continuing harassment against human rights defenders, including members of İHD, and urges the Turkish authorities.

Actions requested:

i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Messrs. Cemal Babaoğlu, Müslüm Kına, Müslüm Çiçek, Halit Şahin, Sıtkı Dehşet, Veysi Özbıngöl, Muharrem Erbey, Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede as well as all other members of İHD, Eğitim-Sen and SES Şanlıurfa Branch offices and, in general, all human rights defenders in Turkey;

ii. Release Messrs. Cemal Babaoğlu, Müslüm Kına, Müslüm Çiçek, Halit Şahin, Sıtkı Dehşet, Veysi Özbingöl, Muharrem Erbey, Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede and all other members of İHD, Egitim-Sen and SES Şanlıurfa Branch offices immediately and unconditionally since their detention is arbitrary as it only aim at sanctioning their human rights activities;

iii. Put an end to all acts harassment, including at the judicial level, against Messrs. Cemal Babaoğlu, Müslüm Kına, Müslüm Çiçek, Halit Şahin, Sıtkı Dehşet, Veysi Özbingöl, Muharrem Erbey, Arslan Özdemir and Ms. Roza Erdede as well as against all other members of İHD, Egitim-Sen and SES Şanlıurfa Branch offices and, in general, all human rights defenders in Turkey;

iv. Comply with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially its Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”, as well as 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”;

v. 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: cumhurbaşkanligi@tccb.gov.tr
- Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Office of the Prime Minister Basbakanlık 06573 Ankara, Turkey, Fax: + 90 312 417 0476; Email: receptayyip.erdogan@basbakanlik.gov.tr
- Interior Minister, Mr. İdris Naim Şahin, Ministry of Interior, İçişleri Bakanlığı, 06644 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: + 90312 418 17 95 / +90 312 418 7696, Email: idris.naim.sahin@tbmm.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, Basbakanlık, 06573 Ankara, Turkey; Fax: +90 312 287 88 11
- The Governor of Şanlıurfa Province, Celalettin Güvenç phone: +90 414 313 19; E-mail: [sanliurfa@icisleri.gov.tr](mailto:sanlıurfa@icisleri.gov.tr)
- 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.

Paris-Geneva, September 28, 2011

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



The Observatory
for the Protection
of Human Rights Defenders

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
- Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29