



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS

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HÂKİMLER VE SAVCILAR KURULU /
THE COUNCIL OF JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS
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Dear Minister of Justice and Council of Judges and Prosecutors:

I write as President of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. Our members throughout the world have watched with horror as the trials of our Colleagues in the CHD and the People's Law Office proceeded to verdict on March 22, 2019 with the imposition of long draconian sentences.

We have been observing almost every session of the trials against these lawyers in Istanbul for many years and were taken aback by the way in which the Courts have become politicized in Turkey to the point of not only jailing people who have the right to protest but also their advocates.

On this, the "Day of the Lawyer" in Turkey, we believe it is fitting and proper to raise our voice in protest.

From reports we have received the trials which resulted on March 22, 2019 with long sentences being imposed on Atty. Barkın Timtik, Atty. Özgür Yılmaz, Atty. Ebru Timtik, Atty. Behiç Aşcı, Atty. Şükriye Erden, Atty. Selçuk Kozağaçlı, Atty. Engin Gökoğlu, Atty. Aytaç Ünsal, Atty. Süleyman Gökten, Atty. Aycan Çiçek, Atty. Naciye Demir, Atty. Ezgi Çakır, Atty. Yağmur



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Ereren, Atty. Yaprak Türkmen, Atty. Didem Baydar Ünsal, Atty. Ayşegül Çağatay, and Atty. Zehra Özdemir, Atty. Ahmet Mandacı. These defendants were convicted of allegedly being members of a terrorist organization. The convictions were based on secret, false and misleading evidence such that the defendants were denied basic due process. The tribunal was not fair and impartial as required by law. We note that the manipulation of the system lead to the assignment of Judge Akın Gürlek to rule on these cases. We are informed that Judge Akın Gürlek is well known for his prejudices and harsh sentences against opposition leaders, journalists and academics.

These lawyers in fact were targeted for their own political beliefs and the political beliefs of clients they represented. Their charges were in blatant violation of their rights under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which protect freedom of opinion, and due process. Turkey has ratified this Covenant and is required to follow its provisions. We also believe the attacks on these lawyers violates the UN Principles on the Role of Lawyers which are enshrined in many international treaties.

IADL believes the Government of Turkey must overturn these convictions and free these lawyers. The international community of lawyers is watching what Turkey does.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Mirer, President