On 15 April 2020, the Radio and Television High Council (RTÜK) issued broadcast bans against Fox TV over anchor Fatih Portakal's critical comments while reporting the state’s COVID-19 policies. RTÜK cited Portakal's comments while reporting the news on 30 March, 31 March and 1 April on the issues of blocking opposition mayors' donation campaigns, the politicisation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and economic issues. Fox TV was also fined 3% of its advertisement revenue. According to RTÜK regulations, if Fox TV is fined again on the same violations, RTÜK can cancel its license to broadcast completely. RTÜK additionally fined Fox TV for another day-time programme for allegedly spreading “fake news” while reporting citizens’ struggle to get bread during lockdown. Other lawsuits were launched simultaneously following President Erdoğan's criminal complaint over a tweet Portakal posted on the government’s COVID-19 donation campaign. Also, an indictment was submitted upon complaint of the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BDDK) for defying the law on banking, requesting Portakal's imprisonment for up to three years.

NEW 11 Mar 2021: On 2 March 2021, the Istanbul 46th Criminal Court of First Instance acquitted Fatih Portakal of the charges of "insulting the president" and "damaging the reputation of banks".

Article published by Gazete Karınca: "Fatih Portakal hakkında beraat kararı"
imposed by Turkey's Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK)

_statement by Harlem Désir_