

05
Apr 2019

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No state
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Turkey

Alert created on: 10 Apr 2018

Journalists Detained on Account of Social Media Posts Critical of the Military Operation in Afrin

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

⊕ 2 Journalists in detention

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Detention and imprisonment of journalists

NO STATE REPLY YET

PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ

At least four journalists have been detained in police raids since 20 January 2018 as part of a social media crackdown on individuals who shared critical comments or news regarding the 'Operation Olive Branch', which was launched by the Turkish army on the Syrian town of Afrin.

Van-based journalist Idris Yılmaz, was taken into custody on 21 January following a police raid on his house in Van province. He was ordered arrested on 23 January 2018 on charges of "making terrorist propaganda". His house has been raided by the police on 20 March 2018 and according to his wife, his family members intimidated.

On 22 January, İshak Karakaş, editor-in-chief of Halkın Nabzı newspaper and columnist for Artı Gerçek, was taken into custody during a police raid at his home in Istanbul. An Istanbul court formally arrested Karakaş on 26 January. His social media posts criticising the Turkish military's operation in Afrin have been used as criminal evidence.

Mezopotamya news agency reporter Seda Taşkın was detained on 22 January during a police raid on her home in Ankara. Taşkın was arrested on 23 January on "membership in a terrorist organization" charges.

On 23 January, Haydar Ergül, an editor for the Demokratik Modernite magazine, who had been in custody since he was detained at the Diyarbakır Airport on 16 January, was arrested by an Istanbul court on charges of "making terrorist propaganda" and "membership in a terrorist organisation".

UPDATES

NEW 05 Apr 2019: On 26 March 2019, the 28th High Criminal Court of Istanbul convicted İshak Karakaş of "systematically disseminating propaganda for a terrorist organisation" and sentenced him to a prison term of 1 year, 6 months and 22 days. The court deferred the sentence.

21 Jan 2019: On 17 January 2019, the Court of appeal issued an interim decision ruling for the release of Seda Taşkın pending appeal. On 10 October 2018, the 2nd High Criminal Court of Muş had sentenced Taşkın to a total of 7.5 years in prison - 4 years and 2 months in prison for "aiding a terrorist organisation without being its member" and another 3 years and 4 months for "spreading propaganda for a terrorist organisation." The decision was brought to the appellate court.

07 Jan 2019: İdris Yılmaz's initial detention period was meant to end on 16 May 2018. He however remained in prison due to a new investigation started in February 2018, on charge of "membership in a terrorist organisation". On 3 January 2019, the Van 5. High criminal court sentenced İdris Yılmaz to a 6-year and 3-month prison sentence on this charge. On 31 December 2018 his lawyer has brought an application to the Constitutional Court.

12 Oct 2018: On 10 October 2018, Muş' 2nd High Criminal Court sentenced Seda Taşkın to a total of seven years and six months in prison. The court sentenced the journalist to three years and four months for "making propaganda for a [terrorist] organization" and four years and two months for "aiding and abetting a [terrorist] organization without being a member." The journalist is currently being held at the Sincan Women's Prison.

25 Sep 2018: On 18 September 2018, İstanbul 28. High Criminal Court ruled to lift the judicial control order that forced the defendant to give signature every week, however it rejected the request to lift the international travel ban.

09 May 2018: Editor-in-Chief of the local Istanbul daily Halkın Nabzı and Artı Gerçek columnist, İshak Karakaş, was released under judicial control measures in his first court appearance on 8 May 2018.

FOLLOW-UPS



OSCE 21 Jan 2019 | Relieved that Seda Taşkın was released, the OSCE Representative hopes for her acquittal on appeal.

 [Tweet by Harlem Désir](#)

OSCE 12 Oct 2018 | OSCE Representative appalled by Muş 2nd Heavy Penal Court 7.5 yrs prison sentence to reporter at Seda Taşkın for "aiding and abetting terrorist organisation as non-member".

 [Tweet by Harlem Désir](#)

JOURNALISTS IN DETENTION



Currently in detention (2):

Idris Yılmaz, Haydar Ergül