



JOINT STATEMENT

TURKEY: Release Güldane Kılıç immediately!

Paris-Ankara-Geneva, August 30, 2019 – **Ms. Güldane Kılıç, İnsan Hakları Derneği (İHD) Kars Branch Chairperson and a member of the Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi (DBP – Democratic Regions Party), is arbitrarily detained since July 23 over trumped-up terrorist charges. FIDH, İHD and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) denounce this new politically-motivated arbitrary detention, and calls on the Turkish authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all İHD members currently detained and to end any act of harassment, including at the judicial level, against political opponents, activists, and human rights defenders in Turkey.**

In the morning of July 23, 2019, police officers raided Ms. Güldane Kılıç's residence in Kars and subsequently took her into custody. Ms. Güldane Kılıç is the Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği - İHD) Kars Branch Chairperson and a member of the DBP, a legal Kurdish political party. A total of 12 persons were arrested in the same police operation, including seven People's Democratic Party (HDP) provincial leaders. The police stated that the investigation was confidential.

“The detention of Ms. Güldane Kılıç, the Chairperson of our branch in Kars, is the last example of judicial harassment of human rights defenders and political activists. Needless to state that the detention is part of ongoing policy to silence dissenting voice and restrict civic space”, said Öztürk Türkdoğan, President of İHD.

On July 31, 2019, Kars Criminal Peace Judgeship charged Ms. Güldane Kılıç with “membership in a terrorist organisation” (Article 314 of the Penal Code and Article 7 § 1 of the Anti-Terror Law). Ms. Güldane Kılıç has been since detained in Kars prison.

“Since the proclamation of the state of emergency in Turkey, many arrest operations were launched against civil society representatives and opposition members. This wave of arrests continued after the abolition of the state of emergency, deeply jeopardising the freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration as well the freedom of expression in the country”, said Elena Crespi, Head of Western Europe Desk at FIDH.

“One month after her arrest, we call for the immediate and unconditional release of Güldane Kılıç. The renewed and systematic targeting of dissenting voices in Turkey is only aimed at silencing pluralism and freedom of expression”, concluded Gerald Staberock, OMCT Secretary General.

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