

**JOINT STAKEHOLDER SUBMISSION
TO THE
UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL'S UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW
OF
TURKEY**

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We, a group of former teacher and educator, who are victim of the purge of the Turkish Government, after July 2016, established in Germany our Victim Educators Platform. Our main goal is to be the voice of our dear colleagues in Turkey, who weren't as fortunate as we and are now facing a civil death. Furthermore, we try to bring into awareness the corrupted education system in Turkey and how the Regime is tightening its grip on the curricula.

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HRD is a non-profit and independent civil society organization campaigning to defend human rights and to help people facing persecution all around the world and with a special focus on Turkey.

HRD is preparing reports concerning human rights violations, establishing contacts to other Human Rights NGO's and stakeholders, State Officials and regional as well as international organizations. HRD is also giving legal advice to victims, initiating sue procedures on behalf of the victims (universal jurisdiction) and preparing official petitions to the relevant UN Human Rights Mechanisms.

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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS SUFFERED BY THE TEACHERS IN TURKEY

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INTRODUCTION

Republic of Turkey in recent years, particularly after the July 15, 2016, has violated several international agreements and conventions to which it is a party and has conducted massive human rights abuses. These abuses are made by laws and decrees having the force of law (KHK - Kanun Hükmünde Kararname).

Instead of decisions that must be taken by judiciary at the end of duly judicial proceedings, all works are done and decisions are taken in Turkey by KHK, Presidency Circulars and Decision of Council of Ministers. While decisions are taken on very important issues that may lead to violation of rights, no investigation is done, no procedure is considered, and national and international legislation is disregarded.

The Republic of Turkey is rapidly moving away from democracy and is on the way towards dictatorship in a fast pace.

In this context, thousands of judges and prosecutors were dismissed and vast majority of them were arrested, free press was silenced, thousands of civil servants were arbitrarily purged, the powers of the police and intelligence services were extraordinarily increased, the leader of a major political party in the parliament was imprisoned, thousands of associations, foundations and media organizations were closed and their assets were confiscated. While the rights and freedoms are decreased unacceptably, the number of prisons increased at an incredible rate and continuing to increase¹.

After the July 15 Coup Attempt, which is cursed by all Turkish people who believe in democracy but defined by President Erdoğan as “grace of Allah”, Erdoğan and the groups supporting him used it as an excuse for oppressing, silencing and purging dissidents and perpetuating their unlawful works.

The Republic of Turkey, by disregarding main principles of universal law (e.g. the presumption of innocence) and without making any investigation, associated approximately 140000 civil servants and 100000 workers with coup attempt and terror and purged them either with KHK or through the trustees.

Purged civil servants could not find any possibility to seek their rights because of being declared as terrorist and putschist and closure of ways of seeking remedies by State of Emergency.

Purged people’s compensations were not paid. Their retirement rights have been ignored. They were prevented from benefiting from health services. They were declared as terrorist by publishing their names in the Official Gazette. As a result of intense propaganda and demonization, they were excluded from society. They were also deprived of working in private

¹ <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/gundem/2017/12/10/hukumetin-2023-planı-5-yılda-228-yeni-cezaevi/> (Turkey declared that it plans to build 228 new prisons up to 2023)

sector or do their own businesses. Fundamental human rights of purged people were annihilated and these people were abandoned to hunger, misery and civil death.

As expressed in various reports prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Venice Commission, an advisory body of the Council of Europe as well as Department of State of the USA, it is no longer the possibility to speak of a state of law in Turkey.

In fact, the situation in Turkey is worse than expressed in these reports. We want to give an example to illustrate the point where the human rights abuse in Turkey is reached.

During a peaceful demonstration organized by TAYAD (Tutuklu ve Hükümlü Aileleri Dayanışma Derneği) in Ankara on 16 February 2019, Merve Demirel, a university student, is detained by the police. She was harassed with hand by a policeman while she taken under custody. This molestation's images and videos published in the media and caused public resentment. Responding to rising reactions in society to punish harassing police, Ankara Police Department made a statement, defended this police and **ACCUSED MERVE DEMİREL FOR BEING DAUGHTER OF AN OLD TEACHER WHO WAS PURGED WITH KHK BECAUSE OF BEING MEMBER OF A TRADE UNION THAT IS LEGALLY OPERATED**². Because of the public's reaction to this statement of the police, the Minister of Interior, Süleyman Soylu, made another statement. Soylu defended the policeman who harassed Merve Demirel and he blamed Merve Demirel and her family and threatened them. After the statement of the Minister, the journalist who published the harassment images and videos and made an interview with Merve Demirel is detained³. The dreadful point is this case is that according to the mentality of the people governing Turkey being daughter of a teacher who was purged for being a member of a trade union justifies being subject to harassment. It is obvious that this mentality sees the treatment incompatible with human dignity as normal that is targeting not only purge victim teachers but also their family members.

34000 teachers who had not any connection with neither coup attempt nor terror dismissed and were deprived of their fundamental rights because of

- Being member of a legal trade union,
- Download and use an online chat application
- To be volunteer of a legally operating charity
- To have an account in a legally functioning bank
- To be dissident of President Erdoğan and his party AKP.

It is obvious that none of these points that put forward as a justification are not crime.

These victims cannot announce their voices because of the lack of a free media in Turkey. There is no authority in Turkey that can stop the lawlessness that these victims are exposed to and provide justice. Effective domestic remedies are exhausted. The dismissal and arrest of thousands judges and prosecutors (including 2 members of the Constitutional Court)⁴ is shaking over the head Turkish judicial authorities like a sword of Damocles and make great

² <https://t24.com.tr/haber/ankara-emniyet-mudurlugu-nden-polis-tacizi-aciklamasi-gozaltina-direnmesi-sonucu-basina-yansiyen-poruntuler-ortaya-cikti.808837>

³ <https://www.artigercek.com/haberler/arti-gercek-muhabiri-derya-okatan-gozaltina-alindi> Artı Gerçek muhabiri Derya Okatan, Merve Demirel ile yaptığı röportaj sonrası gözaltına alındı.

⁴ The European Court of Human Rights ruled that there were violation of rights in the proceedings against Alparslan Altan, a former member of the Constitutional Court.

pressure on the judiciary. Therefore, it is impossible to mention the existence of a fair trial in Turkey.

As the people who suffered from numerous unlawful treatments in Turkey and left their country in order to survive, be free and be voice of other victims in free world, wholeheartedly believe in democracy and rely on international law, we aim to bring human rights violations in Turkey on the agenda of the United Nations and to force Turkey to terminate human rights violations and to comply with international regulations to which he is a party. Our objectives are legal and human oriented and totally consistent with the objectives of the UN.

In this report, we want to bring your agenda the major fundamental rights violations that 34000 teachers who worked in the Ministry of Education were exposed to.

1- THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY UNLAWFULLY DISMISSED 34000 TEACHERS

The Turkish government dismissed 34000 teachers in violation of both the international legislation and Turkish Constitution.

It is clearly visible that the dismissal of these teachers is contrary to the article 128 (2)⁵, 129(2-3)⁶, 121 (2)⁷ and 15⁸ of the Turkish Constitution which was in force at the time of purge.

Despite the provisions of the Constitution expressed above the Republic of Turkey

- has violated its obligations under international law
- teachers were purged without any investigation
- the thoughts and opinions of these teachers were considered as “crime”
- teachers were tortured to explain their thoughts
- the principle of non-retroactivity of crimes and punishments is infringed (e.g. being a member of legally functioning trade union or having an account in a legally functioning bank are declared as crime some years after the action occurred)
- 34000 teachers were considered guilty without any trial and court decision.

The purge of teachers is also in contradiction with international conventions to which Turkey is a party e.g. the Termination of Employment Convention of ILO (C158).

⁵ “The qualifications, appointments, duties and powers, rights and responsibilities, salaries and allowances of public servants and other public officials, and other matters related to their status shall be regulated by law.” (According to this provision, teachers cannot be dismissed with a decree having the force of law)

⁶ “Public servants, other public officials and members of public professional organizations or their higher bodies shall not be subjected to disciplinary penalties without being granted the right of defence.”

“Disciplinary decisions shall not be exempt from judicial review.”

(Although the dismissals of public servant are disciplinary decisions, they were exempt from judicial review)

⁷ “The financial, material and labour obligations which are to be imposed on citizens in the event of the declaration of state of emergency under Article 119 and, applicable according to the nature of each kind of state of emergency, the procedure as to how fundamental rights and freedoms shall be restricted or suspended in line with the principles of Article 15, how and by what means the measures necessitated by the situation shall be taken, what sort of powers shall be conferred on public servants, what kind of changes shall be made in the status of officials, and the procedure governing emergency rule, shall be regulated by the Law on State of Emergency.”

(Despite this obvious provision, regulations put into force during state of emergency disregarded the Article 15 of the Constitution)

⁸ “In times of war, mobilization, martial law, or state of emergency, the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms can be partially or entirely suspended, or measures may be taken, to the extent required by the exigencies of the situation, which derogate the guarantees embodied in the Constitution, provided that obligations under international law are not violated.”

“Even under the circumstances indicated in the first paragraph, the individual’s right to life, and the integrity of his or her material and spiritual entity shall be inviolable except where death occurs through lawful act of warfare and execution of death sentences; no one may be compelled to reveal his or her religion, conscience, thought or opinion, nor be accused on account of them; offences and penalties may not be made retroactive, nor may anyone be held guilty until so proven by a court judgment.”

Article 4 of this Convention expresses that *“The employment of a worker shall not be terminated unless there is a valid reason for such termination connected with the capacity or conduct of the worker or based on the operational requirements of the undertaking, establishment or service”* and article 5 of this Convention states that

“The following, inter alia, shall not constitute valid reasons for termination:

(a) union membership or participation in union activities outside working hours or, with the consent of the employer, within working hours;

.....

(d) race, colour, sex, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin;”

Despite these obvious provisions, Turkey purged tens of thousands of teachers by claiming that they are member of trade unions and associations linked to a religious group. Thus, Turkey violated article 4 & 5 in particular and the Convention in general.

2- THERE IS NO JURISDICTION THAT TEACHERS CAN APPLY BECAUSE OF BEING PURGED BY KHK

According to both international and national law, any individual subjected to an unfair or unlawful action have the right to apply for judicial authorities. Nevertheless, it is not possible for purged teachers to apply any judicial authority in Turkey, because there are hundreds of court decisions express that KHK is out of the administrative judicial review. In fact, this is the reason why tens of thousands of teachers are purged with KHK. Turkish government deliberately preferred this method for preventing purged teachers to apply courts and get back to their job with judicial decisions. Although as the result of international pressure a new administrative body, OHAL Commission, is created to handle the case of purged teachers. Nevertheless, the OHAL Commission was totally created for the sake of formality, because

- OHAL Commission is an administrative body.
- All of its members were appointed by the government that made the purge.
- It started to work 1 year after the creation.
- Due to the time limit the Commission has to decide on each case in 2.5 minute.
- Up to now the Commission rejected % 99 of the cases.

This issue is explained in detail in the report of Amnesty International entitled *“Purged Beyond Return? No Remedy For Turkey’s Dismissed Public Sector Workers”*⁹. Therefore, Turkey also violates the right to a fair trial guaranteed by UDHR and ECHR.

Article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that *“Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law”*. Also, article 8 of the Termination of Employment Convention of ILO (C158) expresses that *“A worker who considers that his employment has been unjustifiably terminated shall be entitled to appeal against that termination to an impartial body, such as a court, labour tribunal, arbitration committee or*

⁹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur44/9210/2018/en/>

arbitrator.” Despite these provisions the right of purged teachers to apply for judicial authorities for action for annulment and return to work is restricted. Therefore, ongoing process in Turkey is violating article 8 of the UDHR and article 8, 9 and 10 of the C158 of ILO.

3- PURGED TEACHERS ARE EXPOSED TO HATE SPEECH BY TURKISH STATE AUTHORITIES

Purged teachers seem guilty by Turkish society because of the hate speech and exclusion exposing them. This situation causes purged teachers to be exposed to verbal and actual attacks in society. The Turkish government qualifies dissident groups, trade unions and organizations as terrorists and as mentioned above exposes opponents to unacceptable treatment in the rule of law.

Turkish government, without any trial and interrogation, purged thousands of teachers and published their names in the Official Gazette as “terrorist”. To be purged in this way, labelled as terrorist and exposed to hate speech and social lynch mean the violation of right to life.

In this context, the Republic of Turkey violates the article 3, 5, 6 and 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 1, 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

4- THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY VIOLATES THE “PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE” OF THE TEACHERS PURGED WITH THE KHK

The presumption of innocence, a universally accepted principle takes part also in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, of the purged teachers is violated. Turkish government, without any trial and interrogation, published the names of teachers in the Official Gazette and declared them as criminals. Thus, Turkey abolished the presumption of innocence of these teachers and harmed their personality and dignity. All people, including teachers, have the right to live with dignity. State officials have not the right to bereave arbitrarily the right of people to live with dignity. The above mentioned treatment made by Turkey violates the universally accepted legal principles as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and debar purged teachers from the right to live with dignity.

5- THE RIGHT TO DEFENCE DID NOT PROVIDED TO THE TEACHERS BEFORE DISMISSAL

More than 34000 teachers working in the public sector were purged without any examination or investigation. In this context, the right to defence was not provided to none of the teachers. Therefore, purge of these teachers is totally unlawful.

There is no doubt that with this purge the Republic of Turkey violates the article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Every person charged with committing a crime should be allowed to use his right to defence. Every individual is innocent unless he/she is found guilty at the end of an open trial where all necessary opportunities to use the right to defence are provided to him/her. (UDHR, Article 11)

Besides, article 7 of the Termination of Employment Convention of ILO (C158) states that “*The employment of a worker shall not be terminated for reasons related to the worker's conduct*

or performance before he is provided an opportunity to defend himself against the allegations made, unless the employer cannot reasonably be expected to provide this opportunity.” and impeding the opportunity to defence is violated also this article.

6- NONE OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS PUT FORWARD ABOUT PURGE OF TEACHERS ARE NOT LEGAL

The purge of teachers made by Turkish government after the July 15 Coup Attempt violates the provisions of the Termination of Employment Convention of ILO (C158), because the reasons put forward about this purge are not related with and eligible to “employee capacity”, “execution of work” or “workplace requirements”. For this reason, above mentioned purge violates ILO Convention C158.

Besides, none of the reasons expressed to justify the purge of 34.000 teachers are lawful.

The acts of purged teachers put forward by Turkish government as illegal are totally legal acts and none of these acts are defined as crime in any legal documents. It is also obvious that teachers cannot be associated with military coup attempt.

In KHK, the reason of teachers’ purge was expressed as “being members of terrorist organizations or organizations, groups that were listed by the National Security Council as acting against the security of the state”.

There is no need to waste time to make comprehensive explanations about legality of this justification, because any individual who has basic knowledge of law can easily comprehend the unlawfulness of this justification. Nevertheless, we would like to draw your attention to some points in terms of universal law.

- No evidence has been revealed that indicates existence of any terrorist acts of these 34000 teachers before July 15 coup attempt. There was not any investigation about these teachers. Also, there was no relation between these teachers and the coup attempt. In this context, it is obviously unlawful to purge these teachers by associating them with terror and terrorist acts.
- In the rule of law, people can be judged and convicted only by the courts. However, the purged teachers were declared as terrorist by administrative bodies without any investigation.
- The right and power to determine an organization as terrorist organization belongs to the Judiciary. Such a decision may be made at the end of a judicial process in accordance with legal procedures. National Security Council has no legal right and power to declare an organization as terrorist. However, in Turkey National Security Council declared a group as terrorist and relying on this declaration tens of thousands of people in public sector including 34000 teachers purged without any evidence, investigation, trial and judicial decision.
- There was also very important unlawfulness in terms of the time of implementation of crimes and punishments. An act not defined as a crime at the time committed cannot be considered as a crime later. However, in Turkey, although there was no legal change some acts of 34000 teachers that were lawful before July 15 coup attempt were considered as crime after July 15 coup attempt and these teachers are accused of being terrorist

- Individuality of offences and punishments is one of the main principles of law. In Turkey this principle is ignored. Firstly, some people declared as guilty by administrative bodies and then some other people who have connection with these people also accepted as guilty and punished.
- Purged teachers declared as guilty because of their legal acts such as being member of a trade union, depositing money to a bank, supporting opposition parties.

The article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that *“No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed.”* and article 7 of the European Convention on Human Rights expresses that *“No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed”*. Despite these evident provisions 34000 teachers were purged and deprived of their fundamental human rights.

7- TEACHERS WERE NOT ONLY PURGED BUT ALSO DEPRIVED OF THEIR EMPLOYEE PERSONAL BENEFITS

Purged teachers were deprived of their rights. For instance, their pension premiums were disregarded, requests for retirement were rejected for a long time, their money accumulated in different funds were extorted and they were not allowed to utilize from health services. These cases infringe article 12 and 13 of the Termination of Employment Convention of ILO (C158).

Purged teachers living in the public housing were forced to vacate their houses in 15 days. The difficulties of finding a new house in summer season and the economic burden of moving in a few days were disregarded and the household goods of teachers who could not move to another place were thrown away.

In addition, ship’s crew certificate and pilot’s license of purged teachers were revoked.

8- PASSPORTS OF PURGED TEACHERS WERE CANCELLED VE THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GET NEW PASSPORT

The passports of purged teachers were cancelled. Thus, their freedom of travel that is under the protection of international conventions and Turkish constitution was restricted.

The cancellation of passports was not limited to these teachers, but was extended to include spouses and children of these teachers. Thus, even though there is no legal accusation about the family members of purged teachers, individuality of offences and punishments principle is still violated and these family members cannot get passports.

Violations regarding the freedom of travel are continuing despite approximately 3 years passed after the coup attempt. Although some members of the Turkish government stated that the restrictions on the passports without the court decision is terminated, these restrictions were not abolished.

This situation violates not only Turkish constitution but also the provisions of the article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that is as follows

1. *Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.*
2. *Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.*

9- TEACHERS' RIGHT TO UNIONISATION WAS VIOLATED

Aktif Eğitim-Sen was one of the biggest trade unions of Turkey and it had about 18000 members when closed. These members were purged and aggrieved only because of being the member of this union. Although union dues of these teachers were paid by the state until July 15 coup attempt, they were purged immediately after coup attempt due to being member of this union. Thus, these teachers were punished for using the right to organization and unionization given them by the ECHR and universal law.

On 23 July 2016, 7 days after the coup attempt, 2 confederations and their members (19 trade unions including Aktif Eğitim-Sen) were closed and all their assets were confiscated by the decree having force of law No. 667.

Hereby the Republic of Turkey violates

- “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association” provision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 20)
- “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests” provision of the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 11)

These trade unions were decided to be closed by decree having force of law that is prepared and put into force by the Council of Ministers, an administrative body. Therefore, these decisions infringe the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention of ILO (C87) including “Workers' and employers' organisations shall not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority.” provision of article 4 of this Convention.

10- PURGED TEACHERS PARTICULARLY MANAGERS AND MEMBERS OF THE TRADE UNIONS HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO UNJUST ARRESTS

In Turkey, after July 15 coup attempt, being manager of a closed trade union has been considered as crime and old managers of these trade unions started to be judged. As the result of the propaganda made by the state and elimination of the right to a fair trial, courts disregarded the current legislation and started to accept “being member of Aktif Eğitim-Sen” as evidence for being a member of terrorist organization.

Tens of thousands of teachers were purged, declared as terrorist and put into prison because of their membership to Aktif Eğitim-Sen one of the biggest a trade unions of Turkey that was established in accordance with law and engaged in activities under the supervision of the state. These practices are clear violation of national and universal law and necessary actions should be taken immediately to stop it.

11- TURKEY DOES NOT ALLOW PURGED TEACHERS TO WORK ALSO IN PRIVATE SECTOR

Social Security Institution of Turkey has labelled purged teachers in its nationwide online system that can be seen by all public and private bodies. Thus, when a private company intends to hire a purged teacher it sees that this teacher is purged and declared as terrorist. Despite this label if a private sector company hires a purged teacher this company is threatened, harassed, subjected to intensive audits and penalized by Social Security Institution. Thus, private sector companies are frightened and discouraged to hire purged teachers. For this reason, vast majority of these teachers cannot find jobs also in private sector and their right to work is violated.

12- TURKISH GOVERNMENT INTERVENES JUDICIAL PROCESS

In order to prevent purged teachers to take their rights back, the Turkish government interferes trials through the Council of Judges and Prosecutors and Ministry of Justice. Due to the government oriented interventions as well as created fear and unlawful environment, there is no longer the possibility of a fair trial in Turkey.

In recent years, many legal changes that are in contradiction with universal law were made in Turkey in order to impede fair trial. In addition, the government manifestly intervened the elections of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors and provided the election of its supporters to this Council. These members of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors do not act independently and impartially but intervene judicial processes for the benefit of the government. Also, agents of the National Intelligence Organization and General Directorate of Police always attend trials, visit judges and prosecutors and instruct them, check their decisions and report them to different governmental bodies. Judges and prosecutors not comply with the instructions given are punished by the Council of Judges and Prosecutors and assigned to subordinate and bad missions.

There is no doubt that fair trial cannot be achieved in an environment dominated by unlawful interventions, threats and fear. In this environment where the courts even reject passport demands of purged teachers' spouses, it is impossible for these teachers to succeed in the lawsuits of return to work.

13- TEACHERS WERE NOT ONLY PURGED BUT ALSO LOST THEIR RIGHT TO BE ELECTED

Supreme Election Council of Turkey rejected to give certificate of election to some people who won the local elections on 31 March 2019 only because they were purged by a decree having the force of law.

- Zeyyat Ceylan, HDP candidate for Bağlar municipality of Diyarbakır, won the local elections by taking 116000 votes. However, 9 days after the election Supreme Election Council rejected to give him the certificate of election because he was a purged teacher and gave the certificate to the candidate of the ruling AKP who took 42000 votes.

- Müzahit Karakuş, HDP candidate for Tekman municipality of Erzurum, won the local elections. However, Supreme Election Council rejected to give her the certificate of election because she was a purged teacher and gave the certificate to the candidate of the ruling AKP.
- Gülcan Kaçmaz Sayyigit, HDP candidate for Edremit municipality of Van, won the local elections. However, Supreme Election Council rejected to give her the certificate of election because she was a purged teacher.

Despite the fact that they got the vast majority of the votes these teachers were not allowed to become mayor for the reason that they were purged. Thus, with this decision of the Council, purged teachers lost also their right to be elected.

14- HIGH LEVEL OFFICIALS SYSTEMATICALLY PROVOKE THE PUBLIC OPINION AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH HATE SPEECH AGAINST PURGED TEACHERS AND NORMALIZED THE PERSECUTION OF PURGED TEACHERS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

The incident expressed in detail at the introduction about Merve Demirel, the daughter of a purged teacher who is harassed by the police, is not an isolated event. Due to the hate speech of partisan media and Turkish authorities, including but not limited to President Erdoğan and Ministry of Interior Soylu, purged teachers and their families are demonized and all sorts of evil targeting them are legitimized.

As there is no free press in Turkey, purged teachers unfortunately cannot announce their voices.

15- CONCLUSION

It is considered that we are facing one of the most comprehensive violations of teacher rights in the world in recent decades. The rights of teachers stemming from and under the protection of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, ILO Conventions, universal law and Turkish Constitution are disregarded. Tens of thousands of teachers were purged, arrested, prevented to work also in private and debar from their pension rights and compensations just for being a member of a trade union.

The purged teachers are seeking their rights. Nevertheless, it is not possible for them to get back their rights in Turkey where became an empire of fear and the principle of rule of law is annihilated.

Nowadays, in Turkey, due to the ongoing official operations that give the impression of a genocide and created climate of fear, people cannot dare to seek even their universally protected rights. Plenty of the purged teachers refrain from litigating and seeking their various rights, because they are still afraid of facing some inhumane treatments if they do so.

This fear is not groundless, because everybody knows what lived the purged teachers Nuriye Gülmen and Semih Özakça as well as their families after they started to strive against unlawfulness and seek their rights. Both of them were beaten, their homes were repeatedly

raided, and not only them but also their family members were arrested. Even this single example indicates the point where the violence and lawlessness is reached in Turkey.

Nowadays, in Turkey, purged teachers are still struggling for survival despite all bad conditions, threats, operations and demonization.

Despite all the difficulties we persevere to struggle for protecting human dignity, putting an end to human rights abuses and eliminating the victimizations.

Following steps should be taken immediately in order to eliminate victimization and ensure justice:

- 1- Turkey should immediately get back purged teachers to their work
- 2- Judicial proceedings should be conducted in compliance with universal legal rules and principles including but not limited to the presumption of innocence, individuality of offences and right to defence.
- 3- Purged teachers' financial, social and personal rights should be compensated.
- 4- Turkey should apologize from these purged teachers due to her injustice and unlawfulness treatment.
- 5- Turkey should rehabilitate the purged teachers by declaring their names in the Official Gazette as innocent.

We are asking the United Nations, member states and all relevant parties to hear the voice of purged teachers and support them to get back their rights that are protected by both international and national law.