

*"The International Women's Day is the most important rally for women's suffrage, which can record the history of the movement for the emancipation of the women to this day."  
Clara Zetkin, 1911*

## **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2019: MORE THAN 17.000 INNOCENT WOMEN IN TURKISH PRISONS**

Today we celebrate International Women's Day. The main demands of the founders of Women's Day are now fulfilled, at least in Europe and Germany. Nevertheless, much remains to be done in matters of women's rights. Equal opportunities in working life, equal pay for equal work, improving the situation of migrant women, combating violence against women and against forced prostitution or trafficking of women are some of the issues that we need to address vigorously.

In countries in which the rule of law is endangered and democratic values are not anchored in the respective society, there is a great need for action. One of these countries is Turkey, where women are wronged. Fundamental rights and freedoms, the rule of law and democracy have largely been suspended in Turkey since the declaration of the state of emergency in July 2016. The termination of the state of emergency has not changed anything since the regulations of this state continues to apply.

Turkey has developed into an "open-air prison": more than 17,000 women were illegally arrested after the alleged coup attempt of 15 July 2016 and are exposed to inhuman prison conditions. Some of these women are pregnant, about to give birth, or are placed in overcrowded prisons with their babies and children. Torture, sexual abuse, poor access to health care, ignoring visitor rights, no educational opportunities for children and much more are becoming more common. This approach is both a violation of universally recognized ethical principles, as well as a violation of international conventions, to which Turkey is legally obliged to comply.

We call on all women's rights activists, NGOs and the German government to take action against this practice by the Turkish government to stop the witch hunt against innocent women. In addition, international organizations should have the opportunity to identify, investigate, and help to stop the massive human rights abuses in Turkey and bring to account those who violate the applicable law.

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