



ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

WITH LAWYERS
IN 22 COUNTRIES

EJDM Europäische Vereinigung von Juristinnen & Juristen für Demokratie und Menschenrechte in der Welt

EJDH Asociación Europea de los Juristas por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos en el Mundo

EJDH Association Européenne des Juristes pour la Démocratie & les Droits de l'Homme

EGDU Associazione Europea delle Giuriste e dei Giuristi per la Democrazia e i diritti dell'Uomo nel Mondo

Equality Privacy Social Rights
No Racism Peace No Torture No War
Self-Determination of Peoples Democracy
Human Rights Rights of Migrants

Bologna, Donostia, Düsseldorf, Vienna, 11 December 2023

ELDH condemns raid of a lawyer's office in Istanbul

On 6 February 2024, after an armed attack on the largest court building (Çağlayan Courthouse) in Istanbul, two assailants were killed by the police. According to the police, the attackers were members of the DHKP-C. Following this attack, a number of offices of various organisations in Istanbul were raided and vandalized by the police forces, including the People's Law Office. Four lawyers, Didem Baydar Ünsal, Berrak Çağlar, Seda Şaraldı and Betül Vangölü Kozağaçlı were arrested. The lawyers who were arrested are members of the Progressive Lawyers' Association (ÇHD) and Betül Vangölü Kozağaçlı is currently acting as one of the executive board members of the association.

The office also includes the ÇHD lawyers Selçuk Kozağaçlı, Barkın Timtik, Aytaç Ünsal and Oya Aslan, who have been imprisoned for years, as well as 18 other accused lawyers. As the office has frequently defended alleged members and supporters of the DHKP-C in criminal proceedings, these fellow lawyers have already been accused of being members or supporters of the DHKP-C themselves. This inadmissible equation of the lawyers with their clients also seems to be the reason for today's attack on the People's Law Office.

Currently lawyers are kept under Vatan Police Headquarters, and it was announced that they will not be able to access their lawyers for 24 hours. Since there is a confidentiality order on the file, colleagues acting as defence counsel for the lawyers are also unable to access the contents of the file and the accusations.

The ELDH condemns the inadmissible equation of the lawyers with their clients and demands their immediate release.

The ECtHR has repeatedly stated that the government of Turkey has disregarded the principles of the rule of law and has failed to implement the judgments of the ECtHR.

Lawyers' organizations from all over the world have come to the conclusion after their fact-finding missions in Turkey and after observing numerous trials that the principles of a fair trial are violated in Turkey as well as the UN Basic Principles concerning the role of lawyers.

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