



To M. Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister
Istanbul
TURKEY

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Dear M. Prime Minister,

Letter of protest

Public Services International (PSI) is writing to you to protest in the strongest term against the continued harassment and intimidation of our sister trade unionists in Turkey.

We are aware that on 13th February 2012, 15 women trade union leaders and activists, members of PSI, were arrested and dragged from their homes in early morning raids. Further, the offices of municipal workers union, Tüm Bel Sen, and health and social service workers union, SES, (both affiliated to PSI), as well as the offices of the Confederation of Civil Servants Trade Unions, KESK, (affiliated to ITUC) were invaded and searched as part of a so-called police investigation. We think that it is no coincidence that these raids and arrests occurred just as the Confederation was preparing its celebrations for International Women's Day on 8th March.

Since then, six of the women have been released on bail:

- Özden Özmen Gök, SES Ankara Branch Member;
- Leman Kiraz, SES Former Executive Board Member;
- Songul Morsumbul, former KESK Women's Secretary;
- efika im ek, member of the Egitim Sen Ankara Branch;
- Nezahat Asrav, member of the Egitim Sen Ankara Branch;
- Meral Hız, member of the Egitim Sen Ankara Branch.

Nine others remain in prison:

- Güler Elveren, Women's Secretary of Tüm Bel Sen;
- Bedriye Yorgun, Women's Secretary of SES;
- Belkis Yurtseven, member of the SES Ankara Branch;
- Hülya Mendillio lu, member of the SES Ankara Branch;
- Nur at Ye il, member of the SES Ankara Branch;
- Canan Çala an, KESK Women's Secretary;
- Guldane Erdogan, Women's Secretary of Egitim Sen Ankara Branch 2;
- Hatice Beydilli, member of Egitim Sen Ankara Branch 1;

- Evrim Özdemir O ra , member of Egitim Sen Ankara Branch 1.

As far we know there is no legal basis for their arrest. On 12th June 2012, together with other GUF General Secretaries, we met with the Turkish labour minister during the International Labour Conference in Geneva and the reason we were given for the arrests was that the women have been linked to terrorist work.

The minister offered to share the information he had from the public prosecutor. PSI therefore asks to receive that information and demands the immediate release of our sister trade unionists still imprisoned.

We remind you that Turkey's record on the treatment of women, as well as the treatment of trade unionists, has been called into question many times including by the International Labour Organisation, the European Court of Human Rights and the European Commission.

PSI calls on the Turkish Government to live up to its obligations, as a member of the international community, and to guarantee the respect of women's rights, trade union rights and all human rights in Turkey.

Yours sincerely,



Peter WALDORFF
PSI General Secretary