



BUNDESRECHTSANWALTSKAMMER

The President

Bundesrechtsanwaltskammer
Littenstraße 9 | 10179 Berlin

Minister of Justice
Mr Bekir Bozdağ
06659 Kizilay
Ankara
Republic of Turkey

By e-mail to info@adalet.gov.tr

Berlin, 18 January 2017

Open Letter

Concerning the detention of lawyers and closure of lawyer's associations in the Republic of Turkey

Your Honour,

The Bundesrechtsanwaltskammer (The German Federal Bar) represents the interests of the 28 German Bars and thus of the entire legal profession in the Federal Republic of Germany, which currently consists of approximately 165,000 lawyers, vis-à-vis authorities, courts and organisations – at national, European and international level.

The German Federal Bar expresses its deep concern over the current situation of the legal profession in Turkey.

According to the information available to us, around 270 Turkish lawyers were arrested since 15th July 2016, among them several current and former presidents of regional Bars, Mr. Orhan Öngöz (President of the Trabzon Bar), Mr. Mehmet Cemal Acar (President of the Siirt Bar), Mr. İsmail Taştan (President of the Gumushane - Bayburt Regional Bar), Mr. Fevzi Kayacan (President of the Konya Bar), Mr. Mehmet Güzel - Former President of the Erzurum Bar, Mr. Zeynel Balkız (Former President of the Manisa Bar), who are still in detention right now. Twenty-nine lawyers associations, among them "YARSAV - Judges and Prosecutors Association", "Çağdaş Hukukçular Derneği - Progressive Lawyers Association" and MANİSA Lawyers Association, were closed down with their assets confiscated by the government.

Bundesrechtsanwaltskammer

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We are irritated by the fact that so many lawyers have become a target of investigations by the state in such a short period of time.

In the view of the above, the German Federal Bar urges your Honour to take effective measures to ensure that all lawyers currently in detention receive proper treatment, that their professional duties towards their clients are not violated and that the investigations against them are conducted according to the principles of the rule of law.

In addition, the German Federal Bar asks you to take all necessary measures to guarantee that lawyers in Turkey are able to perform their professional duties without fear intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference.

Yours sincerely,



Ekkehart Schäfer