



29th Session of Human Rights Council (15 June - 3 July 2015)
General Debate - Item 4 (Human rights situations that require the Council's attention)

Mr. President,

As the first and only NGO from Turkey holding a General Consultative Status with ECOSOC, the Journalists and Writers Foundation feels the responsibility of revealing some alarming developments in Turkey that require the Council's utmost attention.

It's very uncommon and even more distracting to see Heads of States and governments deliberately committing human rights violations, especially, concerning freedom of expression and hate speech. This abnormal situation is a terrifying development with regard to protection and promotion of human rights on a worldwide scale.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in the aftermath of the Gezi Protests, only in July 2013, 22 journalists were fired and 37 journalists were forced to resign. According to the Turkish Journalists' Association, 559 journalists, reporters, photojournalists, and staff lost their jobs in 2014.

In addition, Mr. Hidayet Karaca, our Board Member and a TV network executive, has been imprisoned for the last six months without an indictment. Our NGO's honorary president, Mr. Fethullah Gülen who was repeatedly awarded by different bodies of the international community for his contributions to peace has been exposed to hate speech by Turkish President, Mr. Erdogan, himself.

Alongside with Hizmet movement, today, each individual and group, from peaceful environmental demonstrators, Kurds, Alawis, to non-Muslim citizens who are not aligned with President Erdogan are all prone to suffer from deliberate violations of human rights in Turkey. During the first two months of this year 67 individuals were sued on the basis of insulting the Turkish president, including a 13-year-old student. Moreover, numerous reports released by leading global NGOs raise serious concerns regarding the overall deterioration in freedom of expression, the rule of law, and human rights' conditions in Turkey.

In conclusion, we request the Council to step up to protect societies whose highest representatives openly and manifestly become the very perpetrators of human rights violations.

Thank you, Mr. President.