



The UIA Institute for the Rule of Law

STATEMENT

Paris, 10 October 2024

TÜRKIYE: Forced hospitalization of lawyer Dilek Ekmekçi: a new attempt at judicial repression

The Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers' (UIA-IROL) expresses its deep concern about the situation of Istanbul lawyer Dilek Ekmekçi. Since 1 September 2024, Ms. Ekmekçi has been held in Istanbul's Bakirkoy prison on charges of “denigrating Turkish officials”, after taking steps to lodge a complaint against politicians reported to have been involved in a human trafficking network.

On 3 October 2024, the Ankara Criminal Court ordered her forced hospitalization for three weeks, citing the need for medical supervision. Her lawyers and human rights organizations denounce this decision as a clear attempt to discredit and silence the courageous lawyer committed to defending fundamental rights.

Dilek Ekmekçi is known for her long-standing commitment to the fight against forced prostitution of minors, particularly those under state guardianship, exploited by mafia networks with alleged links to police and supremacist organizations. She personally discovered these atrocities while searching for her sister, herself placed in these state institutions.

UIA-IROL urges the Turkish authorities to guarantee respect for the fundamental rights of lawyers, in particular their freedom to exercise their profession without fear of reprisals or intimidation¹. We demand the immediate release of Ms. Dilek Ekmekçi and call for her physical and psychological safety to be guaranteed.

UIA-IROL urges the international community to intervene firmly in support of lawyers persecuted in the exercise of their profession in Türkiye. It is imperative that governments use all diplomatic channels to demand the protection of fundamental human rights, including those of human rights defenders such as lawyers.

More about UIA-IROL

The Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL) promotes the Rule of Law and supports and defends, in particular, (1) lawyers, judges and human rights defenders who are harassed, threatened and/or persecuted in the exercise of their professions, (2) the independence of the legal and judicial professions, and (3) the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, especially in defense of human rights.

For more information go to: www.uianet.org - uiacentre@uianet.org
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¹ Principle 16, [Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers](#) (1990)