



**PRESS RELEASE**

November 30, 2015

**The UIA Condemns Murder of Lead Lawyer Tahir Elçi,  
President of the Diyarbakir Bar Association**

The UIA is deeply shocked by the murder of prominent lawyer Mr. Tahir Elçi, President of the Diyarbakir Bar Association and a leading human rights activist.

According to reports, Mr. Elçi was shot in the head and killed on Saturday November 28, shortly after making a press statement at the Diyarbakir province's central Sur district. Two police officers were also killed and several people were injured in the attack. At the time of this writing, all the factual circumstances surrounding the case remain unclear.

The UIA firmly condemns this odious crime.

Tahir Elçi was the lead lawyer in numerous cases involving Kurdish issues. In particular, he represented, before the European Court of Human Rights, numerous victims of serious human rights violations allegedly perpetrated by the Turkish security forces.

Last month, Mr. Elçi was briefly arrested as part of an investigation initiated by a Turkish prosecutor for “spreading PKK propaganda” in relation to remarks he made on a Turkish television show. At that time, the UIA had expressed its concern regarding both the procedural irregularities that marred Mr. Elçi's arrest and, more generally, the serious threat to the freedom of expression posed by the criminal prosecution facing Mr. Elçi.

The UIA wishes to extend its sincere condolences to Mr. Elçi's family and loved ones. The UIA also expresses its solidarity with the whole community of Turkish lawyers and, in particular, the Diyarbakir Bar Association.

**The UIA urges Turkish authorities to ensure that the investigation into Mr. Tahir Elçi's murder is independently and impartially conducted. All necessary steps should be adequately taken to bring to justice those responsible, in accordance with international standards.**

## More about the UIA

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*The Union Internationale des Avocats (International Association of Lawyers - UIA) was founded in 1927. It is the oldest worldwide legal association and brings together several thousand lawyers, as well as over 200 bar, federation and association members (which represent around two million lawyers) from more than 110 countries.*

*The main aims of the UIA are to promote the fundamental principles of the legal profession; to contribute to the establishment of an international legal order based on the principle of justice between nations, through law and in the cause of peace; and, to defend lawyers and their clients. the principle of justice between nations, through law and in the cause of peace; and, to defend lawyers and their clients.*

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For more information go to: [www.uianet.org](http://www.uianet.org) - [uiacentre@uianet.org](mailto:uiacentre@uianet.org)

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