



**ASSEDEL**

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67000 Strasbourg, FRANCE

Dunja MIJATOVIC  
Commissioner for Human Rights

Council of Europe  
Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights  
67075 Strasbourg Cedex  
FRANCE

February 20, 2021

Dear Ms. Mijatovic,

Turkey is a member of the Council of Europe since April 13, 1950, is going through a difficult period in terms of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The country is far from the human rights and freedoms that exist in modern democracies. Turkey has been dropped to 'Not Free' status by Freedom House annual reports<sup>1</sup>. In terms of political rights, Turkey receives 16/40 and in terms of civil liberties receives 16/60 points in this report. 1,376 million citizens have been investigated on terror charges since the July 15 coup attempt. If this figure is considered in terms of affected families, 10 percent of the population of the country is left under suspicion and accusation of terrorism.

The regime is not satisfied with the violations they have committed but also trying to silence those who voice these violations. Courts are forced to make unlawful decisions, and people are victimized by making decisions that the regime wants and using them as an apparatus for unlawfulness. Omer Faruk Gergerlioğlu is a lawmaker who voices human rights violations at the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Recently, a top appeals court has approved a jail sentence against Mr. Gergerlioğlu on terrorism charges which potentially will open the way to him being barred from parliamentary membership<sup>2</sup>. A lawmaker who tirelessly expresses human rights violations is facing 2.5 years of imprisonment for supporting

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<sup>1</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/turkey/freedom-world/2020>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-hdp-idUKKBN2AJ1VE>

terrorism. Such decisions are apparent indicators of an institutional shift that drifts Turkey into irrational situation in the modern age.

Nevertheless, Mr. Gergerlioğlu is not alone as a human rights defender. 200 important people and organizations over the past week, sending an open letter to the President of Turkey, have announced their support to him<sup>3</sup>. In addition, The Chair of the Delegation of Turkey of the EP, Mr. Sergey Lagodinsky<sup>4</sup>, The Rapporteur of the Delegation of Turkey of the EP, Mr. Nacho Sanchez Amor<sup>5</sup>, MEP Ms. Kati Piri<sup>6</sup>, and Rebecca Harms<sup>7</sup> have announced their support to Mr. Gergerlioğlu.

With this letter, we kindly request you to publish a statement offering your support to Deputy Mr. Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu as the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. Your support will be a help and support to approximately 1.5 million citizens who are the victims of terrorism accusations in Turkey. We believe that the Council of Europe should not stay silent about violations of human rights and the detention of a deputy in a member state in a very critical situation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

**ASSEDEL**, L'Association européenne pour la défense des droits et des libertés

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<sup>3</sup> <https://observatoryihr.org/news/open-letter-to-president-erdogan-in-solidarity-with-human-rights-activist-and-mp-omer-faruk-gergerlioglu/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://twitter.com/SLagodinsky/status/1362886272088424452>

<sup>5</sup> <https://twitter.com/NachoSAmor/status/1362879545053962240>

<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/KatiPiri/status/1362871330639671298>

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/RebHarms/status/1362839577858367488>