

"All Human, All Equal! The Turkish Government should remember this without delay and immediately stop committing crimes against humanity!"

*Statement on the Occasion of Human Rights Day
Peaceful Actions Platform, 10 December 2021:*

73 years ago today, the Member States of the United Nations came together to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This step brought the world together after the greatest tragedy in human history.

The Universal Declaration, which served as a milestone in helping countries to establish a viable and realistic human rights framework, has certainly had a positive impact on our societies: We have come a long way, in terms of human rights, since then.

Undoubtedly, the number of people living under favorable conditions, in terms of human rights, is today higher than ever before in history. Although this may be a source for optimism, severe and systematic human rights violations, a decline in the number of democracies, thus shrinking civil society spaces, still continue around the world. Additionally, violent attacks, incidents of enforced disappearance, and repression against free speech and the civil sphere, are increasing day by day through the use of punitive methods.

On Human Rights Day, we, as the stakeholders of the Peaceful Actions Platform, and as non-governmental organizations and human rights defenders, would like to announce once again that our struggle for human dignity, equality, justice, peace and democracy, continues, and will continue. Every human being is born free and equal. This indisputable truth must be embraced by all of us in the spirit of solidarity.

After, 2013's Gezi Park protests, and the 2013 corruption probe that involved senior government figures, the Turkish government undermined the independence of the judiciary and of the rule of law. Going beyond the search for legitimate power, the Turkish government started to commit hate crimes and pursued a policy that was aimed at marginalizing certain groups and polarizing society. After the events of July 15th, the government put its hate policies into action, and applied systematic and organized torture, especially against those who are perceived to be affiliated with the Gülen Movement, and those who are Kurdish.

Widespread torture and ill-treatment have become an epidemic in today's Turkey, in official and unofficial places of detention, including prisons, on the streets, and almost everywhere. Enforced disappearances and illegal renditions that target the government's critics, both in Turkey and abroad, have become a common practice of the State's apparatus.

**#AllHumanAllEqual
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The government tries to instill fear and terror in every individual whose ideas are not in line with its own, and accuses those who disagree with them of terrorism.

As the Peaceful Actions Platform, we human rights defenders will continue to fight under all circumstances, believing in the sanctity of the right to life, regardless of language, religion, race, nationality, gender, ethnic and cultural differences. We emphasize that these practices, which harm human life and the humane fabric of the social structure, and that constitute crimes against humanity, should be terminated immediately by the authorities. The State and the government should remember that we are all human and equal, and should stop committing crimes against humanity immediately.

There are many different categories of such acts, such as increased discrimination against certain groups, torture and ill-treatment, interference with the right to assembly and demonstration, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of the press, the inviolability of housing, the violation of property rights, violence against women and children, and the loss of economic and social rights. Such violations are increasing day by day.

The government should immediately stop targeting those who are critical of its own policies and defend basic human rights, ending the practice of portraying them as enemies by committing hate crimes. The fact that at least 1,576,566 people have been investigated for so-called 'terrorist crimes' in the Republic of Turkey, is the most concrete proof of this.

There has been heavy pressure on, and censorship of, the press; Newspapers, television and radio stations have been shut down, and society's right to receive news has been taken away. As a result of practices such as confiscating the press cards of journalists, and, furthermore, their arrest and unemployment, both individuals' access to information and the public's access to information have become almost impossible. Journalism is not a crime. However, objective journalism is equated with "terror" by the Turkish government.

We, as the Peaceful Actions Platform, once again commit to continuing our struggle to end the ongoing serious human rights violations in Turkey, which constitute crimes against humanity.

We Are All Humans, We Are All Equal!

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