

Joint Letter by the Human Rights Advocates on the Release of Political Prisoners in Turkey's Jails

PROMINENT GROUP OF 205 SIGNATORIES CONSISTING OF ACADEMICS, JURISTS, JOURNALISTS, POLITICIANS, HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS CALL ON TURKEY TO URGENTLY RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE MIDST OF PANDEMIC.



The notoriously overcrowded prisons in Turkey pose serious health threats to inmates during the coronavirus pandemic. The justice reform law passed by the Turkish Parliament that permanently released thousands of prisoners excluded inmates serving time for political crimes, so-called “terrorism”. As many prominent human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch, acknowledged, those inmates are being held in pretrial detention or sentenced without evidence that they committed violent acts, incited violence, or provided logistical help to outlawed armed groups and their lives are at risk. As indicated in the complaints by the written and oral statements of their families, the inmates’ rights to life – which is among the most basic and universal human rights and is protected by the 10th amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey and the article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) – are under clear, serious, and near threat.

We are deeply concerned about the escalation of health issues of aforesaid prisoners since cancer and other severe illnesses have increased in Turkish jails.

The undersigned jurists, academics, human rights activists, journalists and politicians, who are concerned with human rights issues, call on the Turkish authorities to urgently release the political prisoners and the prisoners of conscience in Turkish jails before the risk of mass death hits.

SIGNATORIES FROM JURISTS, ACADEMICS, POLITICIANS, HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS AND JOURNALISTS

- 1- Mike O'neal, Attorney, O'neal Consulting, Kansas
- 2- Dr. James C. Juhnke, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
- 3- Rimsie McConiga, Journalist, Kansas
- 4- Laurie Dipadova-stocks, Park University
- 5- Tom Nanney, Visiting Associate Professor University of Missouri/Kansas City School of Law
- 6- Marcella Sirhandi, Emeritus Professor, Oklahoma State University
- 7- Doris Chang, Professor of History
- 8- Prof. Eve Levin, University of Kansas
- 9- Jude Huntz, Professor of Philosophy, Devry University,
- 10- Mary Gibson McCoy, Attorney, Missouri
- 11- Delores Chambers, Professor, Kansas State University,
- 12- Edgar Chambers, Professor, Kansas State University,
- 13- Deb Woodard, UMKC Associate Teaching Professor Emerita, Missouri
- 14- Sofia Khan, MD, Human right activist, founder of KC for Refugees, Kansas
- 15- Gulnar Eziz, Harvard University, MA
- 16- Stephanie Sabato , Professor Emerita , JCCC, Kansas
- 17- Judy Ancel, UMKC professor Emerita, Missouri
- 18- Vince Wetta, State Representative, Kansas
- 19- Arbana Xharra, Journalist, NY
- 20- Shruti Mukherjee, Scholar, Stony Brook Univ, NY
- 21- Steve Sunderland, PhD, Director Cancer Justice Network
- 22- Gretchen Eick, Ph.D., Professor of History, Emerita, Friends University, Wichita, Kansas Visiting Professor, University of Dzemal Bijedic, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 23- Kai Breaux, Scholar, Stony Brook Univ, NY
- 24- Michael Rubin, Resident Scholar / AEI, USA
- 25- Lucinda White, Attorney, Kansas

SIGNATORIES CONT.

- 26- Valerie Moyer, Scholar, Stony Brook Univ, NY
- 27- Carlos Mondlane, Judge, Mozambique
- 28 - Former Canadian Senator Nancy Ruth.
- 29- Ruth Schowalter, Lecturer / Georgia Tech Language Institute, GA
- 30- Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg , Professor, Writer, Kansas Poet Laureate, Kansas
- 31- Scott Thumma, Professor of Sociology of Religion Director, D.Min. Program Director, Hartford Institute for Religion Research, CT
- 32- Kari O'rourke, Human Rights Activist, Missouri
- 33- Wendi Lynn See, Attorney, South Carolina
- 34- Hakan Acar ,LLB, LLM, CPLLM , PhD Barrister and Solicitor Law Society of Ontario,Canada
- 35- Beth Murano, Attorney, Missouri
- 36- Curtis Smith, Professor Emerita, Kansas City Kansas Community College, Kansas
- 37- Sheila Sonnenschein, Human Rights Activist, Community Volunteer, Kansas,
- 38- Rev. Jennifer Bryan, Human Rights Activist, Kansas
- 39- Martin Okpareke, Community Outreach and Refugee Family Strengthening Program Manager, Jewish Vocational Services, Missouri
- 40- Sister Celia Deutsch, Human Rights Activist and Interfaith Coordinator of Our Lady of Refugee Church, New York
- 41- Sally Hipscher, Human Rights Activist and Chair of Interfaith Coalition of Brooklyn, New York
- 42- Rabbi Heidi Hoover, Rabbi, Beth Shalom v'Emeth, Brooklyn- NY
- 43- Margaret Rausch, PhD, Independent Scholar and Freelance Editor and Translator, Kansas
- 44- Kelly Hansen, Chaplain, Human Rights activist, Missouri
- 45- Delores Jankovich, Social Worker, Human Rights activist, Missouri
- 46- The Honorable Judy Sgro, Member of Parliament, Canada
- 47- Anca Dumitrescu Jelea, Lawyer, JAD Law, CANADA
- 48- Syndey Carlin, State Represenative, Kansas,
- 49- Lebert Shultz, Attorney at Law, Sheridan at Overland Park, Kansas
- 50- Dennis Hill, Teacher, Human Rights Activist, Missouri

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- 51- Sophia Pandya, Professor of Religious Studies, Department Chair, California State University at Long Beach, California
- 52- Kathleen Kirby, Human right activist and Teacher New Hampshire
- 53- Josh Hoops, Associate Professor at William Jewell College, Missouri
- 54- Ed Chasteen, Professor, President HateBusters, Missouri
- 55- Zoey Shu-Yi Chu, Scholar, Stony Brook University, NY
- 56- Calvin Hayden, Johnson County Sheriff – Johnson County, KS
- 57- Shannon S Shaw, lecturer, Texas State University, TX
- 58- Nance Davies, Artist, Scholar at Massachusetts College of Art and Design
- 59- Anne Conger, Human Rights Activist, student in Union Theological Seminary, NY
- 60- Ramou Colley, Executive Director, the Rahma Project, Sussex, ENGLAND
- 61- Marina Colorado, News Journalist, France 24 Espanol, Colombia
- 62- Mario Goico, Retired State Representative, Kansas
- 63- Sherry Dean Rovelo, Ph.D. Professor, Speech Communication Richland College, Dallas, TX
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- 65- Rosanne Marie Oates, Human Rights Activist, New York University, NY
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- 67- Cecilia McLaren, Human Rights Activist, New York University, NY
- 68- Yasmine Garay, Human Rights Activist, New York University, NY
- 69- Jodie Adams Kirshner, Research Professor, New York University, NY
- 70- Corliss Jacobs, Human Rights Activist, Vice President of Board, Cross Border Network for Justice and Solidarity, Kansas
- 71- Melissa Stiehler, Human Rights Activist, Vice President of Board, Cross Border Network for Justice and Solidarity, Kansas
- 72- Peggy Neal, Melissa Stiehler, Human Rights Activist, Board Member, Cross Border Network for Justice and Solidarity, Kansas
- 73- Clara Irazabal, Professor, Director, University of Missouri – Kansas City, Missouri
- 74- Marc Garcelon, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Missouri – Kansas City, Missouri
- 75- Joseph D Jacobs, Human Rights Activist, Missouri
- 76- G. Dale Mathey, Human Rights Activist, Board Member, Cross Border Network for Justice and Solidarity, Kansas
- 77- Maeve Cummings, Professor, Pittsburg State University, Kansas
- 78- Lynne Vanahill, Director International Student Support Services, Kansas

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- 79- Theresa Torres, Professor, University of Missouri - Kansas City, Missouri
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82- Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno, Professor, University of Kansas, Kansas
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87- Patrick Raglow, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma
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91- Dr. Ron Massier, Emeritus Professor, Nashville TN
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95- Amanda Roche, Artist, Human Rights Activist, Nashville TN
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100- Ruth Feigenbaum, Mathematics Professor, Bergen Community College, NJ
101- Valeria Correa, Human Rights Activist, Rutgers University, NJ
102- Asma Bawla, Human Rights Activist, New York University, NY
103- Edward E. Goode, Human Rights Activist, Missouri
104- Caroline Davies, Associate Professor, University of Missouri - Kansas City, Missouri
105- Stu Shafer, Professor, Johnson County Community College, Kansas
106- Akash Patel, Human Rights Activist, Founder of Happy World Foundation Inc., Oklahoma

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- 107- Shona Tritt, Ph.D, Clinical psychologist, Lecturer, University of Toronto
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- 109- Rev. Dr. Richard Nelson, Scholar, Nashville TN
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- 111- Bob Sweney
Former New York State Assemblyman, Lindenhurst, NY
- 112- Honorable Michelle Schimel,
Former New York State Assemblywoman, Port Washington, NY
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Executive Director Emeritus, Long Island Council of Churches, New York, NY
- 114- Rabbi Steven Moss,
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- 115- Rev. William F. Brisotti
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- 116- Reverend JoAnn Barrett
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- 119- Thomas Petriano, PhD
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- 120- Latifa Woodhouse and Colin Woodhouse
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- 121- Soh Young Lee-Segredo,
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- 122- Edward Andrew, Professor Emeritus,
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- 123-Catherine Green, Professor, Missouri
- 124- Peter Milliken, Former Canadian Member of Parliament and the Speaker of
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- 125- David Kilgour, Former Member of Parliament (MP) and Secretary of State.
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- 126- Ornela Bego, Lawyer, TX
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- 139- Jane Chandler, Professor, Louisiana
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- 152- Sherly Sullivan, Attorney, Oklahoma
- 153- Prof. Amy Remensnyder, Professor of History, Brown University
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181- Catherine Freis, Emerita Professor of Greek and Roman Studies at Millsaps College, Mississippi

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- 191- Dr. Mark McLain, M.D., Mississippi
- 192- Sen. Hillman Frazier, Mississippi State Senator, Mississippi
- 193- Dr. David Breaux, Former Dean, College of Arts and Sciences at Delta State University, Mississippi
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- 196- Thomas Dinapoli, Professor, Louisiana State University, Louisiana
- 197- Adv. Ashraf Muhammed, Former Chairman of Western Cape and Member of National Association of Democratic Lawyers(NADEL), Cape Town, South Africa
- 198- Amina Frense, Council Member of South African National Editors Forum (SANEF) and Chairperson at the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 199- Kisten Govender, Elected Member of South African Legal Practice Council, Durban, South Africa
- 200- Ela Gandhi, Granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, Founder of Gandhi Development Trust, Durban, South Africa
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- 205-Mehmet Halidun, Assistant Professor, Arkansas Tech University, Arkansas
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