

URGENT ACTION

TURKISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION FACING THREATS

The Turkish Medical Association (TTB) and its prominent members have been subjected to threats of violence, following a statement they issued on 24 January, calling for an end to the ongoing military operation by the Turkish armed forces in Afrin, northern Syria. The TTB lodged a request with the Ankara Governorship to provide protection for its offices and members, but they have received no response.

On 24 January 2018, the **Turkish Medical Association (TTB)** issued a statement calling for an end to the Turkish armed forces' operation in Afrin, northern Syria. The ongoing military offensive began on 20 January 2018 and is directed at the Kurdish Autonomous Administration's military wing, the YPG (the People's Protection Units) in Afrin, northern Syria. Turkish government cites YPG's links to the armed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a proscribed organisation which the Turkish armed forces have been involved in armed clashes with for decades.

Following the publication of their statement, the Ankara head office of the TTB received a large number of threats of violence by email and phone calls, as well as on social media which included anonymous threats that the office would be invaded. Individual members of TTB's executive committee have also been targeted on social media, threatened with physical violence (e.g. 'we will eradicate you'), and called 'traitors'. President Recep Tayyip Erdoan also attacked the TTB during a speech on 26 January 2018, calling them the 'so-called Turkish Medical Association, the terrorist lovers'. On the same day, two trade unions known to be close to the government, Salik-Sen and Memur-Sen, called a protest outside the offices of the Istanbul branch of TTB for Monday 29 January. As a precaution, TTB evacuated its Ankara head office on 26 January, and has requested Ankara governorship to provide protection to the organisation and its members.

Please write immediately in Turkish, English or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety of members and staff at TTB's offices in Ankara, Istanbul and elsewhere in Turkey;
- Calling for a prompt, thorough, impartial and independent investigation into the calls for the invasion of TTB offices and threats of violence;
- Calling on the authorities to provide immediate and effective protection for TTB's members, staff and offices, as requested by the organisation.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 MARCH 2018 TO:

Minister of Interior

Mr Suleyman Soylu
Devlet Mahallesi
Ismet Inönü Blv. No: 4, 06580
Çankaya/Ankara, Turkey
Email:mustesarlak@icisleri.gov.tr; bakanli.k.musavirliqi@icisleri.gov.tr

Salutation: Dear Minister

Ankara Governor

Mr Ercan Topaca
Haci Bayram Mahallesi,
Armutlu Sokak,
Valilik Binasi, Ulus, Altinda,
Ankara,
Fax: +90 312 306 6670
Email: <http://www.ankara.gov.tr/ankara-valisine-mesaj> [online message form]
ankarabilgi@icisleri.gov.tr

Salutation: Dear Governor

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

