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Turkey: Conduct effective investigation into gruesome murder in Doğubeyazıt

Amnesty International condemns the gruesome murder of a local shop owner from Doğubeyazıt district of Ağrı province in Turkey, who was found dead, tied to an electricity pylon on 25 June 2018 with a gunshot wound to his head.

The full circumstances of the killing must be promptly, thoroughly and effectively investigated and all those suspected to be responsible for this crime brought to justice in fair trials.

Several media outlets have reported that the victim, 46-year-old Mevlüt Bengi, was registered as a ballot observer for the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) on the 24 June elections and alleged that the murder was carried out by the armed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The authorities have not yet made an official statement regarding the murder and no individual or group has yet taken responsibility for this brutality, which violates the most basic principles of international law.

On 28 June, officials from Ağrı Governor's office and the local gendarmerie told Amnesty International that the investigations are still ongoing. Amnesty International was not able to confirm the media reports that authorities have announced a 5-day curfew in some villages of Doğubeyazıt to find the alleged perpetrators.

Amnesty International is concerned regarding reports that Turkey's Minister of Interior, Süleyman Soylu, reportedly called Pervin Buldan, the co-chair of the Kurdish-rooted leftist Peoples' Democracy Party (HDP), holding HDP responsible for the murder. Such unsubstantiated allegations risk inciting violence against the supporters and members of HDP, third largest political party in Turkey's parliament. Similar to this, on 18 June, Minister Soylu accused Diyarbakır Bar Association and Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce of being supporters of the PKK in news programme he appeared on the state television channel, TRT.

Both organizations were amongst the civil society organizations prevented by Turkish authorities from visiting Suruç, a town in the south eastern province of Urfa, following [pre-election violence](#) that took place in the town, in which four people were killed and more than 10 injured. According to reports, the deaths and injuries occurred following gun attacks in the town and an attack against survivors in Suruç State Hospital on 14 June.

The authorities did not allow non-governmental organizations to travel to Suruç to investigate the incidents, citing unsubstantiated security concerns.

Such measures, that prevent independent civil society organizations from investigations undermine accountability and erode confidence in the state's own criminal investigation.

Amnesty International calls on the authorities to ensure that independent civil society organizations can carry out their work without being subjected to threats or other hindrance.

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