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France: No stone unturned in investigation into slaying of Kurdish women activists

The investigation into the gunning down of three Kurdish women activists in Paris must be prompt and thorough, Amnesty International said.

Sakine Cansız, a founder of the armed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Fidan Doğan and Leyla Söylemez were found shot dead at the "Kurdistan Information Office" on the evening of 9 January.

"There must be justice for these apparently political killings – no stone must be left unturned in the investigation by the French authorities," said John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Programme Director.

"The Turkish authorities must cooperate fully in the investigation to bring those responsible to justice."

The killings come at time when the Government of Turkey and the PKK have begun peace negotiations.

"Both sides must ensure that the killings do not derail negotiations aimed at ending the decades long conflict and ongoing human rights abuses," said Dalhuisen.

As many as 40,000 people are thought to have died since 1984 when armed clashes between the PKK and the Turkish armed forces began. The conflict has also resulted in widespread human rights abuses, both in the Kurdish dominated south-east and across the country.

The PKK has called for autonomy for the Kurds as part of a package of demands. In recent years armed clashes between the armed forces and the PKK have increased despite faltering attempts at negotiations.