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ORAL STATEMENT
ITEM 4: General Debate

Crackdown on freedoms and deterioration of the human rights situation in
Turkey

UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-fifth session
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Mr. President,

While the deterioration of the human rights situation in **Turkey** is not new, the scale of the current crackdown is unprecedented.^[1]

Amnesty International is alarmed by the increasing use of arbitrary pre-trial detention, often in cases where there is no evidence of criminal behaviour,^[2] and the increase in allegations of torture and ill-treatment of those in police detention since the failed coup attempt of last July.

We are also concerned about the massive crackdown on freedom of expression and media freedom. Since the attempted coup, over 156 media outlets have been permanently shut down by successive emergency decrees. Over 120 journalists and other media workers are currently imprisoned pending trial. Some have been held for over ten months. Vague anti-terrorism laws, such as those prohibiting membership of, or making propaganda for, a terrorist organization, are being used to prosecute journalists, media workers and human rights defenders.

Last week, the Chair of Amnesty International Turkey, Taner Kiliç, became yet another example of the government's crackdown on civil society, as he was

^[1] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/6434/2017/en/>.

^[2] See Amnesty International, Turkey: Independent monitors must be allowed to access detainees amid torture allegations https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/07/turkey-independent-monitors-must-be-allowed-to-access-detainees-amid-torture-allegations/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss.

detained, and eventually charged with “membership of a terrorist organisation” and remanded in pre-trial detention.^[3]

Amnesty International calls on the Turkish authorities to ensure his immediate and unconditional release. We also call for the immediate end to the use of arbitrary, punitive, pre-trial detention which has been used to target human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, writers, judges and academics. .

Thank you, Mr. President.

^[3] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/06/turkey-imprisonment-of-amnesty-chair-is-a-devastating-injustice/>; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/free-taner/>.