

PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutođlu
Office of the Prime Minister
Bařbakanlık 06573
Ankara, Turkey

Dear Prime Minister:

As the Steering Committee of Psychologists for Social Responsibility ([PsySR](#)), we write this statement to express our deep concern for the 1,128 Turkish academics from 89 universities across your country who signed the Academics for Peace-organized petition, "*We will not be a Party to this Crime.*"

We are troubled by the reports we read about your administration's punitive response to the petitioners, some of them our fellow psychologists, who are being wrongfully criminalized for having advocated peace and a return to negotiations rather than the escalation of deadly violence occurring in the Kurdish-populated region in the Southeast.

The ongoing conflict in the Southeast is having disastrous effects on the lives of men, women, and children who bear the brunt of the political polarization. As a group of socially responsible psychologists committed to peace, we are troubled by the gross human rights violations being perpetrated both in the Southeast and by the crackdown on the petition's signatories. They have been accused of being traitors and sympathizing with terrorists. As a consequence, they are being investigated and/or detained for prosecution, fired from their jobs, and harassed and threatened in other demeaning ways. However, in signing the petition they acted within their human rights, as defined and codified by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of which Turkey is a signatory.

Along with thousands of academics around the world, we strongly express our solidarity with our colleagues in Turkey who, despite the threat of a negative political backlash, courageously rose to the challenge of exercising freedom of expression and standing on principle. We support their demand for peace and advocacy against the inhumanity of state violence.

We call on your government to end all prosecutions against the petition signers and to respect the principles of academic freedom and free speech.

February 14, 2016