

# Amnesty International Southend Group



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## Tell Turkey to free Taner Kılıç & İdil Eser

The situation in Turkey is truly frightening. The Chair and Director of Amnesty Turkey have both been jailed on false allegations that they are involved with “terrorist organisations”. Many other human rights defenders are either detained or banned from travel as they await charges.

**Taner Kılıç**, Chair of Amnesty Turkey, was detained in the early hours of 6 June along with 22 other lawyers on suspicion of involvement with the “terrorist organisation” Fethullah Gülen.

He has now been officially charged with membership of the organisation and remains in prison awaiting trial.

The only claim that supposedly links Taner to the Gülen movement is that Bylock – a secure mobile messaging application that the authorities say was used by members of the terrorist group – was discovered on his phone in August 2014.

No evidence has been given to back this up and Taner denies ever having downloaded or used Bylock. In fact, he says he’d never even heard of it until its alleged use by the Gülen movement was widely spread in the media.

Taner is neither a supporter nor a follower of the Fethullah Gülen movement and has in fact been critical of its role in Turkey. He must not face trial on the basis of flimsy and inadequate accusations.

These charges have drawn widespread international condemnation, including from the US State Department, the EU and many international and domestic human rights organisations.

**İdil Eser**, Director of Amnesty Turkey, was at a routine training workshop on 5 July in a hotel in Büyükdada, Istanbul when the authorities burst in and arrested her without giving a reason.

Nine other human rights defenders on the course were also detained, with eight facing indefinite imprisonment in Turkey before official charges are made.

They have all been accused of “committing a crime in the name of a terrorist organisation”: a ridiculous and baseless accusation. All they are guilty of is bravely speaking up for human rights in Turkey.

We know that İdil and others were kept in solitary confinement without proper access to their lawyers for some time.

The details of Turkey’s accusations against İdil are astounding. They include attempts to link her with three unrelated and opposing “terrorist organisations” through her work for Amnesty. The prosecutor’s request – that she remain in prison awaiting trial – references two campaigns by Amnesty, neither of which involved Amnesty Turkey, one of which was conducted before İdil joined the organisation.

**TURN OVER FOR DETAILS OF LETTER-WRITING AND E-MAILING ACTIONS**

**PROTECT  
THE  
HUMAN**

[www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk)

**Southend Group meets on the second  
Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at  
The Balmoral Centre, Salisbury Avenue,  
Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 7AU**

**Please write and tell Turkey's Minister of Justice to put an end to this witch-hunt and to release Taner, İdil and all human rights defenders in Turkey.**

**This is a suggested text – use your own wording if you want to. AI UK recommends that you do not include your address on other Turkish cases.**

*Dear Minister*

***Free İdil, Taner and other imprisoned human rights defenders***

*I am appalled to hear that a second Amnesty International Turkey leader has been imprisoned, on unfounded and baseless accusations, within the space of a few weeks.*

*Amnesty's Taner Kılıç was imprisoned after being wrongly accused of membership of the “Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization”. Now Amnesty's İdil Eser, as well as nine other human rights defenders await trial on the suspicion of “assisting an armed terrorist organisation”: a ridiculous and baseless accusation. Another four have been released on bail, but are still under investigation.*

*They were doing nothing wrong.*

*It has not escaped the world's notice that this kind of attack on Human Rights Defenders is becoming more frequent in Turkey.*

*Please ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees and that this baseless investigation against all 11 human rights defenders is dropped.*

*Yours sincerely*

Abdulhamit Gül  
Minister of Justice  
06659 Kizilay  
Ankara  
Turkey

**You can also e-mail the Justice Minister at [info@adalet.gov.tr](mailto:info@adalet.gov.tr)**

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