

## **Can journalism be considered a crime?**

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Since the early years of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the state has consistently used detention, arrest, torture, and other methods of pressure and violence against journalists, writers, cartoonists, and poets who have been critical. Dozens of intellectuals, writers, and journalists have been murdered through unsolved murders, disappearances in custody, and assassinations. The state has hindered the revelation of truth by opening hundreds of cases against these journalists and writers. Today, on May 3rd, World Press Freedom Day, we are once again discussing the pressures applied to journalists, just as it was a century ago.

Regardless of changes in power, the state has always applied pressure to all minorities, Alevis, Kurds, democratic forces, intellectuals, journalists, academics, politicians, revolutionaries, and workers in Turkey. The state not only punishes those who resist this pressure by putting them in prisons but also attempts to eradicate their existence through massacres, executions, unsolved murders, and dismissals from their jobs. However, these resistance fighters lead the progress and advancement of societies. In fact, by applying pressure and violence to these resistance fighters, the state punishes not only them but also their families, loved ones, colleagues, and the societies to which they belong, just like the small ripples that start when a stone is thrown into the sea and gradually grow into waves, causing ripples, especially in the families of these resistance fighters. The state does this consciously because the main aim is to punish not only the individual but also their relatives and society as a whole and to intimidate them. It aims to silence and suppress the society. Social and democratic forces try to resist such human rights violations and raise their voices in every possible way. But it's not enough. What remains when the hands and feet are withdrawn, when the waters calm, are those left behind. That is, those resistance fighters and their families are left alone with their pain and injustice they have suffered.

Let's not forget the imprisoned ones, those punished for their thoughts. Let's not think of them just as numbers or names. Let's remember that they are human beings just like us, and apart from the legal dimension, their lives being disrupted in this way is an injustice on a human level. Let's always try to understand the sensitivities of their families and be there for them in their struggles. Just as we feel uneasy when we don't see our children for two days, let's always remember how difficult it is for them to be forcibly separated from their home environments and loved ones for years. What we don't forget is what we remember...

Who among us has forgotten Metin Göktepe? Even if we have forgotten, did his mother, Fadime Ana, forget? After Metin Göktepe, there have been and will be many more journalists who take up the baton. Young, brave, conscientious hearts... Journalists in Turkey and around the world who refuse to bow to pressure, who overcome financial difficulties through solidarity, and who represent the voice of the unheard, the fearless believers in truth without borders... It's thanks to these dream travelers that this vast-old world has been spinning for millions of years and will continue to do so. In the end, the absolute truth and goodness prevail.

Today is the day of press workers, of free press, of those who reveal the truth. Today is the day of local journalists, unrecognized in the mainstream media. It's even harder to hear their voices in such foggy times. One of those workers is Diren Keser... For many years, Diren has been the voice of Alevi, Kurdish,

women, LGBTI, nature, and the environment through local journalism, program production, and documentary directing. He is the voice of those trapped under the rubble in earthquakes. His, mine, yours, everyone's voice.

Let's be the voice of Diren and the truth... Because sooner or later, the truth has a habit of coming out...

Greetings to Diren, who lives on by resisting, and to everyone who resists again and again...