

## RAN #2/2008 January 17 Turkey

This week's appeal: Anniversary of the death of Hrant Dink: "For Hrant, For Justice"

BACKGROUND: Saturday 19 January marks the first anniversary of the murder of Hrant Dink in Istanbul. International PEN is supporting the "Hrant İçin, Adalet İçin" (For Hrant, For Justice) campaign being run by a consortium of Turkish organizations. The key event will be held at 3 p.m. January 19<sup>th</sup>, outside the office of the magazine *Agos* of which Hrant Dink was editor and where he was shot dead... A website has been launched in Turkish and English: [www.hranticinadaleticin.com](http://www.hranticinadaleticin.com) The Turkish government is due to present proposed changes to Article 301 of the Turkish penal code in the coming days. Calls for repeal have not been met; instead, the focus will be on the terms including "insult to Turkishness" which is likely to be changed to "denigrating the Turkish Nation". There is also the possibility that penalties under the law are to be reduced.

Please add your name to this appeal, in memory of Hrant Dink, to President Gül by sending the letter below.

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President Abdullah Gül  
President of the Republic of Turkey  
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kosku  
00380 Cankaya  
Ankara, Turkey  
FAX: +011 90 312 427 1330

Dear Mr. President,

As a member of PEN Canada, the Canadian centre of International PEN, the writers' organization with 145 centres in 104 countries, I join my writer colleagues around the world, and especially those in Turkey, to honour the memory of the distinguished Turkish writer and editor, Hrant Dink, on this, the first anniversary of his murder.

I am saddened and discouraged to learn that it now appears unlikely that you and your government will move to repeal outright Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, the legislation which has been used persistently and unfairly against Turkish publishers, writers and editors who have been exercising their right to freedom of expression. In 2007 alone, there were 43 trials against books and publishers, and the trials of Ragfip Zarakolu, Irfan Ucar and Umur Hozatli have been prolonged into 2008.

I join with my colleagues at PEN Canada, International PEN, Article 19 and the International Publishers Association in urging you to immediately stop the detentions and trials of writers and journalists. Turkey has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Turkey has an international legal obligation to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined in both documents.

Sincerely,  
[your name and address]

### Copies to:

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
Deputy Prime Minister - Cemil Çiçek (formerly Minister of Justice)  
Deputy Prime Minister - Hayati Yazicki  
Deputy Prime Minister - Nazim Ekren  
Minister for Justice - Mehmet Ali Sahin  
Minister of Interior - Besir Atalay  
Minister of Foreign Affairs - Ali Babacan  
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**Please send copies of your appeal to the following Canadian authorities:**

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