

PEN CANADA

for FREEDOM of EXPRESSION

Asiye Güzel Zeybek was arrested in February 1997 during a demonstration protesting alleged links between Mafia groups and the government. Zeybek was the editor-in-chief of *Atilim*, a radical newspaper, and was accused under Article 168 of the Penal Code of connections with the now-banned Marxist-Leninist Communist Party and specifically of running and distributing the MLCP journal *İşçinin Yolu* (Worker's Path). The initial trial proceedings against Zeybek were commenced in February 2001, four years after her arrest. A series of hearings were since held.

During a trial hearing on October 8, 1997, Zeybek filed a complaint against eight officers of the Anti-Terror Branch of the Istanbul Police Headquarters, claiming that she had been subjected to severe torture, including repeated rape, over a period of thirteen days while she

was being held for interrogation at the Istanbul Security Headquarters. On October 24, 1997, her complaint against eight policemen was accepted following a report confirming the attack from the Psycho-Social Trauma Centre in Istanbul. The officers were brought to trial in November 1998; however, on November 1, 2000, the court decided not to proceed with the prosecution of the eight policemen. On November 11, 2004, the case against the officers was finally abandoned. The Istanbul Heavy Penal Court No. 7 ruled that proceedings against the police officers should be dropped because they had reached the time limit for such proceedings, known as the "statute of limitations".



Zeybek was detained in Gebze Prison. She was reportedly shot in her back and leg during a police raid on her prison in December 2000. She suffered temporary paralysis and retains injuries, although she seems to be in better health now. There have also been concerns that Zeybek was not able to prepare her defence properly because all her documents that she had with her in the prison had disappeared during the prison riots in December 2000, and she was not given complete access to her lawyer.

At the conclusion of a lengthy trial, Zeybek was released on June 5, 2002, after spending five years and four months in prison. On October 16, 2002, Zeybek was sentenced to the heavy sentence of 12 and a half years' imprisonment for belonging to the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP). She currently lives in Sweden.