

**The UN Human Rights Committee
142 Session
(14 Oct 2024 - 07 Nov 2024)**

Türkiye
(Wednesday 16 Oct 2024 PM, Thursday 17 Oct 2024 AM)



Rights Defenders Initiative (RDI)
September 2024

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I. Rights Defenders Initiative (RDI)

Formation: Rights Defenders Initiative (RDI) is an unincorporated association based in London, established recently by a passionate group of volunteers who came together two years ago to advocate for human rights awareness.

Mission: Our mission is to raise global awareness of human rights violations, without regard to ethnicity, race, or political views. We believe in the protection of every individual's fundamental rights.

Website Launch: Since our inception, we have created a dedicated website (<https://rightsdefenders.org/>) to publicize emblematic cases from around the world. To date we are proud to have documented over 80 global cases, amplifying the voices of those in need.

Professionalization: To increase our capacity and professionalism, we have formally established RDI as an association. This status enables us to more effectively support vulnerable communities and advocate for human rights on a broader scale.

Projects: RDI organizes seminars, webinars, and fundraising initiatives to provide educational support to children whose parents have been incarcerated. We also advocate for victims by submitting formal reports and recommendations to bodies such as the UN and the EU.

Community Impact: Our ultimate goal is to create lasting, positive change in communities affected by human rights abuses, working toward a more just and equitable society.

II. July 15, 2016, Trial and Torture

a) General View

1. By CCPR/C/TUR/QPR/2¹ in para 10, regarding the reports of severe beatings, kicking, punching, verbal abuse, sleep deprivation, sexual abuse, threats of sexual violence, sexual violence, foot whipping, being forced to strip naked, stress positions, blindfolding and/or handcuffing for extended periods, prolonged stress positions, denial of basic needs, to extract confessions from accused persons, and that emergency decree provisions establish retrospective immunity, Committee asked from Türkiye to provide information about the reports of the systemic use of torture and ill-treatment, which were widespread in police lock-ups and unofficial detention locations in the aftermath of the attempted coup in 2016.

2. However, Turkey's responses (CCPR/C/TUR/2, para146-159)² made no mention of unofficial detention centers. The State Party simply said, 'They do not exist' in CCPR/C/TUR/2 (para 31)³.

3. In CCPR/C/TUR/2 in para146-159, Türkiye merely stated that torture is prohibited under existing law. The State party preferred not to mention the protective provisions in institutions' laws such as the Turkish Intelligence Agency (MIT) or emergency decrees issued after the state of emergency.

4. Similarly,

a) In LOIPR (Article 2 para 8)⁴, the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) respectfully requested information on the number of persons detained in unofficial places of detention, official

¹ Human Rights Committee, CCPR/C/TUR/QPR/2, List of issues prior to submission of the second periodic report of Turkey - Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (arts. 2, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 14), page 3, 25 August 2021

² Human Rights Committee, CCPR/C/TUR/2, Second periodic report submitted by Türkiye under article 40 of the Covenant pursuant to the optional reporting procedure, due in 2022, para146-159, page 21-22, 28 April 2023

³ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/5/ Fifth periodic report submitted by Turkey under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure, due in 2020, para 31, page 7, 4 April 2022

⁴ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/QPR/5, List of issues prior to submission of the fifth periodic report of Turkey, Article 2, para 8, page 3, 27 December 2018

investigations, and prosecutions into allegations of torture and/or ill-treatment in these facilities and their outcomes. In the State Party Report Under LOIPR (para 31)⁵, The Turkish officials responded to this request with the statement that unofficial places of detention do not exist, which is entirely inaccurate. The same paragraph states that “temporary places of detention have been established due to the damage to the Ankara Provincial Security Directorate building as a result of the attack, the unusable detention rooms, and the high number of detainees.” Some selected cases of torture, the number of which can be expressed in the thousands, are listed below. The court records, medical reports, and footage provided to the state's official news agency (AA) indicate that the incidents were systematic and planned. This nature of the incidents suggests that the justification that new centers were created due to a damaged public building may not be entirely accurate.

- b) CAT asked in LOIPR (Article 2 para 4)⁶ whether suspects arrested for terrorism offenses have immediate access to a lawyer. In the State Party Report Under LOIPR (para 19-20-21)⁷ The Turkish authorities did not answer this question other than repeating the law's provisions. As detailed in the reported cases below, the problem was the law's systematic lack of implementation. Military detainees were not provided with the most basic human necessities, such as food, water, or toilets, let alone access to a lawyer.
- c) In LOIPR (Article 15, para 46-47)⁸, CAT requested reporting on whether courts use evidence obtained under torture. Turkish authorities claimed this allegation lacks concrete evidence. However, it has become common practice for statements made under torture to be accepted as court evidence. Complainant lawyers often ask questions based on these statements during initial defenses. The case of Lieutenant Colonel Levent Türkkan exemplifies this issue. His testimony, obtained under torture, was later denied in court. Despite this, it was referenced in the Ankara 14th High Criminal Court's reasoned decision⁹ in the Special Forces Command case. Dozens of similar examples exist in prosecutors' indictments and court decisions. This practice undermines the integrity of the judicial process and raises serious concerns about the fairness of trials related to the events of July 15, 2016.

5. Regarding national and international inspections, the inadequate response consisted only of statistical figures, glossing over vital issues. The State party's probes have done little but muddy the waters.

6. The State Party's generic stances that do not reveal the actual situation against the international committees reflects a systematic and concerted effort to downplay serious crimes, which provides unequivocal evidence of a systematic effort of cover-up and omission involving and directed by the political leadership. For example;

- a) In the aftermath of July 15, 2016, a systematic and organized torture process emerged under state control. Official figures claim 251 Turkish citizens died as a result of the actions of the soldiers, but independent investigators found 69 of so-called 251 deaths cannot be attributed to the actions of the military and investigations are ongoing. The Turkish judiciary has acquitted 13 of these deaths, which had non-military causes such as heart attacks, motorcycle accidents, and friendly fire.¹⁰

⁵ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/5/ Fifth periodic report submitted by Turkey under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure, due in 2020, para 31, page 7, 4 April 2022

⁶ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/QPR/5, List of issues prior to submission of the fifth periodic report of Turkey, Article 2, para 8, page 2, 27 December 2018

⁷ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/5/ Fifth periodic report submitted by Turkey under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure, due in 2020, para 19-20-21, page 6, 4 April 2022

⁸ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/QPR/5, List of issues prior to submission of the fifth periodic report of Turkey, Article 15, para 46-47, page 11, 27 December 2018

⁹ Reasoned Decision of the Ankara 14th High Criminal Court in the Special Forces Command Case, Page 399

¹⁰ <https://15julynotes.com/News/69-deaths-were-not-soldier-related-369>

b) The Turkish authorities stated that public officials were certainly not responsible¹¹ for the death of Gökhan Açıkkolu, a symbol of post-15 July torture. However, medical reports and NGO findings¹² indicate that he had been subjected to ill-treatment prior to his heart attack.

7. Some public officials turned systematic torture into a PR tool for the Turkish Government of fear and intimidation. This approach is unprecedented, as most states typically deny such practices. In Türkiye's case, torture was openly encouraged and displayed. The Anadolu Agency (AA), the state's official news agency, served torture images to the public. National media featured pictures of beaten soldiers for days. Turkish Government demonstrated power by bringing the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) to its knees through these publications. This approach could become a method used by new-generation dictators globally. Unique unofficial torture centers and special teams were created, systematically committing this crime.

8. These actions represent a significant shift that demands attention from responsible organizations, especially the UN, to prevent future occurrences as *conditio sine qua non*.

9. **This report aims to provide concrete, conclusive, and sufficient evidence beyond any doubt of systemic abuse of the Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (arts. 2, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 14) in Türkiye by detailed and precise information about the unofficial detention centers and victims' narratives about the systemic use of torture and ill-treatment.**

III. Methodology in report preparation

10. We adhered to confidentiality and victim consent standards while preparing the report. Victim names are included if they are in public documents. For safety concerns, some identities are kept confidential. The presumption of innocence is respected, except where torture suspects have admitted guilt in open sources or clear images exist. Data sources include:

- c) SEGBIS system recordings of public hearings
- d) Reports from NGOs combating torture in Türkiye
- e) Images of torture victims published by the state's official news agency
- f) Research and news from press and media organizations
- g) Social media records and content
- h) Illustrations based on victim narratives

11. These sources provide a comprehensive view of the situation, allowing for a thorough analysis of the torture allegations and human rights violations in Türkiye following the events of July 15, 2016. Using multiple data sources ensures a balanced report approach, incorporating official and unofficial accounts of the events. This methodology allows for a more accurate representation of the situation, highlighting systemic issues while respecting individual privacy and safety concerns.

IV. After July 15, 2016 Centers Created for Systematic Torture

12. Since July 15, 2016, numerous unofficial detention centers that have been identified as centers of systematic torture have been documented by victims. We have compiled a list of these unofficial detention centers and the individuals responsible for torture. It would be remiss not to mention the General Staff Headquarters Firing Range and Special Forces Command Oğulbey Barracks, where we believe that Lt. Gen.(R) Zekai Aksakallı¹³ (His name is used because images of his torture are available in open sources) and General İ.Ö.¹⁴ may have been involved.¹⁵ We want to bring to your attention the Armored Troops School and Training

¹¹ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/5/ Fifth periodic report submitted by Turkey under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure, due in 2020, para 44, page 9, 4 April 2022

¹² <https://tihv.org.tr/basin-aciklamalari/gokhan-acikkolu-gozaltinda-olmustur/>

¹³ <https://x.com/IskenceReport/status/1629898369492561921>

(the person in the footage wearing a hat and orange shirt kicking the victim lying on the ground)

¹⁴ <https://15julynotes.com/News/the-bloody-uniforms-of-the-palace-regime-tormentor-soldiers-1-274>

¹⁵ On July 28, 2016, at the Supreme Military Council meeting held on July 28, 2016, Major General Zekai Aksakallı was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general for his extraordinary struggle during the coup attempt. On the other hand, İ.Ö., who was in the rank

Division Command in Etimesgut, Ankara, where Major (R) Barış Dedebağ¹⁶ (His name is used because images of his torture are available in open sources) was involved. We want to bring to your attention the Underwater Offence and Defense Barracks (SAT/SAS) at Beykoz, where Retired Colonel Ali Türkşen¹⁷ (His name is used openly in light of his confession to the crime of torture and plea of not guilty.) was involved. However, it is worth noting that the unofficial detention centers described in detail and under the headings below stand out as specially designed and planned torture centers that have had a profound impact on the lives of hundreds of soldiers.

a) Turkish Intelligence Agency (MIT) Agency Çiftlik Campus

13. The MIT Farm is an additional Turkish Intelligence Agency service building located in the Atatürk Forest Farm (AOÇ) in Ankara. On the same campus are offices used by K.E., who was then Head of Foreign Operations. Erhan Pekçetin, a senior MIT official abducted by the PKK terrorist organization, confessed to using this facility for interrogations.



14. CCTV footage, victim testimonies, and statements from MIT members suggest that people were abducted in Mercedes Vito vehicles from the organization's inventory and interrogated under torture at this center. Pekçetin described the facility as having three or four cells and a protection area, with cameras that could be turned off upon request.

15. Ayten Öztürk, an alleged DHKP-C sympathizer, provided a detailed account of severe torture at this location during her testimony at the Third High Criminal Court in Istanbul. She described beatings, electrocution, sexual and psychological torture that left her with hundreds of wounds and reduced her weight to 40 kilograms. Öztürk noted that the torture team referred to the place as "the bottom of hell" and suggested it was likely the basement of an official office based on sounds she heard.

16. Another victim, Lawyer Mustafa Özben¹⁸ was abducted by members of the National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) and tortured for 92 days at the torture centre in Çiftlik¹⁹, Ankara. Özben's case is just one of many abductions and disappearances that have become a state routine after 15 July. Dozens of people have been recklessly abducted from Turkey and abroad and tortured by MIT and security forces. The

of Brigadier General at the time of the coup attempt, was promoted to Major General in 2016, Lieutenant General in 2019, and General in 2023.

¹⁶ <https://x.com/IskençeReport/status/1794435514088476980> (in the video, a soldier brags that he punched a hole in his head with an object)

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUhK8wO3PvI> (confesses to torture and says he has no regrets)

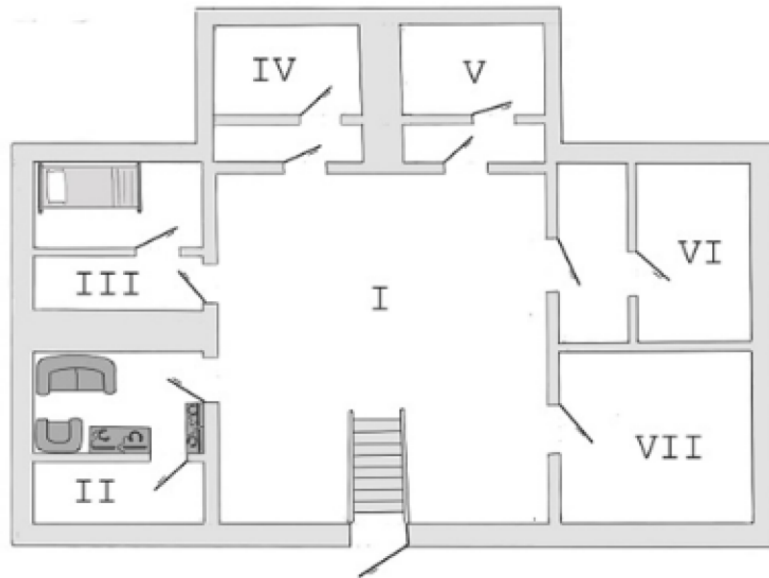
¹⁸ <https://x.com/drgokhangunes/status/1813298473447682370>

¹⁹ Here is the documentary (with English subtitles) in which Mustafa Özben describes the tortures he was subjected to. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4PBRZ1m02M>

Netherlands-based Stichting Justice Square²⁰ has published a comprehensive book²¹ on abductions and disappearances.

17. While military personnel were not typically tortured at this center, an amendment to the Penal Execution Regulation allows prisoners to be taken out of prison and interrogated upon request from relevant authorities, including MIT. This has created fear and anxiety among those imprisoned in connection with the July 15 trials.

18. The layout of the torture center, based on victim testimonies, includes:



I. The staircase descends and opens into a hall.

II. When you descend the stairs, you will find a room on the left used as a staff room. It contains screens on which cameras are monitored, a sofa, and a single armchair. From within the room, a passageway leads to another room. This room is used as a kitchen. It contains a kitchen counter and cupboards.

III. The next room is one of the rooms where abducted people are kept. First, there is a courtyard, and then there is a room. This room, which is dark with no light, has a bed,

IV. The next room is similar in design, with a courtyard and a room. There is no bed inside.

V. The next room is similar, but the walls are covered with soundproof material (like carpeting).

VI. The next room is similar to the previous one.

VII. The last room (to the right of the staircase) comprises a single section²².

b) Ankara Baskent Sports Hall

19. The Indoor Sports Hall, near the Ankara Police Directorate compound, is unofficially used by the Anti-Terror Branch. The Ankara Medical Chamber's human rights violation report describes it as resembling a "concentration camp," lacking proper detainee rights documentation and using intimidation tactics.

20. When individuals with detention warrants are brought to the Anti-Terror Branch, they are taken to this large gymnasium-like area with no identifying signs or documents on detainee rights. A police officer,

²⁰ <https://justicesquare.org/>

²¹ Türkiye'de Yaşanan Adam Kaçırma ve Kaybetme Vakaları <https://justicesquare.org/turkiyede-adam-kacirma-ve-kaybetme/>

²² <https://www.dogruci.com/Haberler/milli-istihbarat-teskilati-baskanligi-nin-iskence-merkezinin-ciftlik-bilinme-368>

speaking from a podium in the tribune, issues orders to detainees, creating an environment of constant supervision and instruction.²³

21. The report containing the findings of the Ankara Medical Chamber was published in 2018. However, it seems that this torture center began to be used immediately after July 15, 2016. It has been reported that hundreds of soldiers have stated that they were subjected to inhumane activities by the torturing police officers. On the other hand, it is evident that the criteria for appropriate lighting, adequate size for the number of detainees, cleanliness of equipment for daily needs, and the provision of hygienic conditions for individuals have not been met.

c) Ankara Bestepe Equestrian Police Center

22. The Ali Gaffar Okkan Equestrian Police Headquarters in Ankara's Bestepe district emerged as a center of systematic torture after July 15, 2016. Located near the Presidential Complex, this indoor facility for mounted police training became notorious for the inhumane treatment of soldiers.

23. Footage of mistreatment at this center was widely disseminated by media outlets, including official state agencies, and used for character assassination. Many soldiers featured in these images were later acquitted of coup attempt charges, even under the current legal system. It's important to note that torture of suspects, regardless of their alleged crimes, is considered a crime against humanity.

24. Ali Aktaş, a prominent lawyer and politician, violated the presumption of innocence by commenting on social media about the soldiers' photos taken in this facility²⁴, referring to them as "coup donkeys locked in the barn." This statement not only disregarded legal and ethical standards but also prevented victims from claiming their rights. No effective investigation was conducted against Aktaş for these insulting and derogatory remarks.

d) Detention Center in Sincan Prison Campus

25. Following July 15, 2016, an enclosed torture center with a capacity of about 1,000 people was reportedly created inside the Sincan Prison Campus in Ankara's Sincan district. Victims refer to this structure as "Tent City." It features a serrated concrete floor, wire surroundings, and open tops where walls meet the roof.

26. Despite the summer season, Ankara's nighttime cold was exploited as a form of mild torture by keeping victimized soldiers partially clothed. Common practices included intentional deprivation of food, water, and toilet access, as well as constant beatings of ranking soldiers who were kept kneeling with hands cuffed behind their backs.

27. A section was reserved for police interrogations under questionable circumstances. Victims and witnesses reported being forced to sign untruthful statements under pressure and torture, with threats of harm to their families if they refused. The screams of tortured victims were deliberately made audible to others, serving as a form of psychological torture for those witnessing the abuse.

V. Case Studies of Soldiers or Their Spouses Victims of Systematic Torture

28. The following lines are based on the victim's defenses in Court. These defenses are registered in the Ministry of Justice's UYAP system and have become an open source as it has been shared with the public by the defendants and/or their lawyers in the same case.

29. Each of victims listed in the following section stressed that his initial statement was obtained under severe torture and should be disregarded, and filed a criminal complaint against those who committed these acts, presenting evidence of torture to the court. The prosecutor's office, which should have initiated ex officio proceedings, did not carry out into these incidents, and those who committed these acts were not held

²³ <https://ato.org.tr/basin-aciklamalari/2018-basin-aciklamalari/419-gozalti-sureclerine-dair-hak-ihlalleri-raporu.html>

²⁴ <https://x.com/aliaktas7/status/754640071903604736>

accountable so far. Proceedings on other motions besides this criminal complaint filed during the trial are ongoing.

a) General Akin Öztürk

30. General Akin Öztürk, born in 1952, served as the Commander of the Air Force from 2013 to 2015.

31. On July 15, 2016, while he was in his daughter's lodging house, he was ordered by the then Commander of the Air Force, General Abidin Ünal, to go to Akıncı Air Base and take control of the situation there. Despite not engaging in any criminal activity, he was subjected to torture and sentenced to life imprisonment. Photographs of him being tortured were also made public by Anadolu Agency, the state's official news agency.



32. General Öztürk began his testimony by describing the shocking treatment he received despite his high rank: "I was a four-star general when I was subjected to these things. When I was beaten by 22-year-old and 20-year-old female police officers. Male and female police officers... I was taken to a gymnasium full of 400-500 people and the beatings started there. They took me to the middle of the gymnasium with my hands handcuffed behind my back and exposed this beating to everyone in the gymnasium. We had no clothes on, just our underwear..."

33. He then detailed the physical abuse he endured: "I would fall to the ground, and someone would pull me by my hair. While handcuffed behind my back, the other one kicked me... There were fractures, my ribs were broken at the time."

34. General Öztürk recounted how his torture was used to intimidate others: "They took this video footage of me and showed it to the detainees in the other sections and said, 'Look, this is Akin Pasha, do you see what your commander looks like, do you want to be like him?'"

35. He then expressed his intention to file formal complaints: "I am filing a complaint against these torturing personnel in the TEM office, whose names I have identified as H.Ö., A.Y., E.S., and I am filing a complaint against them in accordance with Article 77 of the Turkish Penal Code and Article 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. There are witnesses to this torture, including H.G. who is on trial at the 23rd Heavy Penal Court and E.Y. who is on trial at the 20th Heavy Penal Court."

36. General Öztürk described some of the most severe forms of torture he experienced: "Acid was poured under my fingernails. You know, depriving of toilet needs and stuff like that. Heavy swearing ... when my hands were tied behind my back, look, Your Honor, 3-4 people are holding me. And one of them kept hitting me in the face with a cartridge belt. ...of course, blood gushed out all over me."

37. He also recounted a particularly disturbing incident: "They made young conscript soldiers attack me... They made the soldier beat me until blood gushed out of my ear, Your Honor"

38. General Öztürk expressed his frustration with those who denied the existence of torture: "Some of the complainant lawyers were shouting that there is no torture in Türkiye, as if they had not seen the pictures of Akin Öztürk, E.C. and others in the media."

39. Finally, General Öztürk described the continued mistreatment he faced even as he entered prison: "When we were entering the prison, Your Honor, the people who were to meet us were informed. They greeted me with insults and humiliating words.

40. Throughout his testimony, General Öztürk emphasized the systematic nature of the torture he endured and the apparent disregard for his rank and human dignity.

b) Staff Colonel Muhsin Kutsi Barış

41. Colonel Muhsin Kutsi Barış, born in 1971, was appointed as the Commander of the Presidential Guard Regiment with the proposal of Hulusi Akar, the then Commander of the Land Forces, and the approval of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2015. After the July 15, 2016 failed coup attempt, he was declared a coup plotter and is currently in solitary confinement in Sincan Type F High-Security Prison No. 1.

42. In his defense at the Ankara 17th High Penal Court, Colonel Barış provided a detailed account of the torture he endured, beginning with his initial arrest. He described how he was transferred to the Presidential Beştepe Campus: "Two police officers from the Presidential Protection Directorate were sitting next to me, right and left. The police officers in the vehicle stopped the vehicle 50-60 meters from the main entrance guardhouse on the Gazi Army House side of the Presidential Beştepe Campus."

43. Colonel Barış recounted the violent attack that followed: "With the shouting and targeting of the directing people, the first group of at least 15-20 people, I cannot say the exact number, but it could be more, I don't know, came running and started attacking me. This attack was a lynching attack. It was extremely ruthless and excessive. May God does not leave anyone in this situation, which happened to me. My hands were handcuffed; I had no way to save myself."

44. After losing consciousness during the attack, Colonel Barış described his next memory: "The first words I heard were, 'He is not dead, he is alive.' Again, I don't know how long later, when I came to, I was lying on a bed in a room with a catheter and an IV drip attached to my body."

45. Colonel Barış then detailed the threats and abuse he received while in this vulnerable state: "One of these people, who I guessed to be a medium-sized, slightly overweight high-ranking police chief, used heavy insults, hit my toes violently with a penknife in his hand, and said, 'Your major is dead. It's your turn; we won't let you live either... We will kill you by removing all your fingernails one by one.'"

46. Colonel Barış expressed details of encountering high-ranking officials: "One of the people who came while I was laying in this room was Fahri Kasırga, the then Secretary General of the Presidency. When I opened my right eye with difficulty, I realized that Fahri Kasırga was in the room with a large group. Among the group was Ramazan Bal, the then Head of Presidential Protection. I don't know when Fahri Kasırga arrived, but I remember that when I regained consciousness, he was at my bedside and addressed me with derogatory and obscene words."



47. Colonel Barış continued to recount his experiences, including being forced to sign a document: "When I said that I didn't know what was written on the paper and that I couldn't read it, he- torturer policemen said, 'We wrote down what you went through, sign it.' and handed me a pen. The other policeman shouted, 'Don't

bother, sign it.' The third policeman said, "You will make a statement at the prosecutor's office and the court. If you disagree, you can say so there. Sign it, don't bother us. "

48. Colonel Barış then described his transfer to a sports hall and the horrific scenes he witnessed: "When I entered the building, I realized it was a sports hall. They took us to a sports hall. I didn't recognize it from the outside. I found out later that it was the Ankara Provincial Security Directorate Gymnasium. There were 400-500 men inside. The scene was really horrifying."

49. Colonel Barış detailed the brutal treatment he received in the sports hall: "He made me take off my belt and took it. When he took the belt, before I realized what was happening, he started hitting my body randomly with the belt. While he was hitting me, he was shouting at the top of his lungs, spitting saliva out of his mouth, and listing the heaviest insults and curses one after the other."

50. Colonel Muhsin Kutsi Barış concluded by describing the lasting physical effects of the torture: "Even today, I find it difficult to describe the pain I felt after this kick. ... I thought I was paralyzed and would never be able to stand up again. I wasn't paralyzed, but I couldn't feel the tips of my toes for three or four months after I went to prison due to the effects of these blows."

c) Staff Colonel Muhammet Tanju Poshor

51. CAT was informed by LOIPR (Article 2 para 5)²⁵ that victims had been denied access to medical care and asked what measures had been taken in light of these concerns. In the State Party Report Under LOIPR (para 31)²⁶, the Turkish authorities responded with a generic answer that does not reveal the actual situation, such as "the relevant regulation routinely carried out medical care, and these reports were attached to the suspects' documents." However, the victim, Colonel Muhammet Tanju Poshor, offers a different account in the following case. He states that he was detained while he was on the operating table in a hospital, handcuffed behind his back despite the open wound on his back, and was kept naked on his knees for hours with the wound on his back.

52. Colonel Poshor provided a detailed account of the torture he was subjected to and filed a criminal complaint against the relevant suspects. In his court testimony, Colonel Poshor described the torture he was subjected to in the following sentences: "I was detained while I was on the operating table in a hospital. I had an open wound. I was detained in the morning of July 16, 2016, in the operating room. I was beaten by people I do not know. It was like in a Nazi camp."

53. Colonel Poshor then described the various perpetrators involved in his torture: "Ununiformed policemen and some uniformed soldiers, including Barış Dedebağ, were involved in my torture."

54. He recounted the conditions at the Sincan Compound: "At the Sincan Compound, we experienced food, water, and toilet deprivation. There was constant beating of especially the high-ranking officers."

55. Colonel Poshor detailed the severe torture methods used on him: "I met another interrogation group. These answers could not save me from the electric shock that knocked me unconscious several times. For a year and a half, I still couldn't get used to the smell of burning flesh. This smell also bothered my torturers, who occasionally vomited."

56. He then described his experience at an MIT site: "While I was wounded, first they made me lie on my back on the ground. They covered my face with a plastic bag, pressed hard, while another one started to squeeze and twist my balls. I was breathless. Whatever fluid was in my body came out wherever it could find it."

57. Colonel Poshor also highlighted the violation of his legal rights: "When I appeared before the prosecutor, first my lawyer was not allowed in the prosecutor's room. He made other threats and kicked me out of the room."

²⁵ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/QPR/5, List of issues prior to submission of the fifth periodic report of Turkey, Article 2, para 8, page 2, 27 December 2018

²⁶ Committee against Torture, CAT/C/TUR/5/ Fifth periodic report submitted by Turkey under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure, due in 2020, para 31, page 7, 4 April 2022

58. Throughout his testimony, Colonel Muhammet Tanju Poshor emphasized that the torture he experienced appeared to be motivated by hate, constituting a hate crime against military personnel accused of involvement in the coup attempt. ."

d) Judge Colonel Dr. Cemil Çelik

59. The following lines is based on the events described by Dr. Cemil Çelik on his personal YouTube channel.²⁷

60. Judge Colonel Dr. Cemil Çelik, a military judge, served as the presiding judge in several high-profile cases, including the Sauna, Atabeyler, and Zir Valley files. His ordeal began on July 20, 2016, when he was taken into custody and subsequently imprisoned in Ankara Sincan Prisons.

61. In his testimony, Judge Colonel Dr. Çelik provided a detailed account of the torture and mistreatment he experienced: "As we approached the gate of the gymnasium, someone was swearing and insulting. As I was getting out, he punched me in the chest. I started to hear sounds. These were the sounds of people being beaten again, and the sounds of beatings were continuing rapidly."

62. Judge Colonel Dr. Çelik then described the brutal treatment he witnessed: "A man called T.D. was there. He was saying, 'Traitors, son of dogs, you are like this.' He was hitting people without saying anything. He came up to me with slaps. On my left was Judge Colonel Y.T.Ç. He was short and overweight. He came up to him and started slapping his neck, belly, and head. T.Ö., who was in front, was a big man, and he gave him a few extra slaps."

63. Colonel Çelik recounted the horrific scene inside the gymnasium: "Some of them were naked, and some of them had different colored clothes or uniforms. The man called Tahir, nicknamed Tatar, was there. There were also cameras in the hall. I noticed a sign underneath the camera, and the red-colored sign was on. I thought they were recording everything or having someone watch it live somewhere."

64. Judge Colonel Dr. Çelik detailed the ongoing abuse: "They said, 'You will stand on your knees.' He both swears and kicks and slaps us while walking around. They started hitting Colonel T. in the head. While we were waiting, B.Ö., who was in front of me, couldn't stand it and fell. He kept slapping and punching."

65. He added that ".....Then, at some point, a voice came from behind. He said 'what's going on? Enough is enough.' This friend got angry and broke his handcuffs. A policeman named Eser punched this friend. After this movement, a policeman with a long-barreled gun in the stands pointed it at us. I thought that if we reacted to what was happening there, if we rebelled, they would shoot us without blinking an eye."

66. Finally, Judge Colonel Dr. Çelik described the lack of response from the medics regarding their complaints: "We told them about the beatings and torture. They ignored all of them and kept no records."

67. Throughout his testimony, Judge Colonel Dr. Çelik emphasized the systematic nature of the torture and the apparent disregard for their legal rights as detainees.

e) Lt. Colonel (LTC) Levent Türkkan

68. LTC Levent Türkkan was serving as the adjutant of the Chief of General Staff, General Hulusi Akar, when he was arrested following the events of July 15, 2016. Pictures and videos of the severe torture he was subjected to were made public by the state's official news agency (Anadolu Agency). His testimony, which was taken under severe torture, was later used as evidence in court proceedings.

69. In his defense at the 17th High Criminal Court, LTC Türkkan provided a harrowing account of his ordeal: "At noon on July 16, I called Special Forces Commander Zekai Aksakallı and asked him what I should do. Zekai Aksakallı told me to go to the officers at the guard post (security gate). Thereupon, I introduced myself to the officers and surrendered without any opposition or resistance."

70. LTC Türkkan then described the systematic torture he endured: "I was systematically tortured for 4 days between July 16-19, 2016, in a special room in the Capital sports hall. The people who tortured me were a

²⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EB4tegWI2VU>

group of 5-6 civilian, bearded police officers. Because of the drugging and physical trauma, I don't remember much of what happened during those days."

71. He recounted the horrific torture methods used on him: "As part of this torture, the nails of my pinkie, ring, and middle fingers of my right hand were removed. My stomach was tortured, and all the skin was peeled off. The skin on the palms of my right and left hands, including my fingers, was burned and peeled off. My face and eyes were completely beaten, my eyes were completely closed, my nose and ear bones were completely broken, my skull was fractured in several places as a result of the beating."

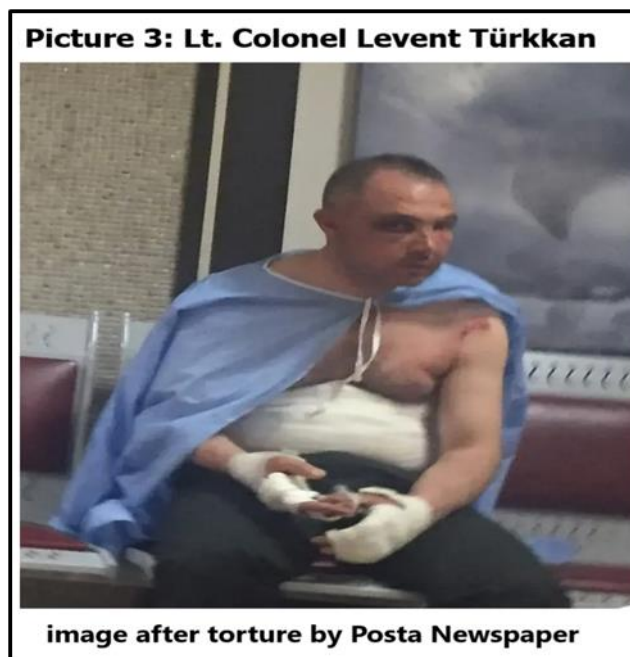
72. LTC Türkkan described the psychological impact of the torture: "After each torture, I fainted and lost consciousness. When I came to my senses again, I had lost all my emotions, I had forgotten all my values. I remember that every sobering up was done with water. I was subjected to the torture of suffocation by being gagged with a wet towel. I remember that I lost my sense of family, who I was, my perception of time and space, and my emotions."

73. He detailed the coercion he experienced: "Every day in the evening, they forced me to sign lists with the names of the personnel present at the General Staff. They made threats against my family and intimidated them with rape and murder."

74. LTC Türkkan mentioned the medical examinations he underwent: "I underwent brain tomography and other general examinations. The report dated July 17, 2016, shows what I was reduced to by torture. I remember being fed through a straw when I entered the prison. I couldn't eat solid food for a certain period of time, and I couldn't even go to the toilet."

75. He emphasized the lasting effects of the torture: "Before that, it was a confused, indistinct, fragmented memory. The torture, ill-treatment, and threats continued after my arrest."

76. Notwithstanding LTC Türkkan was brought before the prosecutor and the court with visible signs of torture and ill-treatment and even bandages, no investigation was carried out into these blatant torture and ill-treatment incidents, and those who committed these acts were not held accountable.



77. Throughout his testimony, LTC Levent Türkkan urged the court not to ignore the evidence of his torture, which was documented by cameras, witnesses, and other defendants. Although, he also stressed that his initial statement was obtained under severe torture and should be disregarded, it was used as evidence in all subsequent trials.

f) Lt. Colonel (LTC) Hakan Karakuş

78. LTC Hakan Karakuş served as 141st Squadron Commander at Ankara Akıncı Air Base Command on and before July 15. During the trials, the court ruled that he was involved in the so-called coup attempt activities at Ankara Akıncı Air Base Command. Hakan Karakuş stated that his testimony was taken under intense pressure, torture, and threats and denied all of his statements before the court. LTC Karakuş was sentenced to life and is currently serving his sentence under severe isolation conditions.

79. LTC Karakuş described in detail the torture he was subjected to and filed a criminal complaint: "I was subjected to all kinds of torture, including physical torture, such as depriving of food, water and toilet and being forced to wet myself, having other police officers who came to the police station beat me, stripping me naked and recording images of torture on camera, being threatened with my family under heavy swearing."

80. LTC Karakuş then recounted an incident involving a commission investigating torture: "At the beginning of September, I don't know where they came from, but men from the commission to investigate torture in prison came at the beginning of September, 1.5 months after the incident. The men saw the traces of torture on me with their own eyes; they took notes themselves, and those bruises had turned yellow and dark orange. They even saw those cigarettes burn mark on my back. They saw the bruises on my feet. They wrote it all down one by one."

81. He described a particularly violent encounter during a medical examination: "A policeman from the special operation unit came into the room during my examination. He hit me in the face with the butt of his rifle, under my eye, around here. I don't remember what happened after he hit me, I fell there and fainted. The doctor was terrified that I would die there. He immediately gave me an injection; then, they took blood from my finger. I don't know what they did. After that, they gave me medicines etc. But what they wrote here was mouthwash."



82. LTC Karakuş also mentioned an encounter with a high-ranking official: "...Ş.Y., on the far right, was the Chief Prosecutor at the time. I think he is now the Deputy Minister of Justice. It was this prosecutor who cursed and insulted me for 45 minutes." Throughout his testimony, LTC Hakan Karakuş emphasized the systematic nature of the torture he endured and the attempts to cover up or downplay the severity of his treatment.

g) Captain Ahmet Tosun

83. Captain Ahmet Tosun was serving as a Program-Schedule Officer at the 141st Squadron of the Akıncı Base Command on and before July 15. During the trials related to the military mobilization that took place on July 15, 2016, the court ruled that he was involved in the so-called coup attempt activities at Ankara Akıncı Air Base Command. Captain Tosun stated that he gave his testimony under intense pressure, torture, and threats

and denied all of his statements before the court. He was sentenced to life and is currently serving his sentence under severe isolation conditions.

84. Captain Tosun described the beginning of his ordeal: "Although I did not offer any resistance, one of the police officers violently hit my neck with his arm, and from that moment on, it was like an apocalypse."

85. He recounted his experience at the Başkent Volleyball Sports Hall: "When they asked me about my profession, I told them without hesitation that I was a soldier and a pilot. When the police officers learned that I was a pilot, they said, 'Have you flown? Did you drop the bombs?' and so on. Although I persistently said, 'No, I didn't fly; I didn't drop any bombs,' they didn't believe me and tried to increase the pressure on me."

86. Captain Tosun described the horrific scene he witnessed: "I saw that some wore military uniforms, others were civilians. Some of them were wearing underwear and tank tops, with all due respect. Some even had a huge 'FETÖ' sign on the back, 'FETÖ' stamp on their backs like animals were sealed. Some of them had scars on their bodies. There were people with black eyes and swollen faces. There were people with wrapped noses, and probably, their noses had been broken due to the blows they had received. People were lying on the ground and unable to stand up. Some people were in severe pain and were moaning in pain. This was the general scene in the hall, and history witnessed a human tragedy."

87. He detailed the constant psychological and physiological pressure at the Anti-Terror Branch: "They made us kneel and didn't allow us to move for minutes. People's knees were shaking, and inevitably, some people gave up and couldn't stand it. Those who let go were punished immediately by kicking and swearing at them. Some people even fainted from being on their knees for so long. One of these fainted men fell and hit his head on the iron bar when he fainted. The man was literally left to die."

88. Captain Tosun recounted the public torture of high-ranking officers: "First, they started beating all the generals among us. The generals right behind us were being publicly tortured."

89. He described the inhumane conditions: "Like every human being, we naturally have human needs such as eating, drinking, toileting, and sleeping. Even going to the restroom became torture for us. I estimate about 500-600 people were in the hall, and everyone naturally needed to use the restroom. I had lost ten kilograms in ten days. I did not doubt that they saw us as only living organisms, even animals. And this went on for ten days. Sometimes I went 24 hours without going to the toilet."

90. Captain Tosun also witnessed evidence of severe torture on others: "A colonel had burns on various parts of his body. Half of his face was especially covered in scars. Another had burns on his chest and abdomen. I wondered how these people had gotten to this state, and a few days later, I learned that when they were taken into custody, regardless of whether they were guilty or innocent, they were made to lie on the hot asphalt by the police who had taken them into custody and kept them there for minutes. The naked body of one of them and the face of another were burned by pressing them against the hot asphalt."

91. He described the conditions in what they called "Tent City": "We called it Tent City among ourselves. (Barbed) Wires surrounded it. The floor was concrete, and the tops of the walls were open. Although it was summer, it was freezing [at nights], and we started worrying about how the night would pass in our conditions. Until then, we had been struggling with fatigue, hunger, thirst, and cleanliness, and now we were forced to struggle with the cold."

92. Captain Tosun recounted a disturbing statement from a female police officer: "I would like to convey what a female police officer said about us while we were detained. I don't know who it was, but it was a female police officer who came every day as a civilian. That female police officer told us the following: 'Now that all of you have been taken into custody, then your wives are trophies for us.'"

93. Captain Tosun expressed his frustration with the lack of accountability: "I know that neither you nor the public prosecutors looking into these cases will lift a finger about these torture cases."

94. Captain Tosun described the disorienting conditions: "We couldn't see outside in the gymnasium; there was no concept of day and night. Since we are not allowed to sleep, our biological balance and metabolism have been collapsed."

95. Captain Tosun recounted the threats and coercion during his interrogation: "In particular, the statement I gave in my handwriting, which was forcibly dictated to me, was taken as follows. 'I will throw you in front of the Special Forces. They will tear you apart there like a dog.' He- torturer started shouting at me. 'We'll bring your wife here, which won't be good for her. We will humiliate her in front of everyone,' and he- torturer continued to threaten me."

96. Captain Tosun described his relief at finally being sent to prison: "The next day in the morning, I was referred to the court and arrested and sent to prison. I never thought I would be happy to be arrested and sent to prison. I was glad to go to prison because I was relieved from the psychological and physiological pressure and torture I had endured in detention."

97. Finally, Captain Ahmet Tosun recounted his experience with the prosecutor: "During my testimony at the prosecutor's office, Prosecutor Abdullah ÇITLIK, a Criminal Procedure Lawyer, police officers, and a clerk were present. Prosecutor Abdullah ÇITLIK was speaking loudly, shouting from time to time, and at the same time swearing unspeakably. Even though there were female officers there, he never refrained from using slangs..."

h) Lieutenant (Lt.) Mutlu Gülerce

98. The following lines are based on Lieutenant Mutlu Gülerce's interview with some online media outlets.²⁸

99. On July 15th, Lieutenant Mutlu Gülerce was a trainee in the service school training course at the Gendarmerie Schools Command in Beytepe, Ankara. He was charged with allegedly participating in coup attempt activities at the Beytepe Gendarmerie Schools Command on July 15, 2016. Lt. Gülerce was ultimately acquitted at the trial's end and currently lives outside Türkiye.

100. In his testimony, Lt. Gülerce provided a detailed account of his experience: "On the morning of July 16th, Colonel V.T. and his team, who came to the school from outside, took us to the Gaffar Okkan Equestrian Sports Facilities, which was called a stable, with the information that 'we would only give a statement' and handed us over to the police."



101. Lt. Gülerce then described the degrading treatment they received upon arrival: "Our valuables, such as phones and wallets, were thrown away in garbage bags without being recorded. We were stripped down to our underwear, handcuffed behind our backs, and taken to the soldiers brought there before us."

102. He recounted the verbal abuse they endured: "Our mother and honor were constantly insulted."

²⁸ <https://kronos37.news/o-fotograftaki-askerlerden-gulerce-beraat-guzel-bir-duygu-ve-evet-sanirim-goreve-donmek-istiyorum/>

103. Lt. Gülerce detailed the inhumane conditions they were subjected to: "We stayed in the barn for 36 hours, as shown in the photo, and we were never given food. Although a few friends fainted, no paramedics came, and only insults were hurled." He described an incident of physical abuse: "On the evening of the first night, a special operations police officer came in and slapped a friend who he claimed was looking at him."

104. Lt. Gülerce then recounted their transfer to Sincan Prison: "Before we were arrested, we were taken to the assembly area set up at Sincan Prison. There were around 700-800 soldiers there. Sadly, half of them were trainees, my classmates. Especially here, we were insulted very heavily." Throughout his testimony, Lt. Mutlu Gülerce emphasized the systematic nature of the mistreatment and abuse they experienced, highlighting the emotional toll it took on him and his fellow soldiers.

i) An Anonymous Soldier's Wife

105. On July 15, 2016, I was married for seven years with a 3-year-old son and a 6-month-old daughter. On July 15th, I learned about the coup attempt on television. I then woke my husband, who had come back from guard duty and was sleeping at home, by phone to inform him about what had happened. My husband, who realized that what he had watched on television was not realistic, went to his workplace that night, thinking that he might be needed.

106. On July 16th, in the afternoon, my husband hung up, saying that the police had arrived at his workplace and that I would not hear from him for a while. Indeed, I didn't hear from him for a while. With two small children, I couldn't go anywhere or knock on any doors. The only thing I could do was watch the news on TV and wait for the information. After six days, I got the first news from my husband when a lawyer called. He told me that my husband could not talk to me; the lawyer just wanted me to know that my husband was arrested.

107. When we saw the beating marks and bruises on my husband's face during our first closed-door meeting, we both couldn't speak for a while because we were crying. When my husband regained his composure, he first asked, "Did they do anything to you?" Because this was the only thing they said during the torture: "Your wives are ours now." All those days, he had lived in fear that something terrible had happened to me on top of his suffering. He was sleepless and exhausted. He had difficulty sitting up because of the kicks and beatings to his waist and back. He had a black eye. He didn't want to appear in front of me like this, but he was so worried about me that he came to the non-contact visit.

108. One night at 04:30, the police raided the house of another person with two children, with whom I lived in the same housing unit, and the police pulled a gun on the children who were crying out of fear, put a gun to the head of a 12-year-old girl, and threw the household belongings all over the place.

109. At some point, my experiences became unbearable. I was running everywhere, but I couldn't reach anywhere. I felt exhausted, but I didn't show this to my husband so that he wouldn't get upset, and every time I went to see him, I consoled him by saying, "We are fine, don't worry about us." But I needed someone to tell me what I was going through. My financial situation did not allow me to go to a private psychologist. I made an appointment at the state hospital and went to a psychologist. I told him what I had been through, hoping he would help me. He told me why I was still married to a traitor and that if I divorced him, I would be free from all these troubles. Even here, I couldn't find an impartial person.

110. People's extrajudicial killings were everywhere. It took depression medication from another doctor to get me out of the pessimistic situation I was in. Because of the situation I was in, my daughter was weaned at the age of 1, even though I wanted to. One day, I realized I was a tired and unhappy mother in front of my children. The medication I took helped to some extent, and I started to recover again.

111. Although the physical wounds healed, my husband could not get rid of his worries about us for a long time. He always greeted us with the fear that something would happen to us. He asked me again and again if there was anything negative. The only story I told him was that we had no problems on the outside. But every night after my children went to sleep, I would cry and cry and cry. The most victimized victims of this process were the women whose husbands were in prison and especially our children. The traumas we went

through drove some of us to suicide. I spent my youth, the best time of my life, crying and being forced to distance myself from society and not enjoying life at all. I have been waiting for a long time for justice and the rule of law to return to my country one day.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations for the Dialogue with Türkiye

112. The examples of torture detailed above are only a few examples of the systematic torture that took place during that period. Although these allegations were made in full detail in court by the individuals named, and all these incidents of torture were reported in the press with pictures and images, no investigation was carried out into these incidents, and those who committed these acts were not held accountable. Rights Defenders Initiative (RDI) respectfully requests that the Committee consider raising these questions to the delegation of the State party-Türkiye on the occasion of the dialogue:

- a)** Please inform the administrative and judicial sanctions that were imposed on public officials suspected of torture, whose identities were provided to the extent that they could be identified. Concerning the named individuals accused of torture: i) How many public officials have been prosecuted for torture or ill-treatment since July 2016? For example, what investigations have been conducted into the allegations against Lt.Gen. (R) Zekai Aksakallı, General İ.Ö., Major (R) Barış Dedebağ, and Colonel (R) Ali Türkşen, K.E., who was then Head of Foreign Operations in MIT, Erhan Pekçetin, a senior MIT official, Ali Aktaş, a prominent lawyer and politician, H.Ö., A.Y., E.S. from TEM Office, a police commissar named Hüseyin, a policeman named Eser, Fahri Kasırga, the then Secretary General of the Presidency, Ramazan Bal, the then Head of Presidential Protection, T.D., the man called Tahir, nicknamed Tatar, Ş.Y., the Chief Prosecutor at the time and then probably the Deputy Minister of Justice, Prosecutor Abdullah ÇITLIK, a Criminal Procedure Lawyer? ii) Have any disciplinary or criminal proceedings been initiated against these individuals? If so, what are the outcomes? iii) What sentences have been handed down in cases where officials were found guilty of torture?
- b)** Please clarify under whose responsibility torture centers, which are the subject of numerous witnesses, information, and documents, were operated during the period of torture. Also, please provide information on i) the administrative and judicial sanctions imposed on those responsible, ii) What specific investigations have been conducted into the allegations of systematic torture at the unofficial detainee centers, MIT Çiftlik Campus, Ankara Başkent Sports Hall, Ankara Beştepe Equestrian Police Centre, and the Detention Centre in Sincan Prison Campus-"Tent City"? iii) How does Türkiye explain the existence of these unofficial detention centers when it claimed no such facilities exist?
- c)** Please inform whether any warnings or cautions were issued to media outlets that recklessly shared images of torture, which is considered a crime against humanity, within the framework of "media ethics" or relevant laws. How does the State party explain the widespread dissemination of images showing the mistreatment of detainees by state media outlets?
- d)** Please inform whether medical assistance was provided promptly for severe injuries and traumas resulting from torture. Please clarify what administrative and judicial sanctions were imposed on officials who were negligent in this regard. Concerning the medical documentation of torture, please provide information about i) What measures have been taken to ensure that medical examinations of detainees are conducted and documented in line with the Istanbul Protocol? ii) How many healthcare professionals have been trained in documenting torture and ill-treatment?
- e)** Please provide the number of torture investigations that have ended in non-prosecution due to the protective provisions in institutions' laws such as the Turkish Intelligence Agency (MIT) or emergency decrees issued after the state of emergency. Please clarify whether torture perpetrators have been encouraged by a practice that would mean impunity.

- f)** Please provide the information about: i) How many cases have been reviewed where allegations of torture-induced confessions were made? ii) In how many instances have courts excluded evidence allegedly obtained through torture? iii) How does Türkiye justify the use of evidence obtained under torture in court proceedings, as exemplified in the case of Lieutenant Colonel Levent Türkkan? iv) What measures has Türkiye implemented to prevent the use of torture as a means of intimidation or coercion in obtaining confessions? v) How does Türkiye respond to claims that detainees were forced to sign false statements under duress and threats to their families?
- g)** Please explain which mechanisms are in place for victims of torture to seek compensation and rehabilitation. How many victims have received compensation or rehabilitation services since July 2016?
- h)** Please provide the information about which steps has the State party taken to ensure immediate access to legal counsel for all detainees, particularly those accused of terrorism-related offenses. And how does the State party account for the apparent lack of basic necessities provided to detainees, such as food, water, and access to toilets?
- i)** As raised by the Chairperson of the Committee in his August 2016 letter, in November 2016, in CAT/C/TUR/CO/4/Add.1 para 109, the Government stated that the investigation into allegations of torture of soldiers at the Çengelköy Police Station on July 17, 2016, following the coup attempt was still ongoing. The State party reports, including CAT/C/TUR/5, are silent on this issue. Please provide information about the fate of this investigation during the hearings.

Recommendations:

Rights Defenders Initiative (RDI) respectfully requests that the Committee consider passing these concerns and recommendations to the delegation of Türkiye.

- a)** The State party should eradicate all forms of torture, and inhuman and degrading treatment by law enforcement officers, including through prompt and independent investigations, the prosecution of perpetrators and the adoption of provisions for effective protection and remedies to the victims.
- b)** The State party should intensify its efforts to prohibit torture and all kinds of ill-treatment effectively. It should ensure that relevant criminal law provisions and policy directives are effectively implemented.
- c)** The State party should ensure the creation and implementation of an independent oversight mechanism for complaints against criminal conduct by State officials. It should also ensure that all cases of torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment are properly investigated and prosecuted.
- d)** There is strong evidence of systematic torture in unofficial detention centers following the events of July 15, 2016. The State party should take all necessary measures to i) Conduct thorough, impartial investigations into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment. ii) Ensure that all detention facilities are officially recognized and subject to regular, unannounced inspections. iii) Prosecute and punish those responsible for torture, including high-ranking officials.
- e)** There is a lack of effective investigations into torture allegations. The State party should ensure an independent mechanism to investigate torture claims. It also should ensure the protection of victims and witnesses who report torture. The State party should guarantee to publish comprehensive data on torture investigations and their outcomes.
- f)** Despite legal prohibitions, evidence obtained through torture continues to be used in court proceedings. The State party should enact legislation and i) Strictly enforce the exclusion of torture-derived evidence in all legal proceedings. ii) Provide training to judges and prosecutors on identifying and excluding such evidence. iii) Establish clear mechanisms for investigating claims of torture-derived evidence.

- g)** Detainees, particularly those accused of terrorism-related offenses, often face restrictions in accessing legal counsel. The State party should ensure that its counter-terrorism legislation and practices are in full conformity with the Covenant.
- h)** The State party should guarantee to i) the right of immediate access to lawyers for all detainees, without exception. ii) to remove any legal or practical obstacles to lawyer-client confidentiality. iii) Investigate and address all reported instances of denial of legal representation.
- i)** Reports indicate severe overcrowding and inhumane conditions in some detention facilities. The State party should take concrete steps to improve the treatment of prisoners and conditions in prisons and detention facilities in line with the Covenant and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, including with regard to their timely access to adequate health services and access to adequate food, water for all detainees. In this regard, the State party should consider not only the construction of new prison facilities but also the wider application of alternative non-custodial sentences, such as electronic monitoring, parole and community service.
- j)** The State party should ensure that victims of such acts receive adequate reparation and compensation. It should take all necessary measures to i) Establish comprehensive rehabilitation programs for torture victims. ii) Ensure fair and adequate compensation for victims of torture. iii) Remove any obstacles to victims seeking redress through the legal system.
- k)** The State party should intensify its efforts to i) Extend an open invitation to UN Special Procedures, particularly the Special Rapporteur on Torture. ii) Fully cooperate with international human rights mechanisms and implement their recommendations. iii) Share best practices and challenges in combating torture with other States Parties.