Mr. Sadullah Ergin

Ministry of Justice

Address: 06659 Kizilay, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: +90 312 419 33 70

E‐Mail: sadullahergin@adalet.gov.tr, iydb@adalet.gov.tr

DATE

Dear Mr. Sadullah Ergin,

Minister of Justice

On Behalf of …………………………… (your organisation’s name), I am writing to you with regard to three human rights activists from Turkey, who have been sentenced to jail terms by a court in Ankara. On October 26, 2011, Naz Güdümen, Buse Kılıçkaya, and Selay Tunç - all transgender human rights defenders from the organization Pembe Hayat LGBTT Dayanışma Derneği - were sentenced to prison terms ranging from five months to one and a half years.

In it’s ruling, Ankara’s 15th Criminal Court of First Instance sentenced Ms. Tunc to six months in prison for “resisting the police”. Ms. Güdümen was sentenced to one year in prison for “insulting the police” and an additional six months for “resisting the police”. Ms. Kılıçkaya was sentenced to five months in prison for “resisting the police”. While the jail sentences for Ms. Tunc and Ms. Güdümen were suspended as long as they do not repeat the same alleged offense, Ms. Kılıçkaya will have to serve a term of imprisonment (pending appeal). Furthermore, in accordance with Article 53/1 of Turkish Penal Code, Ms. Kılıçkaya will also be deprived of her rights to guardianship, tutorship, and Curatorship.

The convictions of Ms. Kılıçkaya, Ms. Tunç, and Ms. Güdümen began with their arrest on July 19, 2010. Police stopped the car in which the women were driving down Seyranbaglari Mah Street in Ankara. The officers informed the women that they were under arrest and forcefully dragged them into a waiting police van. Ms. Kılıçkaya informed the police that they were hurting her arms; a remark that we believe could have subsequently been misrepresented as insulting a police officer. The women were transported to the police station and held for approximately five hours before being released. On June 24th, the women were formally charged with *Damaging Public Property*, *Insulting Police*, and *Resisting the Police and Preventing Them from Performing Their Duty*.

We believe that the initial arrests and brutality as well as the subsequent indictments and convictions may have been motivated by a combination of factors: transphobia; disregard for the law in the case of people who are, or may be perceived as, sex workers; and a specific desire to deter transgender human rights defenders from activism. Ms. Kılıçkaya and Ms. Tunç are co‐founders and current board members of Pembe Hayat, and Ms. Güdümen is an active member. We are particularly concerned with what appears to be the repeat targeting of Ms. Kılıçkaya and Ms. Tunç. This is the second time in less than one month that Ms. Kılıçkaya and Ms. Tunç have been arbitrarily arrested by the police. Notably, in the first instance, the court dismissed the charges, citing the lack of evidence against the defendants. During the case, the judge also reprimanded the police officers for their mistreatment of the human rights defenders, stating that their style of intervention was “totally wrong”.

We urgently request the Turkish Govenment and other relevant authorities to drop charges against 3 human rights defenders. We also request the Turkish Government to take the required legal and de facto steps to end the discrimination, hate crimes, harrassment by the police and all other human rights violations against trans persons in Turkey.

Best Regards,

Signature

Name of Your Organisation