

# **Journalism is not a crime: Release Sevda Perihan Erkılınç Immediately!**

The terror of detention and arrest of all those who take part in the revolutionary democratic struggle in Turkey and who criticise the AKP-MHP government in the slightest continues to expand. The government, which is gradually weakening and losing support among the people, cannot find any other solution but to increase this oppression and terror as the only way to survive. Journalists are among those arrested the most, because the only way for them to stay in power is through the obfuscation of the truth! One of the examples of this picture is the arrest of Özgür Gelecek reporter **Sevda Perihan Erkılınç**, her treatment in prison and the fact that her indictment has not even been prepared despite the two months that have passed.

Erkılınç was taken into custody on the morning of 29 April as part of the operations carried out in Istanbul before 1 May and then arrested and sent to prison together with Songül Yücel, editor-in-chief of Ön Söz Magazine. The Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office justified this operation with the allegations of "calling for Taksim on 1 May despite the bans" and "planning provocations". However, as the public clearly knows, Sevda Perihan Erkılınç is a journalist and has long been involved in the women's struggle. The only thing Sevda does is to bring the truth to the people, to be the voice of the people, to make the voice of labourers, women, LGBTI+s and all oppressed groups heard against the bans.

However, the government's fear of the truth is evident from the fact that it considers journalism as a 'crime' like the previous governments.

## **Torture and Neglect in Prison**

Sevda's detention is not only unlawful but also life-threatening for her health. According to Eren Keskin, Co-Chair of the Human Rights Association of Turkey (IHD), Sevda suffers not only from asthma but also from celiac disease. In other words, her survival depends on a complete gluten-free diet. However, the prison administration systematically violates this vital requirement.

According to Keskin, Sevda has become extremely thin and must eat only cheese because she cannot eat. She is given gluten-free bread only once or twice a week, and often no suitable food is provided. In addition, her requests for referral to the infirmary are not met and she cannot access the medication she needs. This situation clearly amounts to inhuman treatment and leads to Sevda's health deteriorating day by day in prison.

## **No Offence, No Evidence, No Indictment: Only Revenge**

Two months later, the indictment against Sevda has still not been prepared. Her detention is not a situation that can be explained by law, but only a revenge practice of the political power to silence freedom of the press. When all these factors come together, Sevda's situation is not only a violation of an individual right but becomes a part of systematic state policies.

## **You will not be silenced! We Will Continue to Write the Truth**

In the person of Sevda Perihan Erkılınç, the people's right to information and the voice of the opposition are wanted to be silenced. However, history has shown that the truth cannot be covered up with pressure, persecution and imprisonment. Journalism is not a crime! Not giving food to a sick prisoner, leaving him without medication, isolating him is not only a violation of rights, but also torture!

Every day Sevda spends inside is stolen from her health and left to die. This is a conscious state policy and those responsible are clear.

**This is our call:**

***Sevda Perihan Erkılınç and all imprisoned journalists be released immediately!***

***End the systematic neglect and ill-treatment of sick prisoners in prisons!***

***Defending the truth is not a crime. We will not be silent, we will not get used to it, we will not submit!***

**ATIK- Confederation Workers from Turkey in Europe**

**YK - New Women**

**YDG- New Democratic Youth**

**UPOTUDAK- International Solidarity Committee for Political Prisoners**