



**LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN NETWORK OF
HEALTH INSTITUTIONS AGAINST TORTURE, IMPUNITY
AND OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

December 15th, 2022

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of the Republic of Turkey
Ankara, Turkey

Subject: The arbitrary arrest of Prof Şebnem Korur Fincancı

His Excellency,

The Latin American and Caribbean Network of Health Institutions against Torture, Impunity and other Human Rights Violations has been made aware of the unjustified imprisonment of Professor **Şebnem Korur Fincancı**, who was detained on the 26th of October 2022 and wrongfully remains under arrest at Sincan Women Prison to this day.

Due to the accusation of allegedly "producing propaganda for a terrorist organization" she was arrested. The criminal charges against her were when she was legally exercising her right to freedom of expression as a forensic medical expert and Human Rights defender.

Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı, MD, is internationally recognized as a prominent Human Rights defender, forensic medical expert, and president of the Turkish Medical Association (TMA). She also acts as executive committee member and former chairperson of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT).

Why do Turkish authorities fear Human Rights defenders like **Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı**? Why do Turkish authorities fear professional autonomy and the independence of national medical associations?

The first hearing of **Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı** was scheduled on the 23rd of December 2022 at 9:30 am (TRT) in Istanbul. Her pre-trial detention was extended by the 24th Heavy Penal Court.

Every state in the world has the duty of ensuring that the Human Rights of every human being are guaranteed and respected. States are also obliged to prevent any kind of Human Rights violation and to report any known case. Therefore, every state must protect its Human Rights defenders and provide them with a safe and conducive environment for



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their work. The authorities must ensure criminal investigations, detentions, and prosecutions are not misused and abused to silence Human Rights defenders, as this would be a serious violation of state power and would have a fatal impact on all those who speak out about possible Human Rights violations, ultimately scaring them from proceeding with their essential work and leading to a massive step backward in the promotion of Human Rights in the world.

The Latin American organizations that have signed this letter demand that you immediately and unconditionally release **Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı** to freedom and never again target her for expressing herself in the context of her work as a Human Rights defender.

Sincerely,

Center for Mental Health and Human Rights (CINTRAS), Chile.

Center for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and their Families (CPTRT), Honduras.

Psychosocial Care Center. Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS), Colombia.

Psychosocial Care Center. Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS), Peru.

Collective Against Torture and Impunity (CCTI), México.

Argentine Psychosocial Work and Research Team (EATIP), Argentina.

Community Studies and Psychosocial Action Team (ECAP), Guatemala.

Foundation for the Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence (PRIVA), Ecuador.

Institute for Therapy and Research on the Aftermath of Torture and State Violence (ITEI), Bolivia.

Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala (ODHAG), Guatemala.

Network for Children and the Family (REDINFA), Perú.

Cc: Minister of Justice, Mr. Bekir Bozdağ,

Minister of Interior, Mr. Süleyman Soylu