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## **Turkey : Stop the war against Civil Liberties and Press Freedom !**

The issue of French journalists being held in jail in Turkey has held considerable attention in the French Media in the last few weeks, the latest to be imprisoned being the independent journalist Loup Bureau, which was recently released. This is just the tip of the iceberg, more than 170 journalists are being held today in Turkish jails (source [plateforme24](http://plateforme24.com), <http://kedistan.net/2017/08/10/loup-bureau-deniz-yucel-and-162-other-journalists/>). Some are still awaiting trial, some have been sentenced. Journalists are not the only ones under threat : some television or newspaper employees also risk being arrested.

Besides journalists and employees being imprisoned, dozens of different types of medias (dailies, magazines, television, radios) have been shut down, particularly in the Kurdish settlement zones, South East of the country. The case of the emblematic pro-kurdish daily *Ozgür Gündem* is a striking example. Further to its closing down in April 2016 a vast campaign has been launched, with leading figures from the Turkish Media taking turns to be Chief Editor of the day. Some have been arrested for so-called « support to terrorist propaganda ».

This clamp down of the press is of course a result of the dictatorial orientation currently taking place in Turkey. The situation is furthermore worrying as the authorities jail political and social opponents (activists, students, Trade Union members) as well as those who can inform on the situation.

Those arrests and closing down of medias are being carried out mainly under the charge of supporting or belonging to a « terrorist organisation ». That actually means that any person suspected of sympathy towards the Kurdish movement or toward the HDP (People's Democratic Party) becomes a potential target for the State's repression. Even if among the repressed persons, there are some supporters of the Islamist opponent Fethullah Gülen, accused of fomenting the attempted coup in the summer 2016. The situation has been worsening since this failed coup as the Turkish President Erdogan has used it as a pretext to justify the end of Public Liberties in Turkey. We are of course aware that the repression started before this attempted coup, and always aimed worker's movements, Trade Unions, Left-wing parties and Minorities (Kurds, Alevis, Armenians).

Time for worrying has passed, It is now time for concrete solidarity. Trade Union SUD Culture and Medias Solidaires denounces the end of Public Liberties and Press Freedom in Turkey and calls for support to all Solidarity campaigns for imprisoned journalists and Trade Union members. We call on the Turkish State to free all imprisoned journalists, media employees as well as all other political prisoners, to stop all prosecutions, to re-open closed down medias, and to respect freedom of information and expression.