

January 23, 2016

Hon. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan,
Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanı
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi
06560 Beştepe, Ankara, Turkey

Cc: Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu

Dear President Erdoğan:

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), we write this letter because of our deep concern for the 1,128 Turkish academics from 89 universities across your country who signed the Academics for Peace-organized petition, “We will not be a Party to this Crime.”

We are troubled by the reports we read on your administration’s punitive response to the petitioners, some of them our fellow anthropologists, who are being wrongfully criminalized for having advocated for peace and a return to negotiations rather than the escalation of violence that is occurring in the Kurdish-populated region in the Southeast. The conflict between your government and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) is having disastrous effects on the lives of men, women, and children, who bear the brunt of the political polarization. As an international community of anthropologists, we are troubled by the gross human rights violations being perpetrated both in the Southeastern conflict and in the way that the petition’s signatories are being criminalized. They have been accused of being traitors and having sympathy for terrorists. As a consequence, they are being investigated and/or detained for prosecution, fired from their jobs, and harassed and threatened in other demeaning ways. However, in signing the petition they acted within their human rights, as defined and codified by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, *of which Turkey itself is a signatory.*

Along with thousands of academics around the world, we strongly express our solidarity with our Turkish colleagues who, despite the threat of a negative political backlash, courageously rose to the challenge of exercising freedom of expression and, within the milieu of publicly-engaged intellectuals, academic freedom. We support their demand

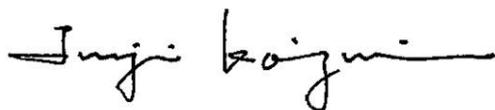
for peace and advocacy against the inhumanity of state violence.

We call on your government to end all prosecutions against the petition signers, to release those who have been jailed, and to respect the principles of academic freedom and free speech.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Faye V. Harrison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Faye V. Harrison, President, IUAES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Junji Koizumi". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Junji Koizumi, Secretary-General, IUAES

On behalf of the Executive Committee