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T.C. Adalet Bakanlığı
His Excellency the Minister of Justice Mr. Bekir Bozdağ
06659 Bakanlıklar / Ankara
Turkey

Brussels, 20-10-2016

Excellency,

The European Council of Literary Translators' Associations (CEATL) has been informed about the detention of Turkish translator, editor, critic, author and linguist Necmiye Alpay (70). Alpay is a member of the Turkish translators' association ÇEVİRİ, represented in CEATL.

Alpay is a translator of philosophical texts into Turkish, from writers including Said, Girard, Ricoeur, and Marchand. Her own source books continue to be an important contribution to the improvement of written Turkish. Alpay has also worked as an editor for various periodicals, and has contributed regularly to several newspapers.

Necmiye Alpay has always been a staunch defender of freedom of expression and a voice calling for peace between Turkey and the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). As such she has been a member of the advisory board of the newspaper *Özgür Gündem*, a symbolic position deemed to show support for freedom of expression.

Since 16 August 2016, when *Özgür Gündem* was shut down temporarily by the Turkish state for 'supporting PKK terrorism', everyone involved with the newspaper has been under investigation. Necmiye Alpay has been accused of 'being a member of an armed terrorist group'. She is imprisoned awaiting trial on the pretext that 'she might flee'. Among the many intellectuals and journalists who have been jailed awaiting trial, she is the oldest, and in fragile health.

Necmiye Alpay denies all charges against her. Her imprisonment is politically motivated. We believe that she is being held solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to free expression. Freedom of expression is a universal human right granted to every individual, and a prerequisite for a flourishing cultural climate in any country.

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CEATL, an international organisation representing more than 10 000 members of literary translators' associations from 28 European countries, demands the immediate release of Necmiye Alpay. Furthermore we urge the Turkish government to stop the crackdown on peaceful dissent, civil society, media and education, and end the political witch-hunt against intellectuals supporting a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict in Turkey.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Holger Fock
President of CEATL

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