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CONFEDERATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES TRADE UNIONS

LA CONFÉDÉRATION DES SYNDICATS DE TRAVAILLEURS



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STATE OF EMERGENCY TARGETS WOMEN PUBLIC OFFICERS!

AKP Governments has policies that target women public officers. These repressive policies rapidly increase since the military coup attempt on 15 July 2016. Women public officers are subjected to repressive policies.

Since the State of Emergency has been declared, 28 emergency decree laws were issued by the Government. These emergency decree laws make destructive impacts on women's situation.

Right after the State of Emergency has come into force, women's organisations were closed down, thousands of women public officers were dismissed from their offices, women politicians as well as co-mayors and human rights defenders, trade union members are detained by courts, anti-women policies come into force, and women's rights are violated by authorities. All of these developments indicate that AKP abuses the State of Emergency. In line with the Government's policies on job security, which is being abolished day by day, there has been increase in attacks against women's labour. There is an attempt to keep women at home through part-time, sub-contracted and remote working forms of employment. Also, women are considered mother and wife only. In other words, they are excluded from work life and public life. These employment forms, which are mainly flexible and have no rules, and approach towards women, create barriers to join trade union. In addition to legislative problems, mobbing and harassment are two other main problems for women public officers as well as workers.

Being dismissed from the public service is a serious issue since there is no effective domestic remedy, be it judicial or administrative. In accordance with the Emergency Decree Law No 685, issued on 23 January 2017, the Inquiry Commission on the State of Emergency Measures has been set up by the Government. However, this Commission aims to prolong the process for the dismissed public officers. The Commission has not been set up to address the problems but to respond to calls from the international mechanisms. It is not a constitutional but an administrative organ. As for the gender issues, the composition of the Commission give an idea about the male dominance because there is no single woman member. The composition of the Commission indicates that women's problems and gender balance issues are ignored by the Government. The Government is not in favour of women representation in decision-making bodies.

Organised Women Continue to be the Rulers' Source of Fear!

As of 31 August 2017, 21049 women public officers were dismissed from the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Parliament), ministries and their offices in other provinces, judicial institutions, universities etc. This is 19% of the total dismissals. The highest numbers of women dismissals are observed in health and education sectors. 42.5% of dismissed women are from the Ministry of Health while it is 31.4% from the Ministry of National Education. 1049 out of 5717 academics are women that respond to 18.7%.ⁱ

Defamation, poverty, and social deprivation rights resulting from dismissals punish women. In the case of mothers, these dismissals affect also children. In parallel with increase in arrest and detention of women, there are too many infants in prisons. As of July 2017, there are 668 infants in prison. Security officers wait in front of delivery rooms of hospitals to arrest women. Even this fact demonstrates the fascism that we face in our country!

The Government dismisses public officers on purpose and the process lacks of transparency that is to say people in question or trade unions have no information about the process. For example, the Government does not share data about trade union affiliation of these public officers. According to data that we managed to obtain, organised women are deliberately targeted.

KESK is the only public officers' confederation which regularly updates the public on its dismissed members. Moreover, our confederation struggles for our members so that they can be reinstated. Solidarity is a significant element of this process. We are doing our best to show solidarity with our members.

Although it is known that our confederation and/or affiliates have no relation with the coup attempt yet have an opposite worldview with the plotters, 28 emergency decree laws issued under the State of Emergency have affected our women members and executives.

In this regard, more than 1000 women members of KESK including Ms. Aysun GEZEN KESK Co-President, Ms. Gülistan ATASOY TEKDEMİR KESK Women's Secretary, Ms. Derya YULCU EGİTİMSEN Women's Secretary, Ms. Selma ATABEYSES Women's Secretary, Ms. Banu AYKAÇBES Women's Secretary, Ms. Semra KIRATLI TÜM BEL SEN Women's Secretary, and Ms. Özden KAYA ESM Women's Secretary were dismissed from their offices. Given the fact that their passports were cancelled, they cannot represent our trade union in international meetings and events.

While 73.9% of the dismissed KESK members are men, 26.1% of these members are women. The following table shows numbers of dismissed women members of KESK from each sector.

**GENDER of the DISMISSED KESK MEMBERS
(As of SEPTEMBER 2017)**

TRADE UNION	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
EĞİTİM SEN	1.118	496	1.614
SES	549	239	788
BES	313	99	412
TÜM BEL-SEN	869	211	1.080
YAPI YOL-SEN	28	4	32
KÜLTÜR SANAT-SEN	8	4	12
BTS	7	--	7
HABER SEN	13	2	15
ESM	21	10	31
TARIM ORKAM SEN	36	5	41
DİVES	67	--	67
KESK (Total)	3.030	1.069	4.099

The State of Emergency and Emergency Decree Laws Have Deepened Gender Inequality!

Dismissals took women public officers away from the professional life that has an emancipatory impact on them. **Women who lost their economic freedom and autonomy were subjected to a higher level of pressure from husband, family and society.** As a result of these problems, women are taking care of children and/or elderly and sick people at home, lose their social security, cannot be employed by private firms resulting from the defamation policies though there is no legal problem in this regard. Given the social, physical, psychological traumas trigger heart attack or brain hemorrhage, and may lead to serious problems including suicide cases.

Emergency Decree Laws destructs our health and life because there are 52 suicide cases in this period. Similarly, Ms. Zeynep Binen-a pregnant woman and SES member- had a brain hemorrhage and lost her life.

Ms. Ayse Celik, who is known as “Ayse the teacher” by the public and a member of EGİTİM SEN in Diyarbakır, was subjected to lynch and sentenced to 1 year and 3 months’ imprisonment. She was sentenced just because she called in to Beyaz Show, a talk show and said “**Don’t Let Children Die.**”

Ms. Nuriye Gülmen, a dismissed academic and EGİTİM SEN member, initiated a protest (together with Mr. Semih Ozakca) went on hunger strike in Ankara. She was arrested and beaten by security officers too many times and detained by the court. Her detention is not a judicial but a political decision. She was taken to Ankara Numune Hospital though she did not want to be transferred there. In spite of the fact that ECtHR issued a medical report, which says “she cannot stay alone”, authorities did not allow even one family member to take care of her. Ms. Gülmen is in pre-trial detention.

KESK does not give up its struggle for labour, democracy and peace. On the contrary, we carry out our activities to struggle against the Government’s social and economic policies though there is an intense attack and discriminatory policies from its side. There are administrative and/or judicial investigations, mobbing, discrimination against our members and executives. Furthermore, when our members visit workplaces and try to distribute trade union materials such as leaflets, brochures, public institutions’ managers try to prevent our colleagues. It is a *de facto* prevention of freedom of association and trade union activities since there is no legal problem. All these unjust and repressive policies affect particularly our women members and executives. Suspension, dismissals, arrest and detention of our members lead to defamation of them. In fact, they become a specific target of these policies because organised women struggle is considered a problem for authorities. 6 Women members, including Ms. Ebru YİGİT EGİTİM SEN Legal Affairs Secretary, were held in prison for months. Their detention was unlawful. Ms. YİGİT was released in the first hearing on 11 October 2017. These arrests and detentions aim to criminalise our union activities and to create a certain image about KESK.

Numbers of arrested and detained KESK members constantly change. There are administrative and judicial investigations against women members just because they join trade union activities or have press conferences on 8 March or 25 November occasions.

The displacement of public officers (or “exile”) that was in force in the 1990s yet this practice has been reactivated in this period. Right before the fall semester began, more than 1000 EGİTİM SEN were displaced from their schools. They were transferred to schools in remote cities. They had to live away from their families and children. These women members were subjected to racist, sexist discrimination and have become targets of attacks. EGİTİM SEN struggles for an education model based on scientific principles, is secular and in mother

tongue. The displacement of these members and change in curriculum affect particularly women and girls. There is an attempt to institutionalise an education model that is monist, conservative, and sexist. These repressive policies aim to facilitate this process.

More legal regulations, which target women's rights, were made by authorities under the State of Emergency. No trade unions or women's organisations were consulted by authorities for these legal regulations. There is an attempt to destroy women's rights in this period. Recently, a new law that authorises religious officers to perform religious ceremony has come into force. There was no consultation process for this law. The law on religious officers' mandate threatens secular life style and may encourage polygamy. Moreover, there is an increase in religious aspects in public space. Another legal regulation has introduced mediation system in regard to divorce cases though it is contrary to Istanbul Convention. The legal regulation in question limits legal remedies for women who want to divorce and may result in a higher level of violence against women.

In conclusion;

The State of Emergency and Emergency Decree Laws aim to silence and destroy oppositional forces, which are considered barriers to this one-man regime (that authorities attempt to build). In fact, the State of Emergency and Emergency Decree Laws have become weapons against women. **In addition to these attacks, which target political, economic and social rights of women as well as organised structure of these women, repressive sexist policies isolate women from social life and force them to obey.** There is a repressive and revenge mentality in regard to organised women struggle and their transformative power.

ⁱ<http://www.ihop.org.tr/2017/09/18/OHAL-guncellenmis-durum-raporu>