

公益社団法人 日本外国特派員協会

## The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan

100-0005 Japan, Tokyo-to, Chiyoda-ku, Marunouchi, 3-2-3, Marunouchi Nijubashi Building 5F

<https://www.fccj.or.jp> E-mail: [front@fccj.or.jp](mailto:front@fccj.or.jp) Tel:+81-3-3211-3161 Fax:+81-3-3201-0677

### FCCJ Statement on Turkish Journalists Nevşin Mengü and Özlem Gürses

Nevşin Mengü and Özlem Gürses,

The FCCJ is concerned by the detentions, threats of prison terms and other harassment directed at two prominent female reporters in Turkey.

Nevşin Mengü faces prison on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda after interviewing a representative of a group that the Turkish government has designated a terrorist organization. She was detained on December 14 after publishing the interview on her YouTube channel with Salih Müslim, an executive with the Democratic Union Party (PYD), a Syrian Kurdish body. Mengü was released the same day but the authorities seek to prosecute her and have banned her from leaving the country.

PYD is the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, both of which are designated as terrorist organizations by Turkey. The United States has also designated PKK as a terrorist group, although it considers PYD a key player in the future of Syria.

<https://freeturkeyjournalists.ipi.media/turkey-journalist-nevsin-mengu-faces-judicial-harassment-and-coordinated-online-smear-campaign-over-interview/>

According to the Stockholm Center for Freedom, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office claims Mengü violated anti-terror laws by "disseminating propaganda for a terrorist organization through media." On December 26, Turkish prosecutors delivered an indictment seeking up to 7.5 years in prison for Mengü.

<https://stockholmcf.org/journalist-nevsin-mengu-faces-more-than-7-years-in-prison-over-interview-with-kurdish-leader/>

She has since taken down the interview from her YouTube channel though she insists it was a work of journalism in the public interest.

Mengü is a prominent independent Turkish journalist and former CNN Turk broadcaster with more than 770,000 YouTube followers. She has reported extensively on the Middle East and recently traveled to Syria to cover the aftermath of Bashar Al-Assad regime's fall.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XItjz3u0B1Q>

On the same week that Mengü was arrested, Özlem Gürses, another prominent female journalist was also detained. Gürses is charged with equating the Turkish Army with ISIS during a live broadcast, despite having admitted just a few seconds later that it was a slip of tongue and immediately apologizing for it. She is now under house arrest awaiting trial.

<https://www.duvarenglish.com/turkish-journalist-detained-for-criticizing-turkish-armys-actions-in-syria-news-65416>

Both Mengü and Gürses have more than 40 years of journalism experience between them and are known to adhere to the highest journalistic standards and professional integrity. Since their arrest, an online campaign to harass and discredit them has started.

FCCJ joins the International Press Institute (IPI), Women In Journalism and other organizations in urging the Turkish government to lift all charges against the women and help end the harassment of Turkish female journalists. We further urge the government to protect freedoms for all media workers.

The Freedom of the Press Committee