



**Convention against Torture
and Other Cruel, Inhuman
or Degrading Treatment
or Punishment**

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Committee against Torture

**Information received from Türkiye on follow-up to the
concluding observations on its fifth periodic report***

Addendum

[Date received: 25 July 2025]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. The Committee Against Torture (the Committee) requested Türkiye to provide, by 26 July 2025, follow-up information in response to the Committee's concluding observations relating to:
 - Aggravated life imprisonment and the facilitation of contact between prisoners in İmralı Prison with their families and legal representatives;
 - Legislation brought into force during the State of Emergency (SoE) affecting the enjoyment of fundamental legal safeguards; and
 - Efforts to prevent and prosecute gender-based violence, as contained in paragraphs 17, 29 and 33 of the Committee's concluding observations (CAT/C/TUR/CO/5).
2. The Committee requested also information about the plans for implementing, within the coming reporting period, the Committee's remaining concluding observations.
3. The response of Türkiye is set out below.

II. Follow-up information to paragraphs 17, 29 and 33 on the concluding observations(CAT/C/TUR/CO/5)

A. Information relating to paragraph 17

4. In the Turkish legislation, the scope of the offences requiring aggravated life imprisonment is very narrow, and aggravated life imprisonment is applicable only for the most serious offences such as genocide, crimes against humanity, intentional killing with certain aggravating elements, torture resulting in death, sexual assault resulting in death, destruction of the unity and integrity of the state, attempting to overthrow the government, parliament or the constitutional order, armed rebellion against the government, military or political espionage with certain aggravating elements.
5. Furthermore, even if an offence requires aggravated life imprisonment according to the law, the trial court is able to reduce the sentence and, thus, not to impose a sentence of aggravated life imprisonment, depending on the circumstances of each case and the existence of certain legal requirements such as mitigating circumstances and the good conduct of the accused during trial.
6. Moreover, conditional release is in principle possible for convicts who are sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment, except for those sentenced for certain offences. Turkish legislation provides a review mechanism for conditional release of life prisoners and Article 47 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC) titled "Aggravated life imprisonment" does not exclude the possibility of early release under probation with a few exceptions set out by the law.
7. According to Article 107 of the Law on Execution of the Penalties (Law No.5275), a convict can be released on probation after having served a certain period of his/her sentence and depending on his/her good conduct during imprisonment. The second paragraph of the said article stipulates that, as a rule, one convicted of aggravated life imprisonment may be entitled to release on probation after spending 30 years in the penal institution.
8. The scope of convictions of aggravated life imprisonment excluded from the review mechanism for conditional release is very limited. According to Article 107/16 of Law No.5275, only those sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment for having committed one of the crimes stipulated in subchapters 4, 5 and 6 of the 4th chapter of the 2nd part of the TPC (crimes against state security, constitutional order and national defence) through a terrorist organisation are not eligible for the review mechanism for conditional release.
9. Developing special prison regimes based on the severity of the crime committed and creating different security categories with regard to penitentiary institutions based on the dangerousness of the convict do not contradict with the principles of human rights law, as

also confirmed by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). The ECtHR has held in its case-law that public-order considerations may lead the State to introduce high-security prison regimes for particular categories of detainees and, in many State Parties to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), more stringent security rules apply to dangerous detainees. The ECtHR concludes that it cannot be said that detention in a high-security prison facility, be it on remand or following a criminal conviction, in itself raises an issue under Article 3 of the ECHR. (*Piechowicz v. Poland*, A. no: 20071/07, 17/04/2012, par. 161).

10. According to Article 25(1)(f) of Law No.5275, convicts who are sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment can be visited by family members and their custodians at intervals of fifteen days for no more than one hour per visit. As of 7 June 2025, among the inmates in İmralı Prison;

- Convict Abdullah Öcalan was visited by his lawyer, his custodian, his family members as well as current and former members of Parliament 10 times on 23.10.2024, 28.12.2024, 27.02.2025, 31.03.2025, 03.04.2025, 15.04.2025, 21.04.2025, 25.05.2025, 19.05.2025 and 07.06.2025;
- Convict Veysi Aktaş was visited by his family members twice on 31.03.2025 and 08.06.2025;
- Convict Ömer Hayri Konar was visited by his family members twice on 31.03.2025 and 07.06.2025;
- Convict Hamili Yıldırım was visited by his family members twice on 31.03.2025 and 07.06.2025.

11. All of these visits were in-person contact visits.

B. Information relating to paragraph 29

12. In the face of the multi-faceted and severe terrorist threats faced by the Turkish people and State, the Turkish Government has been rightfully taking the necessary measures to protect its people in line with human rights law. In fact, this is a requirement of the Government's obligations arising not only from national legislation but also from international law to ensure the welfare and peace of the people and the society, to protect the State and its democracy, and to remove any obstacles that limit fundamental rights and freedoms. Türkiye has been carrying out its fight against terrorism in full compliance with the fundamental principles and rules of international law.

13. Türkiye observes that some of the detailed information provided by Türkiye in its State Party reports on the follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations on fourth periodic report (CAT/C/TUR/CO/4/Add.1, CAT/C/TUR/CO/4/Add.2) and under the List of Issues prior to fifth reporting (CAT/C/TUR/5) as well as during the dialogue at the 80th Session (2123rd and 2125th meetings) of the Committee were not reflected in the concluding observations.

14. Furthermore, it is observed that the concluding observations contain unreliable information and comments which are seemingly based on unfounded allegations of unknown origin and discourses of circles affiliated with terrorist organisations, without relying on any concrete evidence or findings.

15. The fact that the Fetullahist Terrorist Organisation (FETO) is mentioned as "the Hizmet/Gülen movement" throughout the concluding observations amounts to deliberately turning a blind eye to the heinous coup attempt perpetrated on 15 July 2016 by FETO against democracy in Türkiye.

16. Türkiye would have expected that, in order to better assess the scope and the necessity of the measures taken in combatting terrorism, in particular pursuant to 15 July 2016, the Committee gave due consideration and acknowledged the severity of the threat posed by terrorism and the need to act against the crimes committed by terrorist organisations.

17. It should also be underlined that the rule of law, democracy and human rights are the fundamental principles of the Republic of Türkiye and all the measures, including those in combating terrorism, are taken accordingly.

18. None of the measures taken even under and in the aftermath of the SoE decriminalizes torture and ill-treatment nor do they provide impunity for possible perpetrators. As required by the “zero tolerance policy against torture”, the judicial and administrative authorities continue to duly examine each and every allegation of torture and ill-treatment, and take the necessary actions in respect of those responsible. Mechanisms for compensating and rehabilitating victims are in place to address pecuniary losses and intangible damages.

19. In the Turkish legal system, domestic remedies, including the individual application to the Constitutional Court, are available to every person who believes that his/her fundamental rights or freedoms have been violated. Under Article 125 of the Turkish Constitution, judicial review is available in relation to all administrative acts. According to Article 40 of the Turkish Constitution, everyone whose rights and freedoms have been violated has the right to request prompt access to the competent authorities, and damages incurred by public officials shall be compensated by the State. According to Articles 141 and 142 of the Code of Criminal Procedure No.5271, those who claim that their deprivation of liberty is illegal or arbitrary, or does not respect the standards of due process, or violates their rights or freedoms, are able to apply for compensation from the State. In addition to the administrative and judicial remedies, individuals can also apply directly to the Human Rights and Equality Institution or the Ombudsman Institution.

20. During the SoE from 21 July 2016 to 19 July 2018, Türkiye acted in full awareness of its obligations under international law and maintained its close cooperation and dialogue with international organisations. While taking measures in order to completely eliminate the threat posed by FETO through its clandestine infiltration into state organs along with its presence in private sector and media, Türkiye paid full respect to the rule of law and observed the principles of necessity and proportionality.

21. Following the conclusion of the SoE, considering the extraordinary and unconventional structure of FETO, a transitional period was needed to ensure that there was no gap in the fight against terrorism and that such efforts could continue with the same determination within the framework of the rule of law. Hence, legislative adjustments were made to ensure that Türkiye would not be subjected to similar threats in the future and to enable effective counter-terrorism efforts in full compliance with the fundamental principles and rules of international law.

22. Legal amendments introduced through Law No.7145 do not aim permanent conversion of the temporary measures taken during the SoE, but rather serve as transitional regulations designed to strengthen the legal framework against terrorism while safeguarding fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by domestic legislation and international law.

23. While containing provisions necessary for investigations, prosecutions, disciplinary and administrative measures to effectively combat terrorist organisations in the ordinary state of affairs and prevent future interventions to legitimate democratic social order, Law No.7145 also includes numerous provisions that protect and expand rights and freedoms, eliminate inconsistencies in practice, and clarify powers that already exist in legislation. For instance;

- In order to eliminate inconsistencies in practice, the existing authority of governors to restrict entry to and exit from certain areas is clearly defined and limited.
- The differences between those reinstated to duty by decisions of the Inquiry Commission on the SoE Measures and those reinstated to duty directly by decree-laws are clarified.
- Amendments to procedural laws have made retrial possible for applications concluded through friendly settlements or unilateral declarations (other than violation judgments rendered by the ECtHR).
- Governors are entitled to extend outdoor assemblies and demonstrations until midnight.

24. The provisions introduced through Law No.7145 have been thoroughly reviewed by the Turkish Constitutional Court. In the Constitutional Court's verdict dated 30 June 2022, the majority of the provisions of Law No.7145 were found to be consistent with the Constitution. Only certain provisions were annulled as being incompatible with the constitutional safeguards for rights and freedoms.

25. It should also be noted that Law No.7145 does not remove individuals' rights to seek legal remedies. On the contrary, recourse to judicial review is still available against all actions and acts of the administration.

C. Information relating to paragraph 33

26. Combating violence against women and protecting victims of violence are a high-priority policy for Türkiye. Offering holistic response with the principle of zero tolerance, Türkiye has achieved an exemplary track with essential amendments in the legal framework, effective action plans and coordinated services.

27. All necessary legal, administrative and institutional measures have been taken to ensure that all violence cases against women are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted. Furthermore, victims are provided with legal assistance, psychosocial support, shelter services and compensation mechanisms.

28. The decision of withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) is not a step back. Türkiye emphasizes that its national legal framework and institutional mechanisms continue to provide robust protection for women against all forms of violence. Law No.6284 on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women, TPC and other related legislation contain comprehensive protective and preventive measures, and are effectively implemented.

29. This legal framework has been further strengthened through the following legal and administrative measures adopted in recent years:

- The offence committed against a spouse/ex-spouse or a woman has been regulated as an aggravated crime.
- The minimum sentences for intentional homicide, intentional injury, torture, torment and threats committed against women were increased.
- The crime of intentional injury against women was included among the offences that can be a ground for a pre-trial detention.
- One-sided acts of persistent stalking were defined as a separate crime, providing increased protection to victims.
- Victim rights were strengthened to protect the rights of those harmed by a crime. An independent unit was established within the Ministry of Justice to provide services in this area.
- Women who are victims of violence are granted, if they so request, free legal aid and assistance of a lawyer appointed by the Bar Association.
- Special investigation bureaus set up to cover cases of domestic violence were expanded.
- All law enforcement officers and other relevant personnel, including judges and prosecutors in charge of examining these crimes, have been given special training.

30. Policy documents which serve as a roadmap for efforts to combat violence against women are regularly prepared and implemented with the participation and contributions of all relevant stakeholders. To date, four national action plans have been prepared since 2007. Provincial actions plans are also developed in order to strengthen local efforts. Moreover, "Annual Activity Plans" are prepared to ensure the effective implementation of the action plans at local and national levels. Drafting process regarding the 5th National Action Plan which will cover the period 2026–2030 is ongoing.

31. Institutional framework has also been further reinforced. Across all 81 provinces, the following are in service:

- 84 Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers (ŞÖNİM),
- 150 women's shelters with a total capacity of 3,683,
- 420 contact points on district basis in order to make services more accessible,
- 242 Bureaus for Investigating Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Crimes within public prosecutors' offices, staffed with specialized prosecutors,
- 21,624 law enforcement personnel in 1,287 Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women Units.

32. Furthermore, "Provincial Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Commissions for Combating Violence Against Women" meet every three months under the chairmanship of the governors and with the participation of public prosecutors, family court judges and high-level representatives of relevant institutions and organisations in the respective province.

33. Persons who are exposed to violence or at risk of it can file their complaints and seek help from police stations, gendarmerie stations, Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, Family Courts, Provincial Directorates of Family and Social Policies, Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres and health institutions. Additionally, "open-door units" where domestic violence complaints can be filed are in service in Governorates and District Governorships.

34. "ALO 183 Anti-Violence Hotline" provides psychological, legal and economic counseling free of charge on a 24/7 basis for women and children. Persons at risk can also benefit from other emergency telephone lines, such as the "Family, Woman, Child and Disabled Persons Social Service Consultancy Hotline" and the "Gelincik Hotline".

35. The "Women Emergency Assistance Notification System" (KADES) application, available in 11 languages, enables women to report incidents of violence directly to law enforcement with a single click. As of May 2025, the application has been downloaded over 8 million times and facilitated more than 1.6 million alerts. Furthermore, in order to raise awareness and popularize the application, over 113.1 million short text messages between October 2022 and October 2024 were sent to cell phone lines used by women.

36. Ensuring that the law enforcement officers can take measures to protect the victims of violence from individuals who have committed or are likely to commit violence, "electronic bracelet" programme has been put into effect with a capacity of one thousand in 2021. Ankle bracelets are actively used to enforce protection orders and prevent perpetrators from approaching victims. The bracelet capacity has now reached 1,500 and currently 1,216 cases are ongoing. As of May 2025, including the 6,008 cases concluded, the total number of cases monitored through the electronic bracelet programme is 7,224.

37. Awareness-raising campaigns and mandatory training programmes for law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges, social workers and medical personnel have been expanded significantly. Since 2007, approximately 4.5 million personnel have been reached through training and seminar activities. Between 2020 and 2025, training has been provided to over 36 million individuals, aiming to combat gender stereotypes and ensure a victim-centered approach.

38. Furthermore, specialized rehabilitation programmes targeting perpetrators are implemented in penitentiary institutions to address underlying behavioral issues and reduce recidivism.

39. Moreover, associations working in the field of women's rights and combatting violence against women, received over 32.8 million Turkish Liras in support for 268 projects between 2014 and 2025, and over 12.6 million Turkish Liras for 35 projects in 2024 alone.

40. As stated previously in paragraph 14, in the Turkish legal system, domestic remedies are available to every person who believe that his/her fundamental rights have been violated. In addition to the administrative and judicial remedies, victims can also apply directly to the Human Rights and Equality Institution or the Ombudsman Institution.

41. Türkiye is determined to continue strengthening its efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

42. Türkiye's periodic reports under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) provide more detailed information on the issue.

III. Plans for implementing the Committee's remaining concluding observations

43. Türkiye continuously reviews its legislation and practice in line with its commitment to international human rights obligations. All reforms are prepared and implemented through extensive consultations held in a spirit of transparency and collaboration with all stakeholders, including civil society representatives, professional organisations, academics, media as well as international organisations. The recommendations of the treaty bodies, including the Committee, are taken as guidelines in a variety of human rights policies and reforms.

44. The Fourth Judicial Reform Strategy covering 2025–2029 was announced on 23 January 2025. It outlines a roadmap to complement previous reforms and to address new needs with a view to ensuring a justice system based on the rule of law and the respect for human rights. It encompasses a series of goals and measures under certain thematic pillars such as "Rule of Law: the independence and impartiality of the judiciary", "Legal Security" and "Effectiveness of the Judiciary". The relevant Turkish authorities are also working on a new Human Rights Action Plan.

45. Türkiye will continue to duly prepare its periodic reports taking into account the points raised in the Committee's concluding observations and provide information in more detail in its replies to the list of issues to be transmitted by the Committee in line with the schedule foreseen in the Committee's concluding observations (CAT/C/TUR/CO/5).
