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*(kindly translated and provided by Barbara Spinelli)*

The 6 of October 2016 the turkish lawyer **Şerife Ceren Uysal** was invited as honour guest in opening day of the Italian National Bar Council Congress held in Rimini.

This is her speech to italian lawyers:

Dear all

I am Şerife Ceren Uysal, I am lawyer in Istanbul and an executive board member of ÇHD; Progressive Lawyer Association.

I would like to thank you in many aspects. First of all I would like to thank you for this invitation. I am really proud of this.

And secondly I would like to thank all the Italian bar associations that showed to us their solidarity and that send delegates to our hearings in Turkey.

I want also to give a special thank to Italian Democratic Lawyers (GD/AED) and italian Criminal Chambers, Cause since years, Italian lawyers had organize the most effective solidarity with us. When we were attacked in Turkey in different times, you made statements, many of our colleagues participated to our trials as observer. Even when we were in Cizre / Diyarbakır and wanted to prepare a report about the districts under the curfew, about the districts which the government attacked with heavy guns, our italian colleagues came with us to there and took all the risk with us... This solidarity has a great meaning for



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us. We feel strong, we sense that we are not alone. But also the state get the same message. And this has a great importance.

I would like to explain you, where I am coming. As you know, now in everywhere Turkey is an issue of discussions because of the coup attempt which had happened at 15th of July. But I would like to start in an early moment.

I am a lawyer since 2007. In this short term, even not 10 years, I was the lawyer of Kurdish lawyers who spent years in jail, just because they were the lawyers of Abdullah Öcalan, who is isolated for years and years in an island and even can not reach very fundamental rights, despite the judgement of ECHR.

In 2011, state made a mass operation against Kurdish lawyers and they arrested 46 of them. A short time later, in 2013 state organized another mass attack this time to my association ÇHD and 9 of my colleagues arrested and stayed in jail more than 1 year.

This year this time they attacked our brother association, Lawyers for Freedom association and they arrested Ramazan and Ayşe. Ramazan and Ayşe were lawyers of all the other lawyers in Turkey who were in jail. So, we have a vicious cycle. Our place in the courtroom is changing everyday. Some times we are lawyers, some times we are defendants.

So, these are the only examples of mass operations against lawyer due to their role in judicial process. But this is not the end of the story. Weeks ago, they arrested the vice president of my association; Münip Ermiş. We organized a campaign in Turkey and also the lawyers all over the Europe, including European Bar Association organized a solidarity campaign. And we could get him back from the states' hand after 7 days.



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As a young lawyer, I had always have the chance to be a part of important cases, thanks to Tayyip Erdoğan. I defended academics, who had signed a declaration against the politics of government in Kurdish area. Who had asked for peace. And cause of this around 2000 academics had accused to make propaganda of PKK.

I had a chance to be a part of the defence team in Soma, where the trial against the company which caused the deaths of 301 miners cause of profit with the cooperation of state. Cause they were sharing the profit.

So Turkey was not a rose garden before the coup attemp. It was a country in every part of it, you had a risk to smell the corruption. But now it is worse than ever.

Everyone is talking about coup attemp. But I would like to tell you about the last election. At 7th of June, we had the last election. For my perspective, the last legitimate election. After this the bombings had started. ISIS bombed a public release which had organized by young people just to carry toys for the children in Kobane. And than ISIS bomb a demonstrations in Ankara, (4 days later, 10th of October will be the anniversary) More than 100 people who were there just for asking peace for Kurdish people had been killed. And then it did not stop. The government and especially president used this as a tool to suppress the society and they just cancelled the elections. Blame the Kurdish people and party and started to attack the Kurdish districts. They destroyed cities. Now we do not have a district which is called Sur or Cizre... They destroyed the cities and with announcing curfew, they even did not let the people to leave the area. They did not give the bodies of the young children to their families.



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So things were not good for the people who are Kurdish, who are leftist, who are even just democrat and supports human rights in Turkey before the coup attempt.

After the coup attempt, the very early next day, state published thousands of names. And know, more than 40.000 people are in jail, including at least 3000 thousand judges and prosecutors. Around 100000 people dismissed from public services including academics who had known as Peace For Academics. So, know the state is not dealing with this FETÖ Gülen organization but they are again attacking and arresting the people who are very well known with their political identities, journalists, academics, lawyers etc... And their other method is cancelling passports. Ramazan, Ayşe, many lawyers who are the lawyers of Öcalan, their passports had cancelled. And we are expecting to hear more very soon.

The situation of lawyers are more difficult then ever. In the past they were directly attacking us and arrested us but know they are preventing our role in judicial process. Also there is no judicial process. But now visiting a client in prison, impossible. Examining evidences in a file, impossible. According to state of emergency, the governmental decree says that a person can stay in police station without accesing lawyer for 5 days. And this detention can be 30 days. Even entering the courthouses is a challenge for us right now.

It is hard to know what will happen next. But they announced that the state of emergency will contunie till 19 January. And Erdoğan also mentioned that even it is illegal, they could reannounce it for 1 year. I would like to underline that, in Turkey right now, lawyers are doing their jobs under the fasizm conditions. And it will be worse day by day.



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So, I really would like to underline that your support, your solidarity is now more important than ever. We need it not just because of lawyer's fundamental rights but also we need it because if lawyers can not do their jobs in Turkey, it means that more children will day under the state bombs in Kurdish area, more young people will be arrested because of their speeches and thoughts and many people will face with torture. So this is not just a fight for the lawyers' rights but this is a fight for democracy, freedom, to the fundemantal human rights of the people who are not supporting AKP, even this is a fight for the right to live.

I again want to thank you for this opportunity. And plese forgive me because of my poor Italian.