

Groupe de l'Alliance progressiste des
Socialistes & Démocrates
au Parlement Européen

Délégation socialiste française

Brussels, Tuesday, April 25th

Dear Nazlı,

You have been in prison for months just for practicing a profession that is essential to democracy: journalism.

First, you were fired in 2013 for calling for the resignation of four Erdoğan ministers accused of corruption. Then, in July 2016, you were arrested and charged with creating links with a terrorist organization. Now, aged 72, you are in Bakırköy prison for women awaiting trial.

You are at the front line to defend freedom and you are paying the price for this in the flesh, in your day-to-day existence. We stand with you because your fight is ours. It is the fight for democracy, the fight for freedom. We stand at your side to confront the "assassins of dawn."

What is happening in your country is a terrible step backwards, a threat to us all. Freedom is not irreversible. In 2016, Turkey was ranked 151st out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index. In the wake of the abortive coup d'état of 15 July 2016, the Erdoğan government placed dozens of journalists in pre-trial detention, including you, Nazlı.

Every authoritarian regime has wanted to silence journalists, poets and writers. They are threatened, beaten or imprisoned because they report violations of the rule of law, because they denounce abuses and everything that runs counter to the people's interest. As you know, some of the finest pages of Turkish literature have been written in a prison cell.

Today, the sinister Erdoğan is no different from the person who imprisoned Nazim Hikmet.

Article 11 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 is our compass. It says: "The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom." But this right is too often flouted in an attempt to monopolize and control the truth.

Délégation Socialiste Française au Parlement européen

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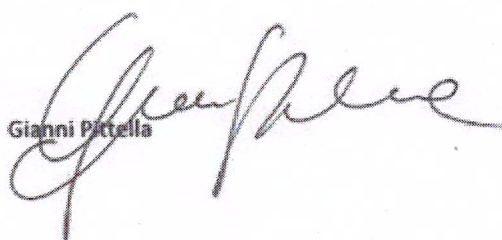
Like you, Nazli, many journalists combat the defeat of justice and fundamental rights. Like you, Nazli, many journalists risk their lives to defend free speech and media freedom so that their fellow citizens can enjoy the fundamental right to freely reported news and information.

We are at your side in this just and necessary fight and we commit ourselves to being worthy of your courage.

In the hope that you may one day be able to read this letter

We think of you and your family,

With our warmest regards


Gianni Pittella

President of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats


Christine Revault d'Allonnes-Bonnefoy
Head of the French Socialist Delegation

Eric Andrieu, Guillaume Balas, Pervenche Berès, Jean-Paul Denanot, Sylvie Guillaume,
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