

ECBA STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF THE TURKISH LAWYER ON HUNGER STRIKE

Today our name is Ebru Timtik. A black day for democracy and justice has dawned. The news of her death, while on hunger strike in a Turkish Prison, has come as a great shock.

Ebru Timtik was a passionate lawyer fighting for justice, democracy and human rights. She was unfairly and unjustifiably detained, and she put herself on hunger strike – at the risk of her life – to obtain a fair trial.

It is now up to the international community to save lawyer Aytaç Ünsal, on hunger strike like Ebru, from a similar tragic end.

The persecuted lawyers in Turkey need our support and mobilization more than ever before. Since the failed coup in 2016, hundreds of judges, prosecutors and lawyers have been arrested, detained and convicted on charges of terrorism without credible evidence.

Lawyers have been identified with and punished for their clients' causes. More than 1,500 lawyers have been prosecuted, hundreds of them in mass trials. Lawyers who are still practising report intimidation and threats.

The rule of law and the independence of the legal profession are essential foundations for political, social and economic stability.

We urge the authorities to protect the independence of lawyers, judges and prosecutors – in legislation and in practice – so that they can perform their professional duties without intimidation and improper interference.

The ECBA and the international legal profession will not cease to support our colleagues working in difficult conditions and will do whatever we can to help restore the rule of justice in Turkey.