

Indictment and Allegations Concerning Ms. Sabahat Tuncel

Ms Sebahat Tuncel was taken into police custody while waiting in front of the Diyarbakır Court House on 4th November 2016 upon the detention of the Peoples' Democratic Party's (HDP) co-chairs and deputies. She was subsequently arrested on 6th November and taken to Silivri High Security Prison in İstanbul.

The prosecutor demands 150 years in prison for Ms Sebahat Tuncel. She is accused of “membership of an “armed terrorist organization” and “making propaganda for an armed terrorist organization”.

The evidence consists of Ms Sebahat Tuncel’s membership in the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), her statements and speeches made in various meetings and the routine press conferences she held before the party assembly meetings of the Democratic Unity Party (DBP).

Whereas the indictment tries to “prove” Ms Sebahat Tuncel’s “membership” in DTK, just like other DBP deputies, she was a natural delegate of the DTK which is a legal democratic institution that holds regular and public general assemblies and declares its delegates.

The indictment demands that Ms Sebahat Tuncel be sentenced separately for each of her 16 speeches in which she allegedly committed the crime of propaganda. The allegation that she has committed this crime 16 times is considered proof of her membership in a terrorist organization. The speeches in question contain criticism of government policies and declarations of her party’s position in relation to the political developments within Turkey.

The indictment contains no evidence other than speeches made within the framework of democratic political activities, which are protected under the right to freedom of expression and political rights and freedoms.

Margaret Owen