



**October 10, 2015**

### **AFSV Statement on the Arrest of Today's Zaman Editor**

The Alliance for Shared Values strongly deplores the Erdogan regime's politically-motivated actions to squash media freedom. These disgraceful actions are the latest attempts by President Erdogan and his oligarchy to curb freedom of press and eliminate checks and balances. Such actions are typical of repressive regimes. They do not befit a country that is a NATO member and a candidate for membership in the European Union. We urge democratic countries and organizations to strongly condemn efforts to silence democratic dissent in preparation for upcoming November elections.

### **Brief Background on Media Atrocities in Turkey**

On Friday, October 9, the editor-in-chief of Turkey's leading English language newspaper *Today's Zaman*, Bülent Keneş was arrested; prison sentences were handed to *Sözcü* columnists Uğur Dündar and Necati Doğru; and an indictment seeking four years jail time is also being sought for Odatv editor-in-chief, Barış Pehlivan.

Earlier this week, chief editor of Zaman daily, Ekrem Dumanli resigned over unlawful pressure from the government. Last week, Bugün columnist Gültekin Avcı's was arrested for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government. In September, the chairman of Platform for Independent Journalism Hasan Cemal was summoned to testify because of one of his columns; and the editor-in-chief of the Cumhuriyet daily noted that his newspaper has also been receiving threats following the physical attacks on the Hürriyet daily's headquarters.

Over the last two years, the Erdogan regime has launched a massive effort to intimidate and legally threaten any media outlet that showed dissent. This has led to the firing of 339 journalists, a crackdown on social media and Internet freedoms, as well as the arrest of 27 journalists, including the CEO of Samanyolu TV, Hidayet Karaca, who remains incarcerated without indictment for more than 260 days. Prominent journalist and author Mehmet Baransu has been kept in solitary confinement in a high security prison since May.

### **About Alliance for Shared Values**

Alliance for Shared Values is a non-profit that serves as a voice for dialogue organizations affiliated with Hizmet in the U.S. (also known as Gulen movement). The Alliance serves as a central source of information on Fethullah Gulen and Hizmet. For more information, please visit [www.afsv.org](http://www.afsv.org).