



## TURKEY: Publisher & Nobel Peace Prize Nominee Ragıp Zarakolu Freed Pending Trial

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The International Publishers Association (IPA) is delighted at the news of the release today, pending trial, of publisher Ragıp Zarakolu, after over 5 months in a high security prison. However the charges are maintained, and the trial against him will continue, a process that can last for months, even years. Three week ago, Istanbul Public Prosecutor Adnan Çimen issued an indictment charging Ragıp Zarakolu with ‘aiding and abetting an illegal organization’. The prosecutor has demanded between 7.5 and 15 years in prison for Ragıp Zarakolu. The Chair of IPA’s Freedom to Publish Committee, Bjorn Smith-Simonsen, said: “While IPA welcomes Ragıp’s release pending trial, it remains concerned that he faces conviction and long imprisonment on charges breaching international standards protecting the right to freedom of expression and therefore urges the Turkish authorities to drop all charges against him as soon as possible”. The first court hearing is due to take place on 2 July 2012. In the meantime, some of the Swedish MPs who nominated Ragıp Zarakolu to the Nobel Peace Prize 2012 will begin a visit to Turkey on 12-15 April 2012. They will seek to meet Nobel Peace Prize Nominee Ragıp Zarakolu. His son Deniz and Büşra Ersanlı remain in jail.

### Background

2012 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee publisher Ragıp Zarakolu was held on pre-trial detention for more than 160 days between 1 November 2011 and 10 April 2012 in a high-security prison, being accused of “**aiding and abetting an illegal organization**” under Turkish anti-terror legislation since 19 March 2012. IPA continues to be seriously concerned that his indictment, alongside several other writers and intellectuals, is in glaring violation of Turkey’s international human rights obligations. IPA therefore continues to seek his acquittal on 2 July 2012.

Ragıp Zarakolu’s lawyers have been denied access to the investigation file and the related documents for months His arrest and pre-trial detention solely rested, so it seemed, on his attendance of two public meetings of a legal organisation, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), which were open to the public and the media. This was unacceptable and seriously questioned the rule of law in Turkey. Ragıp Zarakolu’s lawyers have therefore filed an application to the European Court of Human Rights, accusing Turkey of violating articles 3, 5 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, T. Jagland, recently declared that 1,000 of the pending cases before the European Court of Human Rights concern

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freedom of expression in Turkey. Turkey is actually, year after year, the country which gets the highest number of convictions by the European Court on Human Rights, ahead of Russia. All this is incompatible with the values of a free and democratic society.

For more information, please visit: [www.freedomforragip.wordpress.com](http://www.freedomforragip.wordpress.com)

### **More about IPA:**

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is the global non-governmental organisation representing all aspects of book and journal publishing worldwide. Established in 1896, IPA's mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness for publishing as a force for cultural and political advancement worldwide. IPA is an industry association with a human rights mandate. IPA currently has 65 member associations in 53 countries.

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