

## Turkish Publishers Association Call for For Action on Human Rights and Freedoms in Turkey

1 June 2013, Istanbul

On the fourth day (31 May) of the protest at Taksim, Gezi Park against the cutting of trees and the construction of a shopping mall on the park area, police have fired tear gas and water cannons at protesters. After police attack and several serious injuries because of gas bombs directly targeting people, the protest has widened into a broader demonstration and thousands of people arrived at Taksim area and at the squares in various other cities. Police attacked to thousands whole day and night. The protests and police intervention with excessive gas and water continues during the second day at the related demonstrations in other cities although it stopped this afternoon in police left Taksim Square for now. More than hundreds of people are reported under custody and their condition needs to be concerned.

Police was observed to be throwing gas bombs not to the air as supposed but directly upon the people's bodies, even to their heads. Among the injured first day were two journalists Ahmet Şık, Osman Orsal and deputy Sirri Sureyya Onder, Onder was hospitalized. Gas bombs were also thrown from above by helicopters. There are currently many injured people, one is serious.

European Union and USA Department of State made statements on the issue expressing their worries about the use of excessive force. These statements reminded that the freedom of assembly and association is among one of the fundamental human rights, defined in the human rights instruments to which Turkey is party and Turkey has to assure this freedom to the citizens.

Freedom of assembly as defined in Universal Declaration of Human Rights and European Convention on Human Rights includes the freedom to gather and collectively express and promote common ideas and interests. 34<sup>th</sup> article of our Constitution protects the right to organize peaceful and unarmed meetings and demonstrations without permission.

Police abused the right of assembly and freedom of expression by using excessive gas and water at the peaceful protests in Taksim and in other cities. Turkish Publishers Association condemn this abuse by state and call the authorities to end the use of force. We call the organizations concerning freedom of thought and expression to inform the global audience around the world about the human rights abuses during these events in Turkey and our reaction.

Turkish Publishers Association