

**Delegation of the European Union
to the Republic of Turkey**
Mr Béla Szombati
Chargé d' Affaires
Uğur Mumcu Cad. No:88, Kat: 4,
Gaziosmanpaşa 06700 Ankara
Turkey

Brussels, 8 May 2015

**Re: Request to send an observer from the EU at the hearing of 13-14 May 2015 regarding the
"Association of Progressive Jurists" case**

Dear Mr Szombati,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), which, through the national Bars and Law Societies of the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area, represents more than 1 million European lawyers. The CCBE places great emphasis on respect for human rights and the rule of law. We are particularly concerned by the situation of human rights defenders in the world.

The CCBE would like to express its concerns regarding the situation of 22 human rights lawyers who are members of the 'Association of Progressive Jurists' (Cagdas Hukukcular Dernegi, 'CDH'). These lawyers, well known for their professional activities in the field of human rights, were arrested as part of simultaneous raids carried out in several Turkish cities on 18 January 2013. The raids were conducted under Turkish anti-terrorism laws and targeted alleged members of the armed 'Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front' (DHKP/C), which is listed as a terrorist group in Turkey. The arrested lawyers were accused of 'transferring instructions from organization leaders in prison to militants'. After having spent 14 months in detention these lawyers were listed for trial on 11 and 12 November 2014 before the 18th Penal Court in Istanbul. However the hearing was postponed.

We understand that the hearing will be held on 13 and 14 May 2015, and we respectfully urge the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Turkey to send an observer to this hearing.

For your full information, please find attached the previous letters sent by the CCBE to the Turkish authorities. These letters have not received any response so far.

The CCBE remains at your disposal should you have any query.

I look forward to hearing from you urgently.

Yours sincerely,



Maria SŁAZAK
President