



January 26, 2012

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
Office of the Prime Minister
Vekaletler Caddesi Başbakanlık Merkez Bina
P.K. 06573
Kızılay, Ankara
Turkey

Via email to: bimer@basbakanlik.gov.tr

Re: Professor Halil Kemal Gürüz

Your Excellency:

I write on behalf of the American Chemical Society (ACS) with regard to Professor Halil Kemal Gürüz, a retired chemical engineer and former president of the Turkish Council of Higher Education and the Turkish Scientific and Technical Research Council.

ACS, with more than 164,000 members, is the world's largest scientific society, and aims to "advance the broader chemistry enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people." In this spirit, ACS has worked for over two decades to advocate for the protection of the rights of chemical scientists and practitioners and leverage its unique position in the global chemistry community to address issues of both scientific freedom and human rights worldwide.

Our information on the case indicates that Professor Gürüz was arrested at his home in Ankara on January 7, 2009 for alleged criminal activities and ties to a terrorist organization. After interrogation, on January 11, 2009 he was released on bail, and his trial began on September, 2009.

We are concerned that legal proceedings in the case of Professor Gürüz have lasted three years and may continue for an extended period owing to the Istanbul 13th High Court's decision to merge two indictments against him.

We respectfully urge you to closely examine Professor Gürüz's case to ensure that he is given the opportunity to defend himself against the charges he faces in a manner consistent with Article 19 of the Turkish Constitution, which states that "persons deprived of their liberty under any circumstances are entitled to apply to the appropriate judicial authority for speedy conclusion of proceedings regarding their situation."

**American Chemical Society
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We also ask that his rights and treatment by Turkish authorities are addressed under internationally recognized standards in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights, to which the Republic of Turkey is party.

As we continue to monitor Professor Gürüz's case and welfare, we are grateful for your close attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Bassam Z. Shakhashiri, Ph.D.
President
American Chemical Society

cc:

The Honorable Hillary R. Clinton
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
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