

To : **INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS (UIA)**
uia@uia-architectes.org

Subject : Chamber of Architects of Turkey (CAT) Call for Solidarity

Dear José Luis Cortés,
President of UIA

With our recent previous correspondences, we have shared with you Taksim Gezi Park Lawsuit ruling; sentencing M.Arch. Mücella Yapıcı Executive Board Member of Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (UCTEA), Can Atalay Attorney of Chamber of Architects of Turkey (CAT) and Tayfun Kahraman Former President of Chamber of Urban Planners İstanbul Branch to prison for 18 years.

We are thankful for the support CAT has received throughout the course of governmental operations and political oppression.

New legal processes and lawsuits against the executives of the Chamber then followed the ruling of Gezi; and I am writing to inform you about the lawsuits and legal process carried out against Ankara Branch of Chamber of Architects of Turkey.

The Executive Board Members of the Chamber of Architects of Turkey Ankara Branch, carrying out their duties as representatives of professional organization, opposing the construction works enforced against masterplans of the city and court judgements, have been subjected to political pressure and are being judged by false charges and lawsuits.

CAT Ankara Branch carries out numerous legal processes regarding the city, Ankara the capital of Turkish Republic, and urban environment within the extension of its territory. There prominent lawsuits and legal struggle can be briefed as:

- The construction works in Atatürk Forest Farm, including Presidential Palace enforced against masterplans of the city and court judgements. Atatürk Forest Farm is a Category 1 Nature Reserve, bequeathed and entrusted by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk to the public.
- Unauthorized demolition of İller Bank Building that was built in 1933, a registered cultural heritage and an eminent symbol of modern architecture in the history of capital.
- Unlawful construction of TOGO Buildings, construction of one hundred thousand square meters of structure not permitted according to masterplans of the city.

As a consequence of the political pressure and supremacy of the government, there have been false charges, impeachment cases and expulsion decisions about Executive Board Members of the CAT Ankara Branch;

- President of Executive Board, Tezcan Karakuş Candan has been impeached and expelled from her duty as a public officer in Çankaya Municipality,
- Member of Executive Board, Ali Atakan has been displaced to city of Diyarbakır and his contract has been terminated,
- Member of Executive Board, Muteber Osmanpaşaoğlu has been suspended from her legal public expert duty

Moreover, CAT Ankara Branch has been giving Press Awards since 2016 in memory of Restoration and Conservation Expert Architect Emre Madran. The awards are given to press members and reporters who research and report in the fields of urban planning and architecture, conservation of natural and cultural heritage; sharing the professional and legal processes of the Chamber. In 2021 the awards have been given to 27 journalists; one focusing on destruction of natural environment, mining and hydroelectric power plants.


Following the awards given in 2021; all Members of Executive Board; Tezcan Karakuş Candan, Ünal Kara, Nihal Evirgen, Muteber Osmanpaşaoğlu, Tuğba Arslan, Ece Yoltay and Özgür Bayramoğlu have been accused of terrorist organization propaganda. It is expected that the ruling will be announced at the appeal of lawsuit on 13 January 2023.

Non-governmental organizations, unions, professional organizations, European Union Political Commissionaire and representatives of foreign Embassies are following the case.

Executive Board of Chamber of Architects of Turkey Ankara Branch have carried out their duties as representatives of professional organizations; opposing the construction works in enforced against masterplans of the city and court judgements, fighting for healthy living environment, planning and democracy to fulfill the responsibilities required by the profession.

We thank you for maintaining and strengthening all possible support and connection and ask for your solidarity once again regarding this lawsuit.

Yours faithfully,


Eyüp MUHCU
President
Chamber of Architects of Turkey (CAT)