

BİA MEDIA MONITORING 2008 / ANNUAL REPORT

This report was published in Turkish on 16 March 2009.

According to the 2008 annual report published by the BİA Media Monitoring Desk, a total of 435 people were tried for their thoughts last year.

The report lists the trials and struggles of a total of 835 people. Violations of the freedom of expression are presented under seven headings: Attacks and Threats, Detentions and Arrests, Trials and Attempts, Corrections and Seeking Justice, European Court of Human Rights, Reactions to censorship, and Punishments by RTÜK.

Attacks and Threats

On 29 December, it emerged that the Trabzon Chief Public Prosecution had prepared an indictment on six gendarmerie officers accused of negligence in not preventing the murder of Hrant Dink. Following the statements of gendarmerie petty officer Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin, both of whom are on trial at the Trabzon 2nd Criminal Court of Peace, Colonel Ali Öz, then Trabzon province commander, captain Metin Yıldız and four other gendarmerie officers under his command, Önder Aras, Hüseyin Yılmaz, Hacı Ömer Ünalı and Gazi Güney, are to be tried for "neglecting their duty", with up to 2 years imprisonment. It is expected that the case of the other two gendarmerie officers will be merged with this case. Şimşek and Şahin are currently being tried without detention, and the next hearing of their case was to be on 4 February 2009.

The 9th Criminal Department of the Supreme Court of Appeals unanimously overturned the decree of Ankara's 11th Heavy Penal Court on the attacks on the State Council and the Cumhuriyet newspaper. Accused were Alparslan Arslan and eight other defendants. The Supreme Court said in its decision that because defendants were said to be linked to the Ergenekon organisation, the cases should be merged and reconsidered by the Istanbul 13th Heavy Penal Court which is hearing the Ergenekon trial.

Kaan Gerçek, who is said to have gone around Istanbul with Ogün Samast, the defendant accused of shooting journalist Hrant Dink, prior to the murder, has retracted his statements made to the police and says that he does not remember anything. At the hearing on 13 October, the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court decided to demand that statements be taken from witnesses Ergun Çağatay and Kaan Gerçek, both not in Istanbul. Gerçek, who was doing his military service in Afyonkarahisar, made a statement in the presence of three lawyers of the Dink family. He had previously told the police and the prosecution "Ogün told me that he had killed someone called Hrant Dink. He showed me his gun and a photograph." Gerçek now denies this statement and says that he cannot remember anything. Lawyer Belen says that they will file a complaint about the witness.

The broadcasts of local Hizmet TV, Hizmet Radio and Melodi FM in Ünye were suddenly cut off in the night of 11 November. A preliminary investigation showed that the plugs of the receivers had been pulled, thus interrupting the broadcasts. At around 11pm, the problem was

fixed and broadcasts continued. However, the problem was repeated in the morning. According to eye witnesses, municipal personnel was in the cabin of the receivers at around 7.30 pm. Because the media organs had broadcast a news item saying 'The municipality is dumping rubbish at the riverside', sabotage is considered a distinct possibility. Ünye mayor Ahmet Arpacıoğlu is claiming that the broadcasts were stopped because they were affecting the municipal radio system, but that he hoped the problem would be solved soon.

Following a letter that widow Rakel Dink sent to PM Erdoğan in April 2007, the Prime Ministerial Investigation Committee started an investigation. It has now completed its report. The report says that although there was no intelligence on a planned attack on Dink, the gendarmerie and police did not take the necessary precautions. It also demands a new investigation into those who neglected to do their duty. The committee prepared a 200-page report and filled 27 files. As part of the investigation, the committee also spoke to suspects Erhan Tuncel, Yasin Hayal, Ogün Samast and Tuncel's flatmate Tuncay Uzundal. The committee came to the conclusion that if a prior bombing of a McDonald's in Trabzon had been solved, the murder would have been prevented.

On 12 November, the International Press Institute (IPI) started a "Denied Justice Campaign" to draw attention to unsolved killings and imprisonment of journalists around the world. Among the journalists listed was Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, a Cumhuriyet newspaper journalist who was killed in a bomb attack on 21 October 1999 in Ankara. Necdet Yüksel, who is said to have had connections to the "Tevhid" organisation, confessed in detention to taking part in the bombing of the journalist, who was known for his research on Islamic groups. IPI also noted that Yüksel claimed that Iranian diplomats had been involved in the murder.

Hayat TV cameraman Servet Mehrekula was attacked by private security personnel when he was filming the strike of Ekspres Kargo workers in Yenibosna who had not been paid for five months. He was beaten, and the attackers confiscated his recordings. They also attacked driver Enver Yalçın. Hayat TV announced that they would file a complaint.

Deniz Tuna, lawyer for the weekly Turkish-Armenian Agos newspaper, complained that the prosecution was not acting effectively to deter the emails containing death threats, insults and racist comments. Following the murder of the newspaper's editor-in-chief Hrant Dink on 19 January 2007, the newspaper has filed 19 complaints with the prosecution in Şişli, Istanbul, but no cases have been opened yet. In addition, so Tuna, the prosecution was not approaching the emails as a racist crime. So far, two people have been punished with imprisonment for sending threats to Agos: Zafer Filiz received a 3-year sentence by the Şişli 9th Criminal Court for sending a racist and threatening message to the newspaper twelve days after Dink's murder. 19-year-old Rıdvan Doğan received a 2-year sentence by the same court for sending a threatening message after the murder.

Yasin Hayal, who is on trial in the Dink murder case as an instigator to the murder, is also being tried in the case concerning the bombing of a McDonald's in Trabzon. The Trabzon 1st Heavy Penal Court has reopened the case on the bombing, in which 6 people were injured. Hayal had been sentenced to six years eight months imprisonment on 17 April 2006, but he had been released 11 months later. Following the murder of Hrant Dink on 19 January 2007, he was again arrested. The next hearing is to be on 15 January 2009.

After some journalists covering the visit of the Prime Minister to Hakkari, southeastern Turkey, were attacked with stones, their colleagues protested during the parliamentary group meeting of the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party. When party leader Ahmet Türk was speaking on 4 November, some of them left the room. Türk noticed this and said that his party had always supported press freedom and condemned all attacks on the press, including physical attacks. The G-9 Journalists' Organisations Platform wrote in protest at the attacks on TV reporters' vehicles in Hakkari and Yüksekova on 2 November. The Press Institute Association and the national committee of the IPI also condemned the event as an attack "not only on those journalists present there but on the freedom of the press." The Dicle News Agency (DİHA) said that those journalists protesting were those who followed the PM around and did not normally cover DTP events, thus suggesting that the protest was organised by the Prime Ministerial press centre.

The Press Institute Association and the Turkish Association of Photo Reporters (FMD) condemned the attack of Hürriyet newspaper photo reporter Selçuk Şenyüz, who was attacked by hotel security personnel when he was on duty reporting on the wedding ceremony of the son of State Minister Murat Başesgioğlu at the Sheraton Hotel. The reporter was taken to hospital and underwent a five-hour operation. It will take six months for him to recover completely. The IPI national committee said that using violence to obstruct the media was a violation of the people's freedom to be informed. The FMD called for an unbiased investigation by the hotel management, as well as the prosecution of those responsible.

On 23 October, the car of Haber 73 newspaper editor-in-chief Halil Çoşkun was found burnt out, parked next to Silopi State Hospital. The arson happened a day after demonstrations took place.

Osman Hayal, brother of murder suspect Yasin Hayal, whose denial of being in Istanbul on the day of Hrant Dink's murder has been disproven by evidence, is now on trial for taking part in murder and membership in a terrorist organisation. A secret witness had identified Hayal as the person next to hitman suspect Ogün Samast during the time of the murder. Osman Hayal is thus the 20th person on trial at the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court.

Vedat Yıldız, reporter for the Dicle news agency (DİHA), has filed a complaint after becoming the victim of police violence when observing a protest in the İdil district of Şırnak on 21 October. DİHA announced that another of their reporters, Murat Kolca, who was reporting on events in Adana was targeted by a tear gas bomb in the Toroslar district on the same day. Mardin reporter Haşim Abak has claimed that he was threatened by police in the Kızıltepe district on 20 October. On the same day, Ercan Öksüz, a reporter for the agency in Van who was reporting on a rally in the city demanding a democratic solution to the Kurdish issue, was attacked by the riot police.

The Trabzon Criminal Court decreed that two gendarmerie officers on trial for negligence in not preventing the murder of journalist Hrant Dink should be tried not at the Heavy Penal Court but at the Criminal Court of Peace from now on (21 October). Dink family lawyer Hakan Bakırcıoğlu said that they were told about the decision by telephone but were given no reason. The Trabzon 2nd Criminal Court of Peace had decreed at a hearing on 26 September 2008 that the trial of Officers Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin was outside of their duty and had decreed lack of jurisdiction.

On 15 October, Chief of Staff İlker Başbuğ targeted the Taraf newspaper (without mentioning it by name) and other media organs reporting on the attack on the Aktütün gendarmerie station in Şemdinli, where 17 soldiers died. He said, "I invite everyone to be careful and stand in the right place". Ahmet Abakay, president of the Contemporary Journalists' Association (ÇGD), replied by saying, "I also call on Başbuğ to be more careful when making such statements. The media is not the whipping boy for the General Staff, the government, or other economic and political powers." Sedat Ergin, editor-in-chief of the Milliyet newspaper said, "This is not a style we are used to. He was aggressive. I do not approve of public officials using such an aggressive style, especially not in public." The Taraf newspaper, which had reported that an internal gendarmerie report said that intelligence on an attack was received prior to the attack, was attacked by Başbuğ, who said, "Legal steps have been taken against those leaking such information and those using it. These are criticisms that are not based on true information and that overstep the mark." Galatasaray University lecturer and journalist Füsün Özbilgen said in reaction that Başbuğ should then disprove the claims by telling the truth, arguing that he could not get rid of the questionmarks hanging over the Aktütün attack in the public mind with such an attitude. Nurettin Öztatar, news editor of the Günlük Evrensel newspaper said that both Başbuğ's comments and the newly-organised weekly information meetings organised by the General Staff were attempts to force the media to tow the line.

On 13 October, the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court rejected the demand for an "uncensored" examination of intelligence reports relating to Erhan Tuncel, on trial as a suspected instigator in the murder of Hrant Dink and also a police informant. The court also rejected the opening of a trial against the Telecommunication Directorate (TİB). The court opposed a new request for the intelligence report, composed by Police Intelligence chief Ramazan Akyürek on Tuncel. 75 pages of the 90-page report have been kept out of court because they are said to contain "state secrets" or details of private lives. Dink family lawyers said that a judge read the report, only found 15 pages relevant to the case and sent the rest of the report back. They demanded a renewed examination of the full report. In the report, which was sent to the court on 22 April, Akyürek said that Tuncel had been hired as a police informant on 17 November 2004 in order to control the activities of Yasin Hayal and the activities of groups going to areas like Chechnia to fight. The report also claimed that Tuncel had been found to be not trustworthy, and that relations had been ended on 23 November 2006. The next hearing of the court on 26 January 2009 will continue with the witness statements of Trabzon intelligence office chief Ercan Demir and Trabzon intelligence branch head Engin Dinç, both of whom were pointed out by Tuncel. The court will also hear the statements of police officers Metin Gündoğdu and Muhittin Zenit again, both of whom had given statements on Tuncel's request before. Joint attorneys had complained that they were not present when these witnesses were interviewed and had asked for renewed statements. The court, which is trying suspected hitman Ogğın Samast, suspected instigators Hayal and Tuncel, as well as five other suspects in detention, has also requested the files on the McDonald's bombing in Trabzon in 2004 and on the two gendarmerie officers tried for negligence at the Trabzon Criminal Court of Peace.

It emerged on 8 October that the Supreme Court of Appeals is demanding that the attack on the State Council, the Ergenekon investigation and the attacks on the Cumhuriyet newspaper be examined as a whole. Chief prosecutor Abdurrahman Yalçınkaya said that the Ankara 11th Heavy Penal Court, which was dealing with the attack on the State Council, had only been able to use documents and information on the Ergenekon investigation and attacks on the newspaper sent by 17 December 2007. The Supreme Court is thus demanding a new court

decree based on an examination of all the documentation that should be sent from Istanbul to Ankara.

On 6 October, it emerged that Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran, former member of the Prime Ministerial Human Rights Consulting Board (BİHDK) had received a new threat by the Turkish Revenge Brigade (TİT) by email. Oran said that he had filed a complaint with the prosecution, but that his previous complaint five months earlier had had no results. Oran had been on trial for the "Minority Rights and Cultural Rights Working Group Report", and was later acquitted. He received a threat by TİT on 30 May. In their second message, those threatening him, also wrote, "You will not gain anything by complaining about us to the state. Look, we are still outside."

On 26th of September, Trabzon's 2nd Criminal Court of Peace sent the file of the two gendarmerie officers who were on trial for neglect of their duties prior to the murder of Hrant Dink to the High Criminal Court by ruling lack of jurisdiction.

Same as the witnesses heard before, Lieutenant Hüsametdin Polat, Branch Director of Trabzon Provincial Gendarmerie's Fight Against Smuggling and Organized Crime Unit, told that accused petty officers Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin had informed their superiors, including Colonel Ali Öz, about the tip for the planning of the assassination of Hrant Dink. Polat told in his statement that Şimşek and Şahin had brought up the information Yasin Hayal's brother in law Coskun İğci had conveyed to them in the daily intelligence meeting held in July 2006.

"Colonel Ali Öz did not show the necessary sensitivity about the intelligence tip regarding Hrant Dink's murder. This was not neglect or ignoring the tip. This did not seem normal to me. I got suspicious. It is not intentional, but I cannot say neglect, either."

Murdered journalist Hrant Dink's family filed a complaint with the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) against the three judges for not doing their duty.

Lawyer Fethiye Çetin accused judges Atilla Sarp, İlhan Hanağası and Sadettin Yaman for "violating the law by making decisions without legal ground" and "restricting the effective right to apply to courts. The lawyers asked for legal and administrative investigation for the three judges. Completing their application on September 25, the lawyers wanted to initiate a legal and administrative investigation against the three judges and inspect their decisions. The application of the lawyers emphasized the fact that the court had ended on June 27 the 1,5 year long investigation by the inspectors of the Ministry of Interior with one paragraph long decision without any legal ground. The investigation was conducted to determine the role of the Istanbul Police Department in the murder of Hrant Dink on January 19, 2007. The Regional Administrative Court refused to grant permission for the investigation of any of the officers, in spite of the information the inspectors were able to uncover against the officers and the conclusion by the experts that they had some responsibility in the matter.

The lawyer emphasized that this decision ended the chance to prosecute Istanbul Police Chief Celalettin Cerrah, Intelligence Branch Director Ahmet İlhan Güler and the eight police officers.

Reporter Turan Aktaş of the daily Taraf newspaper filed a criminal complaint against the police officers who manhandled him during an identity inspection and the Medical Examiner's Officers for submitting a report stating there was no manhandling. The reporter said he had gotten into a discussion about the matter of identity inspection at the Söğütlüçeşme train station with the police officers when he was trying to make a report and after the discussion he was twice manhandled for taking their pictures. The officers, on the other hand, said they manhandled him since he was taking pictures.

After the newspaper of the Doğan Media Group started making news about the Lighthouse (Deniz Feneri) fraud case in Germany and possible connections with the association sharing the same in Turkey and the Justice and Development Party, the Prime Minister attacked the Doğan Media Group, accusing them of shady deals. In return, Doğan accused the Prime Minister of blackmailing them. Assoc. Prof. Aslı Tunç, Head of the Media and Communications Systems Department at Bilgi University said, "The latest polemic between the Prime Minister and a media boss, threatening each other through the media organs, has reminded us one more time how important democracy is."

At the second week of his accusations directed at the President of the Doğan Group Holding Aydın Doğan, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attacked the International Press Institute (IPI) and the World Press Councils Union (WAPC) for criticizing him in the foregoing altercation. The Prime Minister accused the said organs as being under the control of Doğan. Condemning the threats directed at the Doğan Media Group, IPI President David Dudge demanded Erdoğan take back his ultimatum to the group and stop the pressure on the media. WAPC President Oktay Ekşi also reacted to the Prime Minister's remarks. The Turkish Journalists Association (TGÇ), the Contemporary Journalists Association (ÇGD) and the Committee of the Publishing Freedom of the Turkish Writers Union (TYB) protested the Prime Minister As well. Ferai Tınç, President of the Press Institute Association and a columnist for daily Hurriyet, said he could not accept the Prime Minister's attack. President of the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) Gavin O'Reilly and the President of the World Editors Forum Xavier Vidal-Folch expressed great concern in the letter they wrote to the Prime Minister at the attempts to prevent the press freedom.

The headquarters of daily Yeni Şafak was attacked the second time in the last five months. It was concluded by the police that the broken window that was found in the morning of August 31 was broken because of a gunshot from outside. The same building was attacked on July 4, 2001 and May 5, 2008.

In Mustafa Kınalı's report entitled "Two people took Ogün to Hrant", which appeared in the newspaper Hurriyet, Associate Doctor Emin Gürses, who was arrested in connection with the Ergenekon case, tells that there were two individuals with Samast when he went to kill Dink and he learned this from a university student, a woman who witnessed the incident. This explanation, which appears on the 159th page of the 137th folder in the appendices of the Ergenekon indictment, is based on the telephone communication Gürses had with an individual who he called "Paşam". These statements in Gürses' telephone interview appeared in the media: "Now the kid (Ogün Samast) who went to kill Hrant Dink went there with two other individuals. The father of the girl who saw this told us, 'My daughter saw them. They were speaking about the event and my daughter was behind them.' The girl is a first-year student in a university. These men and this kid went and killed Hrant Dink. These men are not

around. These men took this kid to Hrant Dink's door. Their identities are not known." This new evidence confirmed the images that appeared during the Show TV news showing Dink's murderer with two other people.

The internet sites of www.antenna-tr.org , which publishes the news and information about the activities of the Initiative Against the Thought Crime regarding the freedom of expression, and www.ortakpayda.org, which presents the activities for the common ground searches in the society, were hacked on July 24. Hearing that their site was hacked by a group so bold not to hide their identity, Şanar Yurdatapan, the spokesperson for the initiative, called upon the Prime Minister, the Telecommunication Institution, the Minister of the Interior and the Justice and the prosecutors conducting the Ergenekon investigation to do their jobs. Yurdatapan says these individual who describe themselves as "Sabotage TIM" organize through an internet site named www.atabeyler.org. He wants these internet pirates be investigated thoroughly to determine whether or not they were connected with the Ergenekon organization.

Senior Major Ali Oğuz Çağlar, who was on duty at Trabzon at the time of Dink's murder, said petty officers Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin, who are on trial for breach of duty at the 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance, had done their duties. Çağlar confirmed that the intelligence reports about Dink's assassination plans had come up at a meeting with Trabzon gendarmerie officials but was ignored by Colonel Ali Öz. Gendarmerie informant Coşkun İçci, Sergeant Major Hüseyin Yılmaz, Master Sergeant Hacı Ömer Ünalır and accused Şimşek and Şahin, who were heard by the court previously, had given the above statement about Colonel Öz's involvement.

The subcommittee of the Human Rights Investigation Committee of the Turkish Parliament (TBMM) announced its report about Hrant Dink's Murder on July 23. The report stated that the state was at fault in protecting the life of its own citizen. President of the committee and Bursa deputy for the Justice and Development Party (AKP) Mehmet Okutan, who declined to answer the questions of the journalists, said, "We have reached the decision that there was fault, negligence and lack of coordination both in gendarmerie and police organizations."

After going to the European Human Rights Court (ECHR) twice for the Trabzon Gendarmeries and Police officials who did not process the tips regarding Hrant Dink's murder, lawyers of the Dink family are getting ready to go to the ECHR for Celalettin Cerrah as well. Following the preliminary investigation by the inspectors of the Ministry of Interior, Istanbul Regional Administrative Court had decided on June 27 that there would be no investigation against Istanbul Police Chief Celalettin Cerrah and the seven officials. The decision stipulated that Intelligence Branch Director Ahmet İlhan Güler, Intelligence Branch Vice Director Bülent Köksal, Chief of the Office of the Intelligence Branch İbrahim Pala, Section Chief Şevki Eldivan, Desk Chief Volkan Akbulak and police officers Bahadır Tekin and Özcan Özkan had no fault in Dink's murder and therefore there was no need to grant permission for their investigation.

The court was finally able to take Trabzon Provincial Gendarmerie Regiment commander Colonel Ali Öz's statement after one and a half years. Giving his statement at Bursa's 1st Criminal Court of Peace on July 21, Öz argued that Intelligence Office Director Captain Metin Yıldız informed him about Hrant's Dink murder of January 19, 2007 by calling him on his cellular phone during his visit at Zigana Mountain in the Black Sea region of Turkey.

When asked about the statements of Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin that the intelligence reports about Dink's assassination plans had come up at a meeting with Trabzon gendarmerie officials, Öz, who appeared at the court as a witness, said, "This subject did not come up at this meeting. I do not remember it."

Describing Metin Yıldız, Ali Oğuz Çağlar, Hüsamettin Polat, Gazi Günay, Hüseyin Yılmaz and Gökhan Asla as his staff, Öz declined to answer lawyer Cinmen's question if there was an animosity between him and them since he said he did not want to answer. When Dink's lawyers asked if the signature on the Form for Recording and Communicating Information of the Provincial Gendarmerie Command was his, Öz's answer was affirmative. When he was reminded that Yıldız stated for Bolu Criminal Court of Peace on June 9 that he had told him during an intelligence meeting where Okan Şimşek, Veysel Şahin and other commanders were present as well that Hrant Dink was going to be murdered, Öz said that he did not remember if this subject was brought up.

On July 20, Trabzon Governor Nuri Okutan announced that they had reached the decision to launch an investigation about Trabzon's Provincial Gendarmerie Commander Colonel Ali Öz and former Intelligence Branch Director Senior Captain Metin Yıldız for their involvement in Dink's murder. Ergin Cinmen, of the lawyers of the Dink family, demanded the cases in Trabzon-Istanbul must be combined and added that otherwise the justice would not be served in Dink's case. and

Fethiye Çetin, one of the lawyers for the Dink family, said that they were following the news about the inspectors from the media, since they received no notification about it. She told that the report was going to be submitted to Trabzon Governorship's Provincial Administrative Council and they were planning to get involved depending on the decision of the council.

In the sixth hearing on July 7, Istanbul's 14th High Criminal Court, which is trying the Dink murder case, decided to continue keeping the eight accused under arrest. In spite of the constant demands by Dink's lawyers, the court refused to combine the Trabzon Gendarmerie case with the Dink murder case.

Complaining that he became a suspect in the case he had started as a witness, gendarmerie informant Coşkun İğci said that he had done his duty as a citizen and tried to prevent Hayal from carrying out Dink's murder. He further added that once he had realized he could not have prevented him anymore, he had informed the gendarmerie about Hayal's plans. He was also able to delay the murder for one, one a half months up until October 2006 by telling Hayal that he was going to buy a gun. After this, he said, he had never seen Hayal anymore. İğci repeated the same testimony that he had given during the Trabzon trial and said that among the accused, he had only known Ahmet İskender.

When he asked how many times he met with gendarmerie he told that he knew the gendarmerie people with whom he was in touch since 2004 and he met with them five, six times after the intelligence reports about Yasin Hayal.

The court heard the statement of Hakkı Bahadır Cihan, son of Yaşar Cihan, a provincial chairperson of the Great Unity Party (BBP). He told the court that there was no connection between the BBP and the "Alperen Ocakları" (Hero-Dervish Hearths), claiming that Metin

Gündoğdu's statement "our people were going to do the Dink job, they messed it up" was transmitted wrongly. The court heard the testimonies of Ogün Samast's relatives Yaşar Samast and Aslan Samast, and Ahmet Emin Özmete, who saw Ogün Samast running after the murder, Agos employee İnan Murat and Agos advertisement section employee Kristin Dellaloğlu.

Ergin Cinmen, one of the lawyers of the Dink family, argued that the law regarding the prosecution of the state officials and other public officials blocked the investigation and prosecution of those within the state who were responsible for the murder. He said that the said law blocked the three of the four fields of the legal struggles regarding the case. He pointed out to the fact that none of the officials from the Istanbul Police Department whose neglect in the murder had been shown were being prosecuted.

When writer Latife Tekin was speaking at the Karabük Culture Festival she had been invited to, the microphone was switched off. During the event, which took place at the end of June, Tekin was criticising the ruling Justice and Development Party's (AKP) "despicable energy policies." AKP mayor Hüseyin Erer jumped up, saying, "You came here with my money. You cannot talk, you cannot do politics here." The writer replied, "No you didn't give me any money, I paid myself to come here. I am talking. I oppose nuclear power stations and I have the right to say that. If I am making a scene here, have me taken into custody." She said she would not leave the podium. She said, "When I used to come to Karabük, it was different. Now when I come I see that the majority of women is covered...Here and in Turkey, there is an ugly urbanisation which is destroying the environment we live in. But these cities will collapse around us...They came from the bottom and have taken control of the big cities. I don't like those guys...They took the government. The media has gained a lot of power...Because everything is in their control....The people cannot say anything, nor can the poor. As soon as you say something, you get the stick." The Women Writers' Committee of Turkey's PEN and the Contemporary Journalists' Association (ÇGD) spoke out in support of Tekin.

On 10 June, the trial of gendarmerie officers Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin, accused of negligence before the murder of Hrant Dink, continued. The Trabzon 2nd Criminal Court of Peace listened to witnesses gendarmerie sergeant major Hüseyin Yılmaz and sergeant Hacı Ömer Ünalır, attached to the Trabzon province gendarmerie command. Their statements confirm that there was negligence at the top level in the gendarmerie, beginning with gendarmerie commander colonel Ali Öz. Yılmaz stated that when the defendants received intelligence, they started to do some research. He also said that Ünalır spoke with Şimşek and was told "I have spoken with the boss, he will tell you what to do later." Ünalır said in his statement that they had received intelligence six months before the murder, but that he found out that the police had received the information a year before. Later, he was not involved in the case any more. He added, "according to our system, there had to be an organisation for it to count as terrorism. Dink's murder was not terrorism, it was a case for the law and order department."

On 9 July, the court case concerning the photos taken of Ogün Samast, suspected hitman of Hrant Dink, will continue. There were "souvenir" photos with Samast and a flag on which it said "The soil of the fatherland is sacred and cannot be deserted." The Samsun 4th Criminal Court of peace will consider the demands of Dink family lawyers that the court hear not only

the witnesses chosen by the Samsun police but all witnesses on duty. The Samsun prosecution had opened a trial, but not because the officers posed on photos with Samast, but because Samast was taken to the tea room instead of a cell, because permission for taking photos was given and because the photos were leaked to the media. Metin Balta from the Anti-terrorism branch has been accused of abusing his position by being negligent. He faces between six months and two years imprisonment. Police officer Ibrahim Fırat faces up to five years imprisonment for violating the secrecy of the investigation and leaking the photos to the press.

Metin Yıldız, who was Captain in Trabzon at the relevant time, gave a statement on demand of the Trabzon Criminal Court of Peace. He accused Trabzon Gendarmerie Regiment Commander Ali Öz. On 9 June, he told the Bolu Criminal Court of Peace that "we told Ali Öz a year before that Yasin Hayal was making plans." Ergin Cinmen, a joint plaintiff, said that Yıldız stated that he had told Öz about the intelligence in person and told other gendarmerie officers during a meeting.

After his acquittal by the court for the case about the "Minority Report and the Cultural Rights Work Group Report", Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran, a former member of the Human Rights Advisory Board of the Prime Ministry (BIHDK), has been threatened by the Turkish Revenge Brigade (TİT) with an e-mail sent on May 30. Baskın Oran, who filed complaints regarding similar threats previously, told Bianet that since the name of the organization in the e-mail was seen in connection with other incidents, he was planning to file a complaint through his lawyers today (June 4). The message, which was sent from zerkama@hotmail.com, claims that he will be the new target. Several organisations called on the government not to ignore such a threat to human rights activists in a shared statement: the Peace Initiative, Helsinki Citizens' Charter, the Human Rights Studies Association, the Human Rights Association, the Human Rights Agenda Association, MAZLUMDER and the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey.

On 4 June it emerged that there were new recordings on security cameras in the murder of Hrant Dink. Recordings from an bank ATM and from a company's security camera reveal that there was a second person with suspected hitman O.S. During the time of the murder, the person was waiting at the scene of the crime, spoke on the phone and was seen again on cameras on O.S.'s flight path. This person waited in front of Agos newspaper office for a long time and then went into a side street and disappeared in a building site.

When, on 4 May, Vatan newspaper reporter Alper Uruş, photo reporter Ilker Akgüngör and driver Ahmet Şener went to Beykoz, Istanbul, in order to report on two villas said to be owned by the leader of the İsmailağa sect, Mahmut Hoca, they were attacked. After they had taken photos of the villas and were preparing to return, eight people blocked the path of the car. The attackers forced them out of the car, beat up Akgüngör and confiscated the camera and his bag. Following the complaints of the journalists, eleven people were taken into custody but later released. Uruş said that he had made a statement to prosecutor Orhan Korkmaz on 8 May and expected those responsible to be tried.

The Turkish Society of Journalists (TGC) said that columnist Hıncal Uluç had been insulted in a statement by the Fenerbahçe Football club, and that singer İbrahim Tatlıses had also verbally attacked journalists. This, in addition to the attack on the Vatan journalists showed that 3 May, World Press Freedom Day, had turned into a week of attacks on journalists. The Press Institute Association also condemned the attacks.

On 4 May, the building of the Yeni Şafak newspaper in Bayrampaşa, Istanbul, was attacked by armed people at 11.50 pm. The unknown person or persons shot at the building front facing the main road five times. Windows in the building broke. The eight employees working at the time threw themselves to the ground. The police examined security cameras. The newspaper announced that it suspected that the attack was a reaction to recent coverage of illegal gangs. The Press Council called on the civilian authorities and the police to do their duty. The attack was condemned by the Turkish Journalists' Society, the Press Council, the Trade Union of Journalists in Turkey, the Association of Contemporary Journalists and the Reporters' Association. The Foundation of Journalists and Writers, as well as the management of the Hürriyet and Radikal newspapers, called the paper to express their solidarity.

Cumhuriyet photo reporter Ali Deniz Uslu was attacked by police when covering the 1 May protests. His right arm was broken at the elbow. Reporter Esra Açıkgöz from the same newspaper was also attacked. Dozens of journalists were unable to carry out their jobs due to the tear gas bombs and pressurised water cannons used by security forces to prevent workers and protesters from reaching Taksim Square. The newspaper's lawyer Tora Pekin said they would file a complaint. Both journalists had identified themselves and shown their press cards, but police continued to attack them. In Şişli, AA camera man Engin Morgül and Reuters camera man Bülent Usta were affected by the pressurised water, and their cameras broke. The Turkish Society of Journalists (TGC) said that the police used "excessive force". The Trade Union of Turkish Journalists accused the police of using violence "knowingly and willingly."

At the fifth hearing of the Dink murder trial at the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court on 28 April, two police officers who had reported that suspect Yasin Hayal had said "(Writer) Orhan Pamuk should be careful" on the way to court were heard. When Hayal said in court that "I am disgusted by Hrant Dink with hatred", joint attorney Erdal Doğan asked whether Hayal knew Dink before the McDonald's bombing. Hayal said that he did not. Then Doğan asked whether Hayal had been influenced by the visits of retired general Veli Küçük and Levent Temiz, former president of the nationalist "Hearths of Ideal" when Hayal was in prison after the bombing. Hayal panicked at the question and shouted, "You are lying, you are lying." Defendants İrfan Özkan and Numan Şişman, both on trial without detention, said that they saw two 7.65 guns in Erhan Tuncel's house. Coşkun İğci, added to the case as a 19th defendant, was not questioned because he did not have a lawyer.

Hrant Dink'in öldürülmesiyle ilgili davanın sanıklarından Erhan Tuncel, polis Muhittin Zenit'le telefonda BBP lideri Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu'yla davanın bir başka sanığı Yasin Hayal'in durumuyla ilgili görüşeceğini söylüyor. NTV'nin duyurduğu habere göre, Tuncel konuşmada Yazıcıoğlu'ndan "Muhsin Başkan" diye söz ediyor; Zenit'e Yazıcıoğlu'nun Trabzon gezisinin programını bildiriyor. "Uçak 8'e çeyrek kala iniyor. Partide yemekli basın toplantısı, partililerle görüşme, cuma namazı, sonra sanayide esnafla görüşme." Tuncel Yazıcıoğlu'yla Yasin Hayal'in durumunu konuşacaklarını, görüşmeye Hayal'in avukatının katılacağını da anlatıyor: "Yasin konusunda görüşeceğiz. Avukatı da çağıracağız, avukat da gelecek. Yasin'in sonraki ceza olayını mı? Hı hı, tamam görüşürüz." Yazıcıoğlu, Dink'in ölümünden önce Tuncel'le görüştüğü iddialarını yalanladı; Tuncel'i kast ederek "Sanki bizzat görüşmüşüm ve görevlendirmişim gibi bir imaj oluşturulmaya çalışılmaktadır" dedi.

Former Trabzon Gendarmerie Commander Colonel Ali Öz and former Gendarmerie Intelligence Branch Head Captain Metin Yıldız did not answer the questions of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee's Hrant Dink murder Sub-Committee on 24 April. Öz said, "We cannot say anything before making a statement in court. But once we have talked in court, we can give you detailed information. Our respect for parliament made us come."

On 18 April it emerged that the Istanbul Governor's Office's Administrative Board has denied permission for an investigation into Istanbul's Chief of Police Celalettin Cerrah, who has been accused of ignoring the warnings of the Trabzon police prior to Dink's murder and thus of being guilty of negligence. Following the demand of widow Rakel Dink, the board met and decided to allow the questioning of six of the eight police officers in question. The board's decision, signed by Istanbul governor Muammer Güler, allowed for the questioning of intelligence unit head Ahmet İlhan Güler, intelligence unit office head İbrahim Pala, department head İbrahim Şevki Eldivan, desk head Volkan Altunbulak and police officers Bahadır Tekin and Özcan Özkan. Permission for an investigation into Cerrah, as well as intelligence unit vice head Bülent Köksal was denied.

Dink family lawyers have called for a merge of the investigation into 10 soldiers in Trabzon by the Trabzon prosecution (including Colonel Ali Öz), with the main murder trial heard at the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court. The lawyers pointed out that these officers were part of the murder through their negligence and that their falsification of documents made the murder possible. The lawyers have filed their demand with the Istanbul prosecution.

The Human Rights Association (İHD) has demanded that an investigation be started into the listing which the General Staff made of NGOs receiving support from international institutions, arguing that such an involvement by the military in civil life represents a violation of the rule of law and democratic principles. The Taraf newspaper had reported that Marine Infantry General Staff Colonel Dursin Çiçek had prepared a 73-page report and sent it to General Işık Koşaner, then vice-chief of General Staff, in March 2006. The list speaks of institutions "receiving financial help from US and EU projects that want to split up Turkey". bianet was also on the list, as was the Association for the Support and Education of Women Candidates (KADER), Açık Radio, Bilgi University, the History Foundation, and dozens others.

The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TİHV) has condemned the behaviour of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan when he spoke to TİHV board member Sezgin Tanrıkulu in a meeting. Erdoğan said, "you are telling lies, you are not honest". TİHV: "In a democracy, politicians and those with public power need to be open to and tolerate criticism. The way they respond to such criticism is a direct measurement of the culture and level of democracy." Tanrıkulu had replied to the PM, "I don't let anyone question my honesty, you can't insult me." The argument had taken place at the beginning of April, when Tanrıkulu had told the PM that the government would have to take political as well as economic steps in order to solve the Kurdish question. Tanrıkulu said that the PM was "not informed enough" about the right to education in one's mother tongue or was deliberately ignoring demands for the right of Kurds to learn and use their mother tongue.

Following the confession of two gendarmerie officers that there were no preventative measures taken prior to Dink's murder, Trabzon 2nd Criminal Court of Peace judge İzzet Kabal filed a criminal complaint against Trabzon Gendarmerie Commander Colonel Ali Öz and nine other gendarmerie officers. The judge was transferred. In his place, judge Şevki Uluçam was brought in, a judge who released Yasin Hayal, now a defendant in the Dink murder case, after 10 months imprisonment in the McDonald's bombing case.

On 6 April, Hürriyet newspaper journalist Ahmet Hakan wrote in his column that lawyer Kemalettin Gülen threatened him after his March 31 column. He had criticized Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in the column and had written that not even a toy gun was fired when Adnan Menderes, a former Prime Minister, was hung. Gülen is alleged to have threatened Coskun by saying "if the party is closed you will see whether a toy gun or something else will be fired" according to the indictment of the case. Hakan claimed that the lawyer was a close relative of sect leader Fethullah Gülen, a cousin or nephew. Hakan also said that Alparslan Arslan, convicted of attacking the State Council and killing one judge and wounding others, mentioned Kemalettin Gülen several times in his first statement in court. He also claimed that lawyer Gülen called Mustafa Birden, one judge wounded in the attack, at home and swore at him.

The Parliamentary Human Rights Committee's Sub-Committee investigating the murder of Hrant Dink was unable to hear Colonel Öz and four other soldiers on 2 April. The Sub-Committee had written a letter to the Ministry of the Interior on 27 March, inviting gendarmerie officers Hüseyin Yılmaz, Hacı Ömer Ünalır, Cevat Eser, Metin Yılmaz and Ali Öz to a meeting where they would give information.

Fethiye Çetin, joint attorney in the Hrant Dink murder case, told Neşe Düzel in an interview in the Taraf newspaper, "there are many connections between Ergenekon and the murder of Hrant Dink. With the statements of the two gendarmerie officers, we can reach those in the Ergenekon organisation who are still active in the police and gendarmerie wing. This is a great opportunity."

Following a hand grenade attack during the time of the State Council attack, the Cumhuriyet newspaper was attacked with Molotov cocktails around two years later. Around three people ran towards the newspaper office, which is surrounded by a wire fence, on 29 March, at 11.24 pm, and threw Molotov cocktails. A journalist leaving the area by car followed them. Nine people were taken into custody, and four of them arrested. Fatih D., Murat A., Bedirhan Ş. were arrested for endangering general security. Umut E. was taken to the Children's Department and later arrested for membership in a criminal organisation and a deliberate arson attempt. Davut Yıldız and underage C.Y. and O.A. were released to be tried without detention. On 5 and 10 March 2006, attempts had been made to attack the newspaper building with hand grenades, and on 11 March the building was damaged in a renewed hand grenade attack.

Several reporters were attacked by police following the riots after the ban on Newroz celebrations in Hakkari's Yüksekova where one person died. Senar Yıldız (İhlas News Agency, İHA), Hamit Erkut and Erkan Çobanoğlu (Doğan News Agency, DHA), Necip Çapraz (A.A. reporter and license holder of the Yüksekova News newspaper), Şevket Yılmaz (Cihan News Agency, CHA) and Sami Yılmaz (Dicle News Agency, DİHA) were all attacked

by riot police at the protests, where people were being taken into custody. Yıldız was hit on the head with a heavy object and had to have an X-ray of his head and stay in hospital for observation. Çapraz' camera was broken. The Turkish Society of Journalists (TGC) and the South-East Society of Journalists condemned the attacks.

The trial of four people accused of sending Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran email threats started at the Ankara 9th Criminal Court of Peace. Following his complaint, the IP addresses of the senders identified them as Kamil Sağlık, Dursun Kaya (working as a night watchman for the Agricultural Businesses General Directorate (TİGEM)), Figen Arslan, an office worker at the Directorate's Trade Department, and Kezban Kılıç. They all denied the accusations at the first hearing. The trial will continue on 14 May. Another trial, concerned with death threats to Oran sent from an Internet café in Samsun, will continue at the Ankara 4th Criminal Court on 6 June.

On 20 March, gendarmerie officers Okan Şimşek and Veysel Şahin, on trial for negligence at the Trabzon 2nd Criminal Court of Peace in connection with the murder of Hrant Dink, confessed that they told their intelligence chiefs Ali Öz (then Trabzon gendarmerie commander) and Metin Yıldız about information that murder suspect Yasın Hayal had come to Istanbul prior to the murder on a reconnaissance mission. The two defendants said that they found out in July 2006 that Hayal had come to Istanbul and researched the Agos newspaper and Hrant Dink's home. Following the order of Öz, they had prepared a fake document which said that they got this information from informant Coşkun İçci not before but after the murder, on 20 January (one day after the murder in 2007). The court then filed a criminal complaint against Öz and Yıldız, as well as Hüseyin Yılmaz, Ali Oğuz Çağlar, Hüsametdin Polat, Gazi Günay, Gökhan Aslan, Hacı Ömer Ünalır, Uğur Erdoğan and Önder Aras and called them to court. The court also decided to notify the gendarmerie command in order for disciplinary measures to be carried out. The Reporters without Borders organisation called the statements in court "frightening", saying: "If the security forces in Trabzon had acted, the murder of Dink could have been prevented. Those who knew about murder plans and did not do anything to prevent it must be punished in the most severe way." Colonel Ali Öz has been transferred from the Bilecik province gendarmerie command to Bursa.

Behçet Dalmaz of the Dicle News Agency was attacked by security officials when observing the 18 March Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers in Hakkari and becoming embroiled in an argument with the officials over ID card controls. The Van Lake Journalists' Society Hakkari representative Necip Çapraz said, "In Hakkari province, journalists, who are trying to do their duty of informing the public in the most truthful and fastest way, unfortunately often meet with practices they do not deserve."

The Paris Office of Amnesty International organised a conference in memory of murdered journalist Hrant Dink on 17 March. Speakers at the conference, entitled "Turkey: What kind of Freedom of Expression?" were AI Turkey coordinator Claude Edelmann, sociologist and journalist Ali Bayramoğlu and bianet's freedom of expression editor Erol Önderoğlu. Önderoğlu criticised the fact that the murder of Hrant Dink was being dealt with in different courts, making it very difficult for the truth to emerge. Bayramoğlu argued that the murders of Santoro, Dink and the three men in Malatya were attempts at obstructing social dynamism in Turkey. Edelmann said that 254 journalists, writers, publishers, artists and rights activists had been taken to court in 2007 for expressing their opinions. He added that the Gündem

newspaper and several newspapers succeeding it were banned for 1-month periods and faced threats.

The Parliamentary Human Rights Sub-Committee listened to former Trabzon Police Chief Reşat Altay, now Burdur Police Chief in its investigation of the Hrant Dink murder. Altay accused former Trabzon Police Chief Ramazan Akyürek and his team of withholding information from him. He said that it was untrue that the Trabzon police received 17 tip-offs. He added, "I heard about Erhan Tuncel and Yasin Hayal after the murder. Before the murder I did not receive any information." He also claimed that he was not informed about conversations between Tuncel and certain police officers. On 28 February, former Trabzon Intelligence Branch Director Engin Dinç, like the present Police Intelligence Department Head Ramazan Akyürek, accused Istanbul's police chief Celalettin Cerrah. When it emerged that police officer Zenit spoke to Tuncel on the phone after the murder, saying "If he's dead he's dead. It was clear how he would be shot. He wasn't going to run away, but he did", Zenit defended himself by saying, "This is a method. Sometimes we talk like that in order to get more information." The committee also listened to Hüseyin Yavuzdemir, governor of Trabzon at the time.

At the beginning of March, an objection to the Rize Heavy Penal Court's decision not to try seven Trabzon police officers for negligence in connection with the murder of Hrant Dink was rejected. Dink family lawyer Bahri Bayram Belen has announced that they would appeal to the ECHR.

At the fourth hearing of the Dink murder trial at the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court on 25 February, detained suspects Ersin Yolcu, Ahmet Iskender and Salih Hacısalıoğlu, all accused of helping with the murder, were questioned. After suspect Erhan Tuncel shouted at Yolcu, the latter used his right to silence, and answered further questions only with "I don't know, I don't remember." Iskender, who owns a stationary shop, said that suspect Hayal gave a gun to hitman suspect O.S. in his shop, but that he (Iskender) did not know why. Yolcu said he had tried to dissuade O.S. from getting on the bus from Trabzon to Istanbul, and that he had met Hayal, who took O.S. to the bus, later. "Yasin told me that if a phone call with the code 0212 (the European side of Istanbul) came, I should give him my phone. Whenever I gave him my phone he went outside and talked. A few months before the murder we thought of killing (writer) Orhan Pamuk. Together with tea maker Süleyman we dissuaded Yasin (Hayal). I am scared of Yasin, and so is everyone else." When Hayal was asked by the judge whether he knew retired general Veli Küçük, now a detained suspect in the Ergenekon trial, Hayal said he did not. Speaking about Dink's murder, Hayal said, "We did not think it would get so much attention. Because we did not know that it would be as sensational as the murder of (journalist) Uğur Mumcu, we got carried away."

Making a statement on 25 February, AKP MP and President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee Zafer Üskül said that the subcommittee investigating the Dink murder would talk to all the people whose names appeared in the files on the murder but who were not on trial. "The committee is not authorised in a case that is being processed by the judiciary. We are not investigating the judicial process. We are trying to identify whether there are officials who should or should not be put on trial. After listening to these officials, our committee will present a detailed report."

On 22 February, Dink family lawyers sent a petition to the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court, saying that the murder had been planned at the "Alperenler Heath", a nationalist organisation. They cited the fact that suspect Erhan Tuncel had said that he still had the keys for the organisation's place, that he had been photographed with Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, chair of the Great Union Party (BBP) which is supported by these Hearths, that murder suspect Yasin Hayal worked at the Hearth, and that Mustafa Öztürk was responsible at the Hearth.

In the night of 16 February, a memorial to caricaturist Oğuz Aral in Cihangir Park (district of Beyoğlu in Istanbul) was vandalised. The statue of Aral, who had worked for the Penguin satirical magazine, had been placed there two and a half years before, on the first anniversary of his death. It had previously been splashed with liquid gas and set on fire, and its brass letters have been stolen many times. The statue was pulled out of the ground and smashed and has become unusable. Penguin representatives said, "What happened to the statue has made us very pessimistic about what could happen to us. We are very sad." The magazine said that the police were looking for the perpetrator(s).

On 13 February, Reporters without Borders (RSF) published their World Report on 98 countries. Referring to Turkey, the organisation mentioned the murder of Hrant Dink, the controversial Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code and press bans in relation to the Kurdish question. The report emphasised that the judiciary was not investigating the police and gendarmerie officers involved in the Hrant Dink murder and that there was suspicion that evidence had been destroyed.

Başbakan Erdoğan'a bir mektup gönderen Kars Çağdaş Kars Haber gazetesi yazı işleri müdürü Gümüşpala Kortağ, AKP milletvekili Zeki Karabayır'la ilgili "Kayıp Milletvekili Aranıyor" haberini yayımladıktan sonra çeşitli baskılarla karşılaştıklarını iddia etti. Haberin 28 Kasım 2007'de yayımlanmasından sonra haklarında dava açıldığını belirten Kortağ, devlet kurumlarının da gazete üzerinde baskı kurduğunu savundu. Kortağ, "Haberlerimiz nedeniyle ekonomik olarak boğulmak isteniyoruz" dedi. Gazeteci, SSK borçlarıyla ilgili kurumlara yazı yazılarak, ilan paralarının borca karşılık kesilmesinin istendiğini, bu haberin yayımından sonra da gazete sahibi olan annesinin bankalardaki hesaplarına haciz konulduğunu yazdı. Kortağ, gazetelerinin Kars'ta tek muhalif ses olduğunu, olumsuzlukların üzerine gittikleri için de altı yılda haklarında 900 dava açıldığını 899'unun da beraatla sonuçlandığını yazdı.

Prime Minister Erdoğan targeted Ertuğrul Özkök, editor-in-chief of the Hürriyet newspaper, after he had written in the context of the debate on permitting the headscarf in public spaces: "The fact that this permission was pushed through with such a majority and despotism has frightened me...Now even I believe that we have to prepare ourselves for a majority hysteria imposing the headscarf at the doors of primary, middle and high schools and state departments." On 12 February, Erdoğan said, without using names, "And today one of them wrote 'the majority's despotism'. How is that in any way decent?" He added, "Because a step in terms of rights and freedoms was taken in parliament, the CHP and the media group acting with them have started shouting." The Turkish Society of Journalists (TGC) condemned Erdoğan's remarks, saying "It is impossible to understand why the rights to freedom of expression and information are ignored at the same time as the concepts of rights and freedoms are frequently discussed in other contexts." On 13 February, Erdoğan said, "They say they are angry. Anger is also an art of public speaking. I never applaud oppression." Referring to the words of the President of the Contemporary Journalists' Association (ÇGD),

who had said, "I am speaking with my liver", he said, "Honourable President, you should not talk with your liver or kidneys, but with logic." The Turkish Journalists' Trade Union cited him as saying, "Is democracy being of one type and of one voice? Does everyone have to think the same? Interpretations and criticisms have to be taken with the maturity of a statesperson and have to be tolerated."

At the third hearing in the Dink murder trial on 11 February, suspected instigator and police informant Erhan Tuncel spoke about his relations to the nationalist youth movement, the "Alperen Hearths". As proof that he had worked for the police he cited the names of police officers Muhittin Zenit, Engin Yılmaz and a man code named "Memdu Abi". Zenit and Tuncel had spoken on the phone shortly after the murder, and Zenit had said, "What, they shot him directly in the head....That's the only difference. He wasn't going to run away, but this one did." Tuncel said in court, "I did what was asked of me, I would not have done more. If I had had bad intentions, I would not have informed on them." Yasin Hayal, also accused of being an instigator, said that Tuncel was known as the "chief" ("reis") and that he had been involved in the bombing of the Trabzon McDonald's in 2004, too, but had been protected. Hayal said he only found out that Tuncel was a police informant after they had been arrested for the Dink murder. At the hearing, the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court rejected a merge of two other cases with the Istanbul main murder trial. In Samsun and in Trabzon security officers are on trial for neglecting their duty and hiding criminal evidence in connection with the Dink murder.

On 6 February it emerged that the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecution had decided lack of jurisdiction in the criminal complaints against former Trabzon Gendarmerie Commander Colonel Ali Öz and five gendarmerie officers, as well as Istanbul Chief of Police Celalettin Cerrah and other police officers. They have all been accused of negligence in their duties in relation to the Hrant Dink murder. Prosecutor Selim Berna Altay has sent the criminal complaints files on Cerrah and the Istanbul police officers to the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecution. The Dink family lawyers have demanded that all those within the state responsible for the murder should be tried together with the hitman, participants and instigators at the Istanbul 14th Heavy Penal Court.

On 1 February, colleagues and the Turkish Journalists' Society (TGC) commemorated Abdi İpekçi, the editor-in-chief of the Milliyet newspaper who was killed 29 years ago, in 1979. Visiting his grave at the Zincirlikuyu graveyard in Istanbul, journalists emphasised that for the last 30 years, even if the actual killers were mostly found, the forces behind the murders had never been brought to light.