



# DOCUMENTING TORTURE

## EXTRACTS FROM ŞANLIURFA BAR ASSOCIATION'S REPORT ON HALFETI INCIDENT

Translated by:  
Arrested Lawyers Initiative  
April 2021



The  
Arrested  
Lawyers  
Initiative  
*"Defends the defenders"*

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The legal responsibility for the original Turkish texts rests on the Şanlıurfa Bar Associations Human Rights Center, and that for the translation, on the Arrested Lawyers Initiative. The photographs used in the report are in public domain, whereas the rights of all work of art belongs to the Arrested Lawyers Initiative. Some of the victims of torture identified here only with their initials have since been released and decided to go public with their full names. Their publicized accounts are in line with their legal statements. As this extract is meant to be used as legal evidence, we stayed faithful to the original document.

## PREFACE

Human rights lawyers and defenders were terrified by the shocking details of torture that took place in May 2019 at Sanliurfa Provincial Security Directorate's Anti-Terror Branch. Although this was not an isolated incident, and torture has been an epidemic since 2016's thwarted coup attempt, it was the first time that the victims were properly interviewed by human rights lawyers and the incident was well documented.

Following murder of a police officers, fifty-four Kurdish civilians, including women and elderly persons, were randomly arrested by the security officials in Halfeti District of Sanliurfa province. The victims were subjected to various forms of torture including beating, sexual and verbal abuse, attempted rape, electrification and threat of killing.

Bar Associations of Sanliurfa and Gaziantep, Foundation for Society and Legal Studies (TOHAV) and Human Rights Association published separate reports on the incidence based on detailed interviews with the victims and their lawyers. The findings of all these reports were corroborating with each other. Some images and videos showing the victims while they were taken to the courthouse or at the garden of a police station were also supportive of the claims of the victims.

The Arrested Lawyers Initiative summarily translated the report of Human Rights Center of Sanliurfa Bar Association. The original report is a 34 pages long Turkish text with no images. The artwork included in this translation are created by Gianluca Costantini based on the accounts of the victims. They do not necessarily reflect the physiognomies of the victims or of the nature of the torture they were subjected to.

The Arrested Lawyers Initiative  
April 2021

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## HALFETI INCIDENT: CONTEXTUAL NOTES

In an armed conflict between the Turkish security forces and the militants of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on May 18, 2019, a police officer lost his life. As part of the investigation launched by the Şanlıurfa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office fifty-four civilians were detained and brought to the Şanlıurfa police station. Soon, allegations of maltreatment and torture appeared in social media.

In response to an appeal by the lawyers of the detained, 11 lawyers from the Şanlıurfa Bar Association's Human Rights Center were commissioned to interview the alleged victims and prepare a report on the allegations. The resulting report was shocking even for the human rights lawyers who have witnessed torture incidents which became the new rule, rather than the exception in Turkey's detention centres and police stations.

The report indicated that several of the detainees were sexually tortured and the ones subjected to torture and ill treatment were threatened by police officers to prevent them from telling what they went through. The pressure to prevent documentation of torture continued on when the victims were brought in front of the judges.

The extracts from the report of the Sanliurfa Bar Association corroborate the reports of other human rights organization who also interviewed the victims.



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*This photograph was shared by social media accounts allegedly run by the Special Operation Police. The photograph was presumed by the Sanliurfa Bar Association to have been taken in the garden of the Halfeti police station.*

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## SANLIURFA BAR ASSOCIATION CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

### EVENT

As a result of the torture, mistreatment and massive violations of human rights that took place between the dates of 18/05/2019 – 28/05/2019, our Bar Association has visited individuals held at detention centers, individuals that have been imprisoned after their arrest warrants, and the location the events took place and conducted meetings with the Sanliurfa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. As a result of the meetings and investigations conducted, it has been determined that torture and mistreatment is present. Subsequently, this report has been prepared.



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*Şanlıurfa Bar Association's Human Rights Center lawyers during a press meeting publicizing their report on the Halfeti torture cases. 3 June 2019, Şanlıurfa / Turkey.*

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Logo of the Şanlıurfa Bar Association



**NOTE:** On 22.05.2019, while Lawyer Mustafa VEFA, a member of our committee, was on the first floor of the Sanliurfa Courthouse at the location of the specially authorized prosecutors' room for his private work, he witnessed an individual and two undercover police officers that were leaving the prosecutor's room which was at the third door to the entrance of the corridor. The individual had his hands tied and had bruises on his face. These two police officers pushed this individual's face to the wall and said, "You will retract the statement you just gave, you will say 'I was not tortured', and you will tell the prosecutor, the lawyers forced you to state that you were tortured, otherwise we will kill you." Later, we have established that this person was Lawyer Fikret Tekinalp's client B.A. This situation will be confirmed if the security cameras in the aforementioned corridor are examined.

– omitted from translation –

## Lawyer Tulay Sahin Ozturk's Statement:

"My client was unlawfully handcuffed behind the back and taken into custody on 18.05.2019. ... I have observed marks of beatings on the faces of individuals named B.A and O.G. B.A's face was swollen and he was holding the right side of his ribcage with his right hand. If I recall correctly, O.G had a black right eye. The individual named O.G came to the bar association to look for a lawyer when his relatives were detained. I had the opportunity to meet him there. However, after leaving the bar association, he was detained and battered. When the people that were detained in scope of the relevant investigation were brought to the courthouse for an extension of their detention period, I observed that some of them were beaten up, had difficulty walking and their clothes were miserable.

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*"I have observed marks of beatings on the faces of individuals named B.A and O.G. B.A's face was swollen and he was holding the right side of his ribcage with his right hand."*

**Lawyer Tulay Sahin Ozturk**

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Both from the verbal conversations with my client and my own observations, I have observed that the Sanliurfa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has greatly tortured individuals detained within the scope of the investigation numbered 2019/17231 at the Sanliurfa TEM (countering terrorism branch of the police department), and these individuals are subject to inhumane treatment. I request from the Sanliurfa Bar Association to take action against torture and mistreatment and to take steps ensuring that the investigation in question is conducted in accordance with the law."



## Lawyer Meral Halat's Statement:

"On 21.05.2019 at 21:39, I went to the Sanliurfa Police Headquarters Karakopru Additional Services Building Countering-Terrorism Branch Directorate to have a meeting with my client A.Z. I notified the authorities of my request to meet with my client. My request was accepted. I carried out the meeting duly. The person I met was having difficulty standing and he was anxious. After introducing myself, I asked about his condition. He thought that he was brought here to be tortured. I presented my lawyer identification card to him. He stated that he had been subject to physical violence and showed the lower part of his ribcage stating that it was broken. He said that he was 45-50 years old and that he had never been insulted, degraded and tortured in his life this much. His psychology was negatively affected, and he was tearful."

– omitted from translation –

"He reported that he was taken to the hospital, but the doctor did not examine him during the health check. He stated that he was in severe pain due to the fracture in his ribcage. Also, there was a stain similar to a blood stain on his shoulder. When I asked what other things he had been exposed to, he hesitated and did not explain."

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*"He stated that he was in severe pain due to the fracture in his ribcage. Also, there was a stain similar to a blood stain on his shoulder." **Lawyer Meral Halat***

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## Lawyers Gokhan Dayik and Ibrahim Tatar's Statement:

"On 22.05.2019, we went to the Countering-Terrorism branch to meet client A.E. with my colleague Lawyer Gokhan Dayik and myself (Lawyer Ibrahim Tatar). Approximately 20 minutes after we submitted our request to the relevant personnel, we were invited to come into the jail for a meeting. A.E. was brought in shortly after. A.E. wobbly took a couple of steps and reached the chair where he was supposed to sit. He sat in front of us with the front buttons of his shirt completely ripped off and his chest visible."

"We noticed that a large part of his shirt was covered with dried blood, that only a small part of the elastic neck of his undershirt remained, that there was a wound in his forehead in the shape of the letter L and on the edge of the eyebrow with a total of 10-15 stitches, that he had a scabby wound on his nose with approximately width of 05mm and a length of 03mm, that there were bruises under his right and left eyes, that there was easily noticeable swelling on the left cheek at the tooth level. We observed that he had trouble hearing us, even though we raised our voices above normal, he did not hear us during our conversation." ...

He told us: "They beat me. Someone probably gave [them] my name. I did not know what had happened. They kicked me, punched me, hit me in the tummy and head. Then they gave me electroshock through my genitals (showing his sexual organ with his hand). They took me to the public prosecutors yesterday, and then to a doctor."



## Lawyer Lezgin Oktay's Statement:

"On 22.05.2019 at 16:37, I went to the Sanliurfa Police Headquarters Karakopru Additional Services Building Countering-Terrorism Branch Directorate to have a meeting with my client B.Z. I notified the authorities of my request to meet with my client. My request was accepted. I carried out the meeting duly. My client stated that he was physically and psychologically tortured. He stated that his hands were handcuffed behind the back when he was detained, that he was weltered on the ground, that his hands and other parts of his body were hit repeatedly with the grip of a gun, that he was kicked on the floor for a long time, that he took several hits in his face, and that his sexual organ was electrocuted with an electro-shock device on the first day of his detainment. It was observed that the client had scars on his hands and face.

We had to file this application because the abovementioned treatment violates the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment."

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*His hands were handcuffed behind the back when he was detained...he was weltered on the ground... his hands and other parts of his body were hit repeatedly with the grip of a gun."*

***Lawyer Lezgin Oktay***

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## Lawyer Serhat Kurt's Statement:

"On 22.05.2019 at around 17:00, I went to the Urfa Police Headquarters Countering-Terrorism Branch. ... My client S.Y. was not subject to any assault or force while he was being detained and noisy clamour that came from his siblings E.Y. and C.Y.'s houses resulted in the police coming to his house and asking him for his identity card. He was then detained on the basis of surname similarity. He stated that when they were brought to the Bozova/Yaylak Gendarmerie Station, all the suspects were beaten whilst lying face down on the ground, and after they were beaten, they had wounds on their heads, knees, backs and chins, and it was observed that the injuries could be easily detected by us even at the time of the meeting. The family is seriously concerned about the clients' safety for him being in the same place with law enforcement personnel who tortured clients."

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*"They had wounds on their heads, knees, backs and chins, and it was observed that the injuries could be easily detected by us..."*

**Lawyer Serhat Kurt**

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*Signs of physical torture. Photos by Mesopotamia Agency who interviewed several of the victims after their release.*

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## Victim A.E.'s Statement:

On 31.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim A.E., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"I was detained on 18.05.2019. ... We were weltered on the ground in the courtyard of the police station. They kicked and hit my face whilst on the ground. I was brought to the Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism Branch on 18.05.2019. They took me two floors upstairs in the evening and the night. Every time, they stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. They tied my hands and feet and stepped on my stomach and chest. They hit and electrocuted my genitals. They were constantly cursing by saying the f-word. This torture took place for four consecutive nights."

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*"... they stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. They tied my hands and feet and stepped on my stomach and chest. They hit and electrocuted my genitals. They were constantly cursing by saying the f-word." Torture victim A.E.*

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## **Victim C.Y.'s Statement:**

**O**n 31.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim C.Y., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

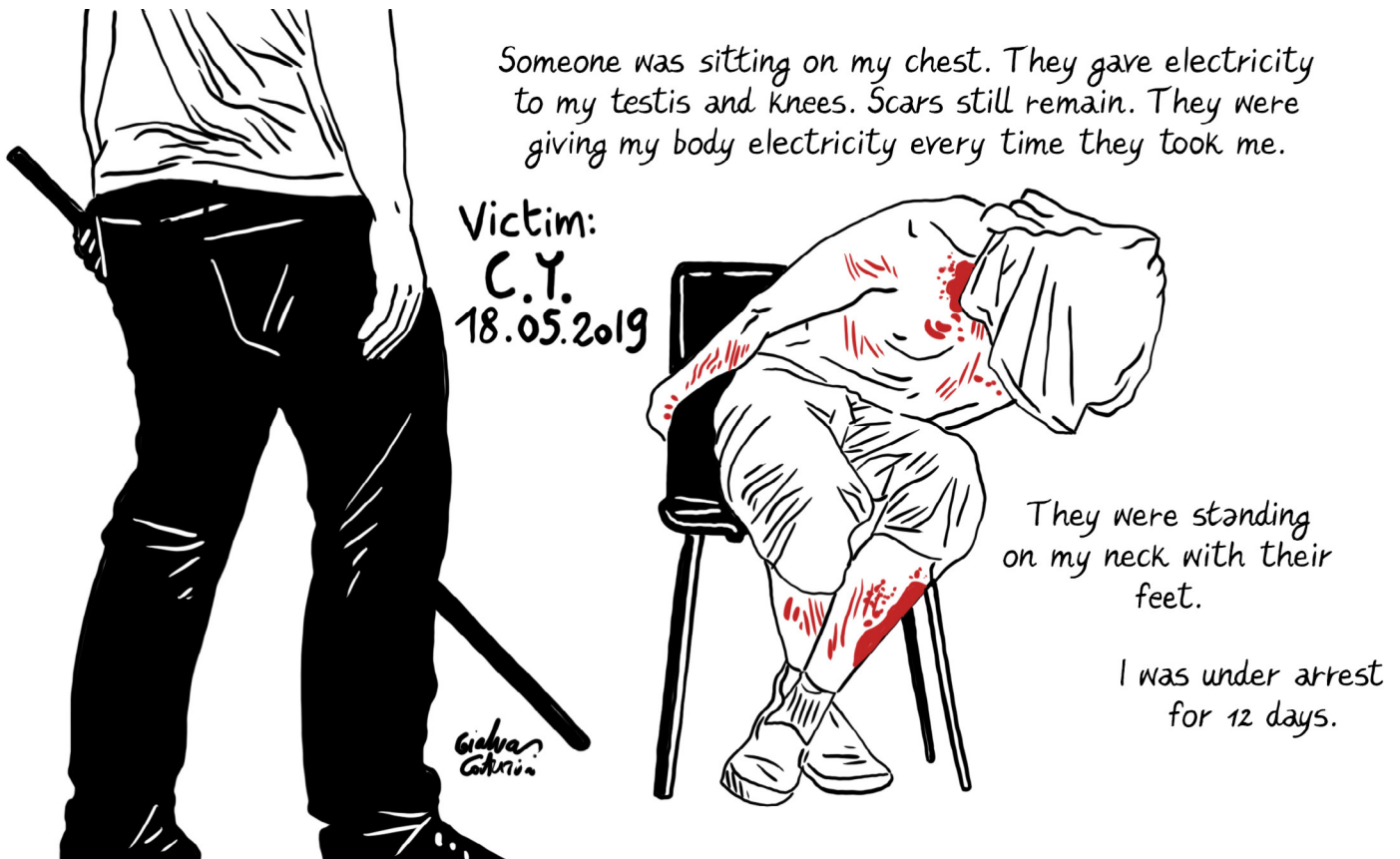
“On 18.05.2019, I was eating sahoor (meal before dawn during Ramadan). As soon as I fell asleep, the next thing I knew that they raided the house. They broke the door and entered. They got me on the ground. There were children too. We were afraid. After being headbutted, I hit the wall. Both sides of my head started bleeding. ... As the day was about to dawn, they took me to Yaylak Police Station. There were many people there. There were about 16 people. They put us all face down with handcuffs behind our back and started hitting us with rifle buttstocks. They hit everyone and every part of our bodies. Sometimes they kicked and they stepped on us. I am still feeling the pain. They tortured us this way for about 30 minutes. Then the Gendarmerie Special Operations took us to the Bozova State Hospital. They bandaged our wounds. They examined us. Then they took us to Balikligol State Hospital. The doctors there did not care for us. We were not given any treatment there. Then the police officers put us in a car. They beat us there too. I have platins in my back and they hit it with a stick. Then they took us to the countering-terrorism Branch. As soon as they took me there, they tortured me.”

"In the evening of the day they arrested me, since I was taken with my head covered with a black bag, I couldn't see anyone. They tied my hands and feet and weltered me. Someone was sitting on my chest. They electrocuted my testicles and knees. Scars still remain. They electrocuted me every time they took me. They stood on my neck with their feet. I was detained for 12 days. They were taking me at certain intervals. They were cursing at me, saying things like "I'll fuck your wife, your daughter, you son of a bitch." ... Most of the time, the torture lasted at least 1 (one) hour. I could not eat afterwards because of the being aimed at my chin. I was electrocuted every time I was taken. In the first couple of days, it was intense. The next days were not as intense. I was staying with 8 (eight) people, some of them were my relatives. My brother and others were tortured in the same way. Some of them would come back with black bruises under their feet and faces. They stated that they were also electrocuted. ... I couldn't see those who tortured me, but they were calling someone the 'president'. I do not know how to read and write."

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*"They were cursing at me, saying things like 'I'll fuck your wife, your daughter, you son of a bitch.' Most of the time, the torture lasted at least one hour." Torture victim C.Y.*

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## Victim A.E.'s Statement:

On 31.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with the victim A.E., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 18.05.2019, I was at my friend Z.A.'s house. I was detained that night. While I was detained, even though I didn't object, they tied my hands and face and beat me. ... I don't remember how long they beat me or when they put stitches on my face. I don't remember the exact date, place or time. But they took me upstairs at the police station. They stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. My eyes were tied. They beat me and kicked me. They hit and electrocuted my sexual organ. However, I was unconscious. I don't remember how many times this was done."

Victim:  
A.E.  
18.05.2019

*They stripped me naked and put my underwear in my mouth. My eyes were bound. They beat me and kicked me. They hit me and electro-shocked me in my genitals. I was however not conscious. I cannot not tell how many times they did that.*



## Victim Z.A.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with the victim Z.A., the victim, in summary, stated the following: "On 18.05.2019 I was detained. While I was being detained, I was in Sanliurfa to visit as a guest. Even though I did not resist, they pinned me down on the ground next to my children and relatives. After putting me down on the ground, they kicked and hit my head and shoulders with a rifle buttstock. ... They took me to the Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism branch. At the same day when I was at the Countering Terrorism branch, they took me upstairs and blindfolded me. They stripped me down and stuck my underwear in my mouth. While they were doing so, my hands were handcuffed behind my back. Then they put me on strappado and started to beat me. The same night they took me again and did the same procedure. They took me upstairs again on 19.05.2019. At this place they put my underwear in my mouth with my hands tied and started to beat me even though I was blindfolded, and then they electrocuted me. After electrocuting me, this time they also squeezed my genitals and pulled down on them too. While I was detained, the doctor was coming into the detention room. While he arrived, he was accompanied by a police officer. The doctor, without any examination, did not do anything more than just ask me if I was alright."



Victim:  
Z.A  
18.05.2019

They got me on the ground in front of my children and relatives, although I didn't respond.  
After getting me on the ground, they hit and kicks my head and shoulders with the rifle butt of the gun ...

## Victim G.A.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim G.A., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 18.05.2019, we were detained in Sanliurfa. ... First, they held my husband down and started hitting my head on the wall. My husband's head started to bleed. Following, they put him down on the ground and stepped on his head trying to squish it. Then they put a gun against my daughter's head and said, "we will shoot your father". Then they started beating my son (S.A.). My little boy M. A. was also handcuffed behind the back. My sister-in-law K.K later said that they also hit her and her husband in the car. Following, they brought us to the Countering Terrorism Branch, whose name I learned later on. Half an hour after arriving at the Countering Terrorism Branch, they put me, F.A. and S.A. in a car; they put my husband, K. K and her husband in another car and they put my son M in another car and took us to the hospital. After the hospital, they brought us back to the Countering Terrorism branch."

Victim:  
G.A.  
18.05.2019

I saw my mother-in-law and my husband was taken us to the same place in the emergency room, our hands were handcuffed from behind back. ... The doctor was going in and out, they beat my husband in the emergency service, and the doctor saw him while they were beating. They beat my husband in the emergency room for about an hour.





"The face of my nephew B.A, whom I saw there again, was completely covered in blood. She told me that she was tortured, electrocuted, and cursed at while she was detained with my sister L. On the 10th day of my detainment, they took me upstairs. I asked if my lawyer came to see me, they did not reply. They took me upstairs through a dark place like an archive room. The place which I believe was like a hallway, was dark. The police officer accompanying me was a woman with black hair and coloured eyes. If I remember correctly, her name was Gulay because that is how they called her. We started moving ahead the hallway. Then a woman told the police to stop and she stopped. I moved forward. It was too dark. I was afraid. Then someone in the room said, "don't turn your back". At that moment someone grabbed my hair and we turned right. I did not see very well in the dark, but I think they took me into the first room."

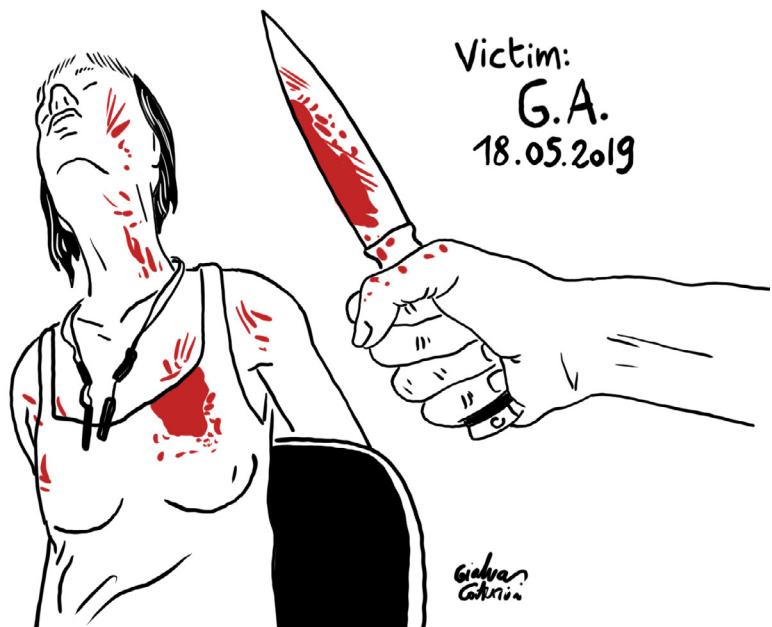
"There was a table and a chair inside the room. There was a small seat next to it and a cushion on the seat that was greenish. There were two male police officers and one female police officer inside. One of the male police officers was the one who took me. The male police officer inside was overweight, of medium height, without a beard, and with normal hair. I would recognize both male police officers if I saw them. The male police officer that was sitting down called me a whore and a bitch and stated, "I will fuck you and leave you pregnant". Then he took out his gun and said, "tell me the truth". I said that I didn't know anything. He grabbed my hair from behind and pulled me from one end of the room to the other. He hit my face on the wall and told me that he would shatter it. He said, "be thankful for the laws, otherwise I would tear you to pieces here with a knife". Later the dark-eyed male police officer told the female police to, "take her away or I will kill her." The female police officer took me to the detention center."

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*"The male police officer that was sitting down called me a whore and a bitch and stated, 'I will fuck you and leave you pregnant!'. " Torture victim G.A.*

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The male police officer sitting said to me "whore, bitch, I fuck you, you will get pregnant with me". Then he took out his gun and said "tell me the truth". I said "I didn't know anything". He grabbed my hair from behind and carried me from one end of the room to the other. He hit my face on the wall and said "I would shatter it". He said "pray for the law otherwise I would tear you to pieces here with a knife". Later the dark-eyed male police officer told the female police "take her away or I will kill her".



## Victim B.A.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim B.A., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

“On 18.05.2019, I was detained. ... They hit my head on the ground and cursed at me by saying the f-word. They took me upstairs at around 13:00 on 18.05.2019. They tied my eyes and hands, stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. They spilled water on me and started beating me. They squeezed my sexual organ and electrocuted it. I did not understand how many people they were. Likewise, they performed the same acts on the dates of 18.05.2019-19.05.2019-20.05.2019. They took my testimony under torture on 18.05.2019, they did not let me see my lawyer. They took me to the hospital while I was taken to the courthouse, but a medical examination was not done.”

It has been observed by us that the victim had wounds, bruises, and ecchymosis on the face and some parts of the body.

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*“They tied my eyes and hands, stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. They spilled water on me and started beating me. They squeezed my sexual organ and electrocuted it.”*

***Torture victim B.A.***

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### Victim B.A.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim B.A., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 24.05.2019, I was detained, I was not told why I was detained. They took me upstairs at the Countering Terrorism branch at around 20.30 at night on 26.05.2019. My eyes were closed, there was a plastic bag on my head, they hit my back and head, they electrocuted my sexual organ, they completely stripped me down, that's all I have to say. I do not want to give more details."

### Victim E.Y.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim E.Y., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"Someone kicked my ribcage with their boots, then stepped on my foot their boots. The friend next to me informed the people about his heart condition. Someone there said, "fuck your heart" and hit him again. They beat us for half an hour, called us traitors, and cursed at us by saying, "fuck you". Then they put us on a minibus and brought us to the Bozova State Hospital. The doctor examined us one by one and asked if we had anything. We could not say anything out of fear of those that had beaten us. The doctor looked at those who had wounds on their faces and said, 'nothing will happen with that.'"

"On the night of the same day, they took me and brought me 2-3 floors upstairs, meanwhile I was handcuffed behind my hand behind back and my eyes were closed. On that floor, they stripped me down and pinned me to the ground. They took off my underwear and put it in my mouth, then they touched my testicles with something and electrocuted them. In the same position, they beat me again. Then they waited for a while and electrocuted my testicles again. In total, I believe I stayed there for about half an hour, then they brought me downstairs again with my hands cuffed behind my back."

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*"The doctor examined us one by one and asked if we had anything. We could not say anything out of fear of those that had beaten us. The doctor looked at those who had wounds on their faces and said, 'nothing will happen with that.'"* **Torture victim E.Y.**

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## Victim M.K.'s Statement:

On 29.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with victim M.K., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 18.05.2019, I was detained. While I was being detained, they slapped my face and pushed me down. At the Countering Terrorism branch, on 23.05.2019, they took me upstairs. They blindfolded me. They stripped me down and put my underwear in my mouth. They squeezed my sexual organ and electrocuted it. I think they were 3-4 people, but I did not fully distinguish them because my eyes were closed. Later, on 26.05.2019, they took me upstairs again, handcuffed me behind back and beat me. They sat on my ribcage, and both times they cursed at me with the f-word."

## Victim T.K.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type Closed Penitentiary, in the meeting conducted with the victim T.K., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 24.05.2019, I was detained. ... They took me to the Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism branch. ... After taking me to the room in the upstairs hallway, they stripped me down and blindfolded me. Then someone started to squeeze my testicles and they started to electrocute my sexual organ with a wire. When they gave a break to electrocuting, this time they would punch my head and stomach. When they stopped punching me, they sat down on my ribcage. In the meantime, they put my previously removed underwear into my mouth. They were constantly cursing at me with the f-word. This treatment was repeated once in every 2-3 days during my detainment. Also, a doctor would come to the penitentiary, but he would come accompanied by a police officer and ask if we were alright. I was tortured until I was arrested on 29.05.2019."



## Victim L.A.'s Statement:

On 30.05.2019 in Sanliurfa T-Type No.2 Closed Penitentiary, in the meetings conducted with victim L.A., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 18.05.2019, I was detained. ... A police officer hit my spouses back with the grip of the gun. Then my spouse fell to the ground. Then they put us all down on the ground and we stayed there from 2 to 7 o'clock. Then they started hitting my spouse and my son. When I screamed at them begging them not to do it, they started hitting me too. They were constantly kicking my head. A kick came to my ear and I felt blood flowing down from my ear. They put all of us in an ambulance, they took us to the Birecik State Hospital, they beat my son in front of the doctors in the hospital, my spouse was not with him, I couldn't see him. After beating my son, his wounds were treated, and we were brought to the Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism branch and taken downstairs."

...

"I stood in front of a room and someone I didn't see, put a sack over my head from behind and completely closed my eyes shut and cuffed my hands from behind my back. As soon as I got in, they put me on the ground and started to kick me, then they started to strip me. Someone started to electrocute my sexual organ with a cable. I felt like I was going to faint with the intensity of the electricity. Then they electrocuted my nipples. At the same time, they electrocuted my arms and legs. The people who were electrocuting me were constantly cursing at me saying, "Fuck you, has anyone else fucked you other than your husband, we will all fuck you now". In response, I said "don't you have a mother or sister". After that, they started hitting me."

...

"Then they took me out of the room. They opened my eyes in a place that looked like an archive room where there were lots of files and documents. A police officer took me downstairs again and put me in jail. There were G.A., R. K., K. K. and a woman I did not know in the jail with me. During my detainment period, I was taken to the same place every 2-3 days and was subject to the same torture. I learned that what they did to me, they did to F.A and G. A., too."

Then they got all of us on the ground,  
we stayed on the ground  
from 2 to 7 o'clock.

Then they started hitting  
my husband and my son.  
When I screamed not to  
do it, they started  
hitting me too, they  
were constantly kicking  
my head, a kick came  
to my ear and  
I felt blood  
flowing from  
my ear.

Victim:  
L.A.  
18.05.2019





## Victim U.Y.'s Statement:

On 29.05.2019, victim U.Y., who applied to our Bar Association, stated in summary that:

"At around 03:00 on 18.05.2019, the Yaylak gendarmerie command and special operations police raided our home. They took my ID from my hand, handcuffed me from behind my back and pinned me down on the ground. I was forced down on the ground for more than 2 hours. I was brought to Yaylak gendarmerie command with a vehicle. Here I was pushed down on the ground while I was handcuffed behind my back and I got kicked in my leg, stomach, feet, back while they were cursing at me by saying, "I will fuck your mother and sister". This lasted for about 30 minutes. We were taken to the Bozova State Hospital. My pinky finger was split and stitched. The bruises and other areas on my face were treated and we were taken to the Sanliurfa Balikligol State Hospital. A beating report was obtained from there and the doctor stated in the report that there have been no traces of beating observed."

...

"While we were in the car, even though they knew and saw that my foot was bandaged, they beat me at least 5 or 6 times by stepping on my feet. From there, we were brought to the Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism branch. We were taken to the lower floor here and our handcuffs were removed. After a period of time that I'm not exactly sure of but what seemed like two days later, a police officer picked me up from where I was and took me upstairs. There, I was handed over to another police officer. That police officer first covered my face with something in the form of a mask. Then he tied my eyes with a cloth and my hands were handcuffed behind the back. That police officer took me to a room, made me kneel and he said, "My president, I brought the person." There were an estimated 3-4 people in the room. Questions were asked about my uncle C.Y. A little eye hole was opened so they could show me 3-4 photos. I was asked whether I knew the people in the photos or not. I stated that I did not know. They slapped me 3-4 times while I was taken out of that room and taken to the corridor. They followed by saying, "we will give you an hour, think well, we will bring you upstairs again"



Victim:  
U.Y.  
18.05.2019

They laid me  
on the ground with  
my hands handcuffed  
behind my back.  
I was kicked in the leg,  
tummy, feet and back.  
For approximately  
30 minutes they kept  
beating me and swearing  
at me such as  
"I will f\*\*\* your  
mother and wife".

## Victim M.P.'s Statement:

On 29.05.2019, the victim M.P. who applied to our Bar Association, in summary, made the following statements:

“At around 06.00-06.30 in the morning, special operation officers came to our house and conducted a search. Then they handcuffed me and brought me to the Countering Terrorism Branch. ... Three nights later, they took me to the same place, blindfolded me again and handcuffed me behind my back. This time, they first put a thick cloth on my mouth and stripped me down and put me down on the floor. Then my sexual organ was electrocuted twice for about one minute each time. They asked to me if I had seen the terrorists who came to this area while I was being electrocuted, I believe I stayed in the torture room for ten or fifteen minutes. After I was electrocuted for the second time, they removed the cloth from my mouth. ... My pubic area is still painful due to the electrocution and I am experiencing psychological stress. I have never been tortured in this way at any point in my life. I request from the Sanliurfa Bar Association - Human Rights Center to follow up on the torture and ill-treatment I have been exposed to.”

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*“... they first put a thick cloth on my mouth and stripped me down and put me down on the floor. Then my sexual organ was electrocuted twice for about one minute each time.”*

***Torture victim M.P.***

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## Victim M.H.Ç.'s Statement:

On 24.05.2019, the victim M.H.Ç., in his statement, stated in summary that:

“On 20.05.2019, I was taken out of bed at 05.30 in the morning. ... We were taken to the Dutluca Gendarmerie Station. ...Then undercover police officers came to the police station, I remember some of them, they were all tall and bearded. Here, 4-5 policemen beat me and threw glass cups and a saltshaker to my face. They were cursing at my mother and my sister and they continued the violence here for a long time. They were constantly saying, "you son of a bitch, we'll fuck your mother". This violence that started at 6.30 at the police station, continued like this. It resulted in an injury on my right shoulder, I was dragged on the ground while they were hitting my face with a baton. I was taken from the kitchen section of the police station to another room, there were about ten people in the room I was in. They threw me on the floor and kicked my face, hit my stomach and waist. One of the policemen squeezed my testicles and they grabbed my legs and pulled them apart. Then they put a chair in the middle of the hall and made me lay down on my back and put my feet on this chair. They hit my feet with a baton and while they were spilling water on my feet and beating them with a baton, they asked me to get up. I could not get up, I could not walk with the pain of my feet. Two undercover police officers held me from my arms and took me back to the kitchen area where two different undercover police officers came and also hit my face. They grabbed me and hit me on to the wall. This lasted for half an hour.”

“Then we were removed from the police station and taken to the Bozova State Hospital. We entered the doctor's room. A soldier was with us inside, the doctor asked if we had anything, I couldn't say anything, I don't know how this issue was reflected in the report. ...We were taken to Karakopru Countering Terrorism branch. We were seven people in total, a body search was conducted, and I was taken to jail. There were eight people staying here. It was a very small area, and we could not even find a place to lay down. Two policemen interrogated me in the evening of the day I was brought to the jail. They asked me questions here and they called me a son of a bitch. I told them that I didn't know anything. They threatened to rape my mother and sister. Meanwhile, my mother and sister were also detained. This part that I explained above took about 20 minutes and I was taken back to the jail.”

“About an hour later, I was taken from the jail again. Someone took me from the jail and took me two floors upstairs while pushing my head down. There were files in the room we passed through, they tied my hands very tightly with a cloth from behind and they tied my eyes after putting a cloth sack over my head. They held me by my arm and made me walk 15-20 meters, I don't know if there was anyone else in that room because my head was tilted downwards. I did not see the person who tied me up. I had a sack over my head, and I heard that there were other people walking down the corridor we were in. They took me to a room and tied my feet while I was standing. I assume there were 5-6 people in the room. While I was standing, they stripped my pyjamas and my underwear down, pinned me down on the ground while my hands were tied behind my back. They cursed at me and they asked questions about my father, I told them that I did not know anything. In the meantime, someone was pressing down on my chest with his feet, then someone sat on my chest and they were calling someone amongst them the president. One was still sitting on my chest and the other was sitting on my feet. My sexual organ was electrocuted by one or two people at the same time with a pointy metal thing that I didn't recognize. I was out of breath and I thought I was going to die. I was yelling and crying, and they electrocuted me at certain intervals I do not remember. I passed out for a moment and I believe this took about one hour.”

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*“I was out of breath and I thought I was going to die. I was yelling and crying, and they electrocuted me at certain intervals I do not remember.”* **Torture victim M.H.Ç.**

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## Victim R.D.'s Statement:

On 23.05.2019 at the Sanliurfa Bar Association Human Rights Center, in the meeting conducted with victim R.D., the victim, in summary, stated the following:

"On 20.05.2019, the police came to my home in the morning. ... They brought us to Sanliurfa Countering Terrorism branch. ...At this place, they handcuffed me behind back and they taped my eyes after covering my head with a black cloth-like sack on my head. Following, they threw me on the floor on my back. While I was on the ground, they pressed down on my throat, head and legs. Then they laid me face down. While handcuffed behind my back, they pulled my arms upwards. They kicked my head. They cursed at me with the f-word. I stayed with my mother and 5 (five) other women I did not know in the jail. We were able to stay crowdedly due to the small size of the room. On that night, after iftar (the evening meal during Ramadan), they came to the jail at around 9-10 and took the men to be tortured."

"...There were my brothers, my mother, my uncle and people I didn't know. They were all being tortured. My mother was old, and she was frightened every time she was called. We were all frightened and anxious. We were worried about what they would do to us this time, if they were going to kill us. On the second day, at about 18.30, I went to meet with the lawyer whom my family had sent. Two hours prior to this meeting, they had taken me to be tortured. During the torture, they said, "eat your meal, I will electrocute you above." While taking me to torture, a police officer advised the other police officer to leave no traces behind. The police officer who took me was blonde and medium heighted. The male policeman, who ordered the blonde was also medium heighted. The blonde police officer handed me over to a male police officer. Then they put a sack on my head. They made me kneel. He said, "where is your dog father" and I said, "he went fishing 2 days ago".



“Then they took off my skirt and pyjamas. They electrocuted my legs, perineum, feet, arms and pubic area. He asked me if I was married, and I said yes. He asked where my husband was and I told him that he was abroad. He asked me if my husband sent me money, how I have been surviving for the past 4 years without a husband, if I had a boyfriend, and how I managed. Then, he cursed at me stating that he would fuck me. While I was on my knees, someone started to kick me. He threatened to change the placements of my sexual organs. Then he said, “take this bitch downstairs we keep hitting her and she doesn't feel anything, she’s like a pig”. They didn't take out the sack on my head. He called the police officer to take me downstairs. They took me downstairs to the jail. The women who stayed with us were also stripped down and electrocuted. They electrocuted their sexual organs and nipples. They cursed at the young woman who was with us. They tried to undress her. Everyone was tortured in various ways. My two brothers are still being tortured. They have a risk of death and we are worried. Who knows what the person who did this to us would do to our brothers. We do not know where my father is. I am very worried. We do not know if they will do something to us again. We are very afraid.”

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*“He asked where my husband was and I told him that he was abroad. He asked me how I have been surviving for the past 4 years without a husband... Then, he cursed at me stating that he would fuck me.” Torture victim R.D.*

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## Victim A.Y.'s Statement:

On 24.05.2019, the victim A.Y., who applied to our Bar Association Human Rights Center, in summary, made the following statements:

"On 18.05.2019, around 04:00 in the morning, special operation officers came to our village. ... They asked for my ID, they told me that I was being detained and ordered me to walk. Meanwhile, they insulted me by calling me a son of a bitch. Then they brought me out of the house by beating me. They took me to my brother E. Y.'s house. When we arrived there, they were beating my brother and my nephew U.Y. was handcuffed behind his back."

"... They took us to the Yayla Gendarmerie Station, and they pinned us down to the ground in the garden with handcuffs. They said, "Our soldier was martyred because of you, sons of bitches." They were walking back and forth stepping over our bodies and they were hitting our faces. They were kicking us all over our bodies. We stayed in the garden of the police station for about half an hour, then they took us to the Bozova State Hospital. Accompanied by the police, they took us to the doctor's room. The doctor did not ask us anything and did nothing. Then they took us from there to Balıklıgöl State Hospital. They took us to the doctor's room there and the doctors there did not say anything to us and did not examine us either."

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*"... they tied my neck and feet with a wire-like rope. They pinned me down on the ground face down and started pulling me up with that rope. They were releasing me back onto the ground when I was almost out of breath." Torture victim A.Y.*

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"... From there they took us to the Countering Terrorism branch. They beat us in front of the Countering Terrorism Branch and took us into the building. ... Meanwhile, they put a sack on my head, tied my feet, and stripped my clothes off of me until I was completely naked. Then the police officers, I don't know how many they were, started to beat me. They were also cursing at me. At that moment, they tied my neck and feet with a wire-like rope. They pinned me down on the ground face down and started pulling me up with that rope. They were releasing me back onto the ground when I was almost out of breath. Then I passed out there. When I was awake again, they started to kick my back and kidney. They said to me, "we will now conduct surgery on you, these terrorists killed our friend. Do you know them?" I told him that I did not. Then they made me lay down on my back, my hands and feet were still tied. Then they started to electrocute my sexual organ. I was yelling and shouting. They continued to electrocute me until I lost control of myself. This treatment had been repeated over and over again. ... Then the doctor came to the Countering Terrorism branch and asked me if there were any signs of beating. Out of fear, I couldn't say anything to the doctor. The doctor asked me what my name was and left. Later, on 24.05.2019, we were brought to court and I was released."



They put a sack over my head, tied up my feet and stripped me naked. Then some police officers, I cannot tell how many, started beating me. They were also swearing at me. Then they tied a rope around my neck and feet and pulled me up with the rope. When I could no longer breathe, they put me back on the floor. I passed out. When I came around, they started to hit me in my back and kidneys.

## Victim G.A.'s Statement:

On 29.05.2019, the victim G.A. who applied to our Bar Association, in summary, made the following statements:

"On 18.05.2019, we were sleeping on the roof with my wife at 02:00 in the morning. ... They were yelling and telling us to open the door while threatening to shoot us if we did not. We opened the door. We were in the same house with my husband, father-in-law, mother-in-law and sister-in-law. We also had an elderly guest. ... Our guest was a very old person in their 70s so he could not go down alone. Special operation officers went up and cursed at him saying, "why don't you come down, you son of a bitch?". They pushed the elderly person and brought him down to us while kicking and beating him. Likewise, they pushed the old man face down and threw him down next to us, then they went towards my father-in-law and started kicking and hitting his head, sexual organ, arm, leg and wherever they could. Four or five people were beating him together. I could not see their faces because we were laying on the ground face down and they had masks on their faces. They were yelling at my father-in-law and asking him why he had a child while they kicked his sexual organ. My father-in-law was yelling and groaning with each kick. After that, the same four or five people turned to my husband and in the same way, they started hitting him and cursing at him by calling him a son of a bitch. They also beat and cursed at our elderly guest as well."

"... At seven thirty, ambulances came, and my father-in-law was covered in blood. The police said that he was unconscious. They took him away because his condition was severe. Then they took my husband and at that moment when I looked up, I saw that the places where my father-in-law was lying were covered in blood. They dragged my husband for meters and my husband's face was covered in blood and it looked very bad."

"... After my husband, they took our elderly guest, and his face was also covered in blood. After they took them with an ambulance, they took me and my sister-in-law with an ambulance as well. While we were being taken away, the backyard and balcony of our home was still filled with special operations officers. They took us to the Birecik State Hospital, I guess it was that hospital. When me and my sister-in-law were brought to the emergency room, I saw my husband and our elderly guest who were brought there before us. They were lying on stretchers and they were unconscious, me and my sister-in-law entered from somewhere like a door entrance hall. I saw my mother-in-law and my husband. We were taken to the same place in the emergency room, our hands were handcuffed from behind our backs."

"... The doctor was going in and out, they beat my husband in the emergency service, and the doctor saw him while they were beating him. They beat my husband in the emergency room for about an hour. At that time, I did not see my father-in-law, they said that they took him to intensive care unit because his condition was severe. When we asked the female police officers how their conditions were, they said that they hoped they all died. We were all then brought to Urfa with a minibus. ... They brought me, my husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law and sister-in-law to the Urfa Countering Terrorism branch."

"... While we were waiting there, they took my mother-in-law upstairs and tortured her, and when she got downstairs, she secretly told me that they electrocuted her. I could not speak much, but she said that they electrocuted her nipples, her sexual organ and that they kicked her waist. Then my mother-in-law and sister-in-law, F. A., and K. K. were in the same ward with us. Then they called me. They took me to the lawyer meeting room and the lawyer started talking to me in the dark. ... Tell me what you know, or they will take you upstairs and torture you like they did to your mother-in-law," he said. They showed me some photos and asked me if I knew these people. He stated that these individuals had come to my house and asked me why I wasn't confirming it. I told him that I would tell him if I knew, but I didn't."

"The next day, they took me from my cell and took me upstairs. A female officer took me. At that moment, a male police officer grabbed my shoulders and said: "Don't move, don't turn around!" and put a black sack on my head. They handcuffed me behind my back. He took me upstairs to a room and as soon as the door opened someone said, "bring her here, I'm going to fuck her." Then he pushed me down on my knees. ... They opened the door in front of the room and made me listen to the sounds of torture. I heard groaning and shouting, one of them belonged to my husband and the other to Z. A. Then they took me to another room, I felt like there was more than one person, there was more than one whisper. They asked me some questions again and I told them that I did not know anything. They started punching my back. Someone started to squeeze my throat, I couldn't breathe. Then he told me to put out my legs, which I did. They electrocuted under my feet, and someone else closed my mouth with his hand, and then they told me to stand up. They tied both of my feet. While I was standing, they took off my trousers and they started to electrocute my legs. Then they took me back to the cell. Two nights ago, they also called F. A. and asked her the same things, in which she responded, "I don't know I haven't seen anyone". They called her a bitch and a whore. They accused her of bearing and giving birth to children of murderers at home. F. A explained it to me in this way. They grabbed her hair and beat her by calling her a whore. They electrocuted her hands and feet. Among the 10 detained individuals, they took me and my husband to a room. They told us that they were not showing favour to anyone else. My husband was being threatened, I don't think this was done in good faith. I was transferred to the Criminal Court of Peace on 29.05.2019. After I was released, an elderly police officer with glasses came to me and said, "you will not talk to anyone on the phone except your husband." Then I was very anxious and called my lawyer. It was around 16.30."

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*"They started punching my back. Someone started to squeeze my throat, I couldn't breathe. Then he told me to put out my legs, which I did. They electrocuted under my feet, and someone else closed my mouth with his hand..." Torture victim G.A.*

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### **The Arrested Lawyers Initiative (TALI)**

The Arrested Lawyers Initiative is a European rights groups consisting mainly of lawyers from Turkish background trying to ensure lawyers and human rights defenders perform their duty without fear of intimidation, reprisal and judicial harassment. TALI is a member of the International Observatory for Lawyers.

[www.arrestedlawyers.org](http://www.arrestedlawyers.org)

### **Şanlıurfa Bar Association**

Şanlıurfa Bar Association was first established in 1952. Headed by Lawyer Abdullah Oncel, Şanlıurfa Bar Association became actively involved in the fight against torture. This current report was prepared by a commission of the Human Rights Center of the Bar Association which consisted of lawyers Abdullah Oncel, Velat Karahan, Necati Tas, Mevlut Gunes, Bahyettin Asoglu, Mustafa Vefa, Meral Halat, Lezgin Oktay, Ayse Sehriban Demirel, Vedat Tosun and intern Ali Aslan.

[www.sanliurfabarosu.org.tr](http://www.sanliurfabarosu.org.tr)