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Arrest of Ms Seher Tümer and members of KESK

Dear Prime Minister,

It is with increasing frustration that the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) must bring to your attention, a *further* example of human rights abuses against trade unionists in your country.

In June, the EPSU Congress, representing 8 million public service workers, [unanimously passed a motion](#) condemning the actions of the Turkish police against 43 members of the KESK Federation. However we are yet to receive a concrete response from your Government.

At this moment, 32 persons still remain in prison, without access to due process and in direct contravention of Council of Europe and ILO standards. One of those people **is Ms. Seher Tümer**, a Branch Secretary of EPSU affiliate SES (trade union of Public Employees in Health and Social Services).

Ms Tümer was arrested at the Zekai Tahir Burak Women Health Research and Education Hospital on 17th April 2009.

The reason for her arrest, as cited by the Turkish Police, was the discovery of routine trade union papers and notes in her house.

These papers and the fact the Ms Tümer participated in a meeting to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March and in celebrations of the Newroz spring festival on 22 March are now being used as evidence of, so called, "terrorist" activities.

Ms Tümer remains in custody, following a first trial on 28 July 2009 in Ankara's heavy penal criminal court (or Central Criminal Court). A second trial is scheduled for 27 August 2009.

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EPSU sees these intimidatory tactics as a blatant attempt to lower the resolve of public service union representatives, in advance of negotiations due to begin on 15 August.

We call on your Government to secure the release of Ms Tümer ahead of her trial on 27 August, as well as the release of all other detained KESK member.

Once again, we urgently call on your Government to take concrete steps to ensure that the rights of trade unions are recognised as a fundamental component of a functioning democratic society,

Yours sincerely,

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel
EPSU General Secretary

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