

November 21, 2011

President Abdullah Gül  
Office of the President  
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kosku  
Cankaya  
Ankara, Turkey

**Re: Professor Büşra Ersanlı**

Your Excellency:

I write to you on behalf of more than 15,000 US and international members of the American Political Science Association, a scholarly association that represents professors and students of political science. A number of our membership includes faculty and students at Marmara University and in Turkey.

It is with grave concern that we have read reports that Professor Büşra Ersanlı, a professor of political science at Marmara University in Istanbul, has been arrested. Professor Büşra Ersanlı is a professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations at Marmara University in Istanbul. According to Scholars at Risk, she also serves as a member of the constitutional commission of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). I understand from Scholars at Risk that Professor Ersanlı and dozens of others were arrested on October 28, 2011 in Istanbul during a police operation that appears to have targeted the BDP, and on November 1, 2011 Professor Ersanlı was charged with “membership in an illegal organization” under Turkey’s Anti-Terror Law, a charge which reflects the authorities’ allegation that the BDP is linked to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is banned in Turkey and designated a terrorist organization by multiple countries. I understand from Scholars at Risk that BDP publicly disavows this allegation, and we are not aware of any allegation that Professor Ersanlı is a member or otherwise associated with the PKK but rather that the charge against her stems only from her work on the intra-party constitutional commission of the BDP.

Absent any additional or contrary information, the facts as described appear to indicate that Professor Ersanlı was arrested and charged as a result of nonviolent expressive activity and association with others, conduct which is protected under international human rights instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Turkey is a signatory, and the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Turkey is party. According to Scholars at Risk, Professor Ersanlı’s arrest coincided with the start of an academic conference in which she was scheduled to participate, thereby also infringing on her ability to exercise academic freedom and to undertake professional exchanges with other scholars, acts also protected by international law.

## APSA Officers, 2011–2012

**G. Bingham Powell, Jr.**, *President*  
University of Rochester

**Jane Mansbridge**, *President-Elect*  
Harvard University

**Morris Fiorina**, *Vice President*  
Stanford University

**Kerstin Hamann**, *Vice President*  
University of Central Florida

**Niraja Gopal Jayal**, *Vice President*  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

**Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado**, *Treasurer*  
University of Nebraska, Omaha

**Lisa L. Martin**, *Secretary*  
University of Wisconsin, Madison

**Jeffrey M. Berry**  
Tufts University

**Michael C. Desch**  
University of Notre Dame

**Christopher F. Gelpi**  
Duke University

**Paul Gronke**  
Reed College

**Ange-Marie Hancock**  
University of Southern California

**Simon Hix**  
London School of Economics and  
Political Science

**Mala Htun**  
University of New Mexico

**David A. Lake**  
University of California, San Diego

**Taeku Lee**  
University of California, Berkeley

**Kenneth J. Meier**  
Texas A&M University

**Anne Norton**  
University of Pennsylvania

**Laura Katz Olson**  
Lehigh University

**Dara Z. Strolovitch**  
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

**Kathleen Thelen**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**Stephen M. Walt**  
Harvard University

**Angelia R. Wilson**  
University of Manchester

**Ronald Rogowski**, *Editor-in-Chief  
American Political Science Review*  
University of California, Los Angeles

**Jeffrey C. Isaac**, *Editor-in-Chief  
Perspectives on Politics*  
Indiana University

**John M. Carey**, *Annual Meeting  
Program Co-Chair*  
Dartmouth College

**Lynn Vavreck**, *Annual Meeting  
Program Co-Chair*  
University of California, Los Angeles

**Michael A. Brintnall**, *Executive Director*

I therefore respectfully urge you to intervene in Professor Ersanlı's case and to ensure that it proceeds in a manner consistent with Turkey's obligations under domestic and international law, in particular internationally recognized standards of due process, fair trial, free expression, and freedom of association. I also urge you to ensure Professor Ersanlı's well being in custody, including access to counsel and family, as well as to ensure reasonable opportunity for release on bail or bond pending the resolution of the proceedings, as I understand Professor Ersanlı has not been accused of violence and poses no threat of violence warranting pre-trial detention.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



G. Bingham Powell  
President, American Political Science Association

cc: Mr. Sadullah Ergin  
Minister of Justice  
06669 Kizilay  
Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 419 3370

The Honorable Hillary R. Clinton  
United States Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520, USA

Mr. Philip H. Gordon  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of European and Eurasian  
Affairs  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520, USA

The Honorable Namik Tan  
Ambassador of Turkey to the United  
States  
2525 Massachusetts Avenue  
Washington, DC 20008, USA  
Fax: + 202 612 67 44

The Honorable Navanethem Pillay  
United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights  
Office of the United Nations High  
Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva  
10, Switzerland

Scholars at Risk  
New York University  
194 Mercer Street, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10012, USA  
Fax: +1 212 995 4402  
E-mail: [scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu](mailto:scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu)