

APSA STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC REPRESSION IN TURKEY

[Be it resolved that] The American Political Science Association strongly condemns the continuing repression and persecution of Turkish Academics by the Erdogan government. Over 2,200 academics have been persecuted for signing a peace declaration entitled “We will not be party to this crime,” opposing Turkish military operations in the nation’s southeast in 2016. Known as “Academics for Peace,” these colleagues opposed the resumption of military hostilities and violence against Kurdish civilians and the imposition of months-long curfews against them. Since then over 500 have lost their jobs; distinguished academics including many political scientists have either taken early retirement or resigned from their positions; young scholars have had their research grants withdrawn. Many have left the country; others have had their passports taken away and prevented from joining their families living abroad; still other scholars in European countries have not had their passports extended- rendering them in effect stateless.

On Friday, July 26, 2019 Turkey’s Constitutional Court ruled that legal proceedings against a group of purged academics [violated their freedom of speech](#). While this ruling is welcome, it means neither the cessation of continuing trials against other members of the group nor does it reinstate them in their academic positions.

As members of the political science profession, we call upon the Turkish government to cease their persecution of academics, which, we believe, is greatly damaging the quality of future contributions of Turkey's scholars to political science and more generally the social sciences. In a democracy, freedom of expression, inside and outside the academy, is to be supported rather than crushed.