
OPEN LETTER

PROTECTING TRANSLATORS
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September 2015

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of the Republic of Turkey
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi
06560 Beştepe, Ankara
Turkey

Re: Appeal for Mohammed Ismael Rasool

Dear President Erdoğan,

The undersigned are writing to express our concern about the detention of Mohammed Ismael Rasool. As you are aware, Mr. Rasool was working as an interpreter for a VICE News team reporting from your country when its three members were arrested on August 27 and charged with aiding a terrorist organization. While the British journalist and cameraman were released after six days, we are deeply dismayed that the Iraqi interpreter is still being held.

By providing linguistic services to journalists reporting on topics of vital interest to the world, interpreters play a significant role in guarding the right to freedom of expression. As a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Turkey should respect that right rather than intimidate and prosecute interpreters using terrorism legislation.

On behalf of the international language community, Red T, a non-profit advocacy for translators and interpreters in high-risk settings, and the five major international language associations – the International Association of Conference Interpreters, the International Federation of

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Page 2

Translators, the International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters, Critical Link International and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters – urge you to release our colleague, Mr. Rasool, without delay.

Sincerely,

Maya Hess
President, Red T

Linda Fitchett
Chair, AIIC Conflict Zone Interpreters

Henry Liu
President, FIT

Aurora Humaràn
President, IAPTI

Angela Sasso
President, CLI

Debra Russell
President, WASLI

Cc:

Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister
Mr. Kenan İpek, Minister of Justice
Mr. Selami Altınok, Minister of Interior
Mr. İsmet Yılmaz, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly
Mr. Talal Jameel Salih Hasan Al-Obaidi, Ambassador of Iraq to Turkey