



## **Science Academy Statement on the Rejections of the “Academics for Peace” Applications by the Inquiry Commission on the State of Emergency Measures**

Since 28 October 2021, the “Inquiry Commission on the State of Emergency Measures (*sic.* ICSM)” has been systematically and at an accelerating rate turning down the applications of the Academics for Peace to be reinstated to their former positions. At least 324 appeals have been denied so far.<sup>1</sup> The Commission's decisions are openly in conflict with the jurisprudence of the Turkish Constitutional Court that has underscored the freedom of expression of the Academics for Peace in the relevant constitutional complaint.<sup>2</sup> The rejections of the appeals by the ICSM will lead to many lengthy proceedings before the administrative courts, further exacerbating the losses already suffered by the dismissed academics.

The applications lodged by the Academics for Peace before the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)<sup>3</sup> to break the wall of silence of the ICSM have not yet been concluded. Shortly before the ICSM started to issue the rejections, the ECHR had extended the time limit granted to the Turkish government to prepare its defence regarding the applications.<sup>4</sup> So far, it is unclear how the ECHR will interpret the verdicts of “rejection” issued by the ICSM in light of the fact that these rejections can be challenged in administrative courts and having regard to the exhaustion of domestic remedies requirement.

As emphasized in our previous statements, under the relevant constitutional case-law, it is necessary to compensate the losses and to reconstitute the academic guarantees of the Academics for Peace urgently and effectively in order to re-establish a free and inclusive scholarly environment. In our 2021 Report on Academic Freedoms<sup>5</sup> we had underlined that the victimization of the Academics for Peace should represent an agenda item of priority for domestic and international scholarly communities. We call upon all actors and institutions responsible for safeguarding the freedom of expression of the academic community to provide an urgent solution for this priority of concern.

Respectfully shared for the information of the public opinion.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Website of the “Academics for Peace”: <https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/314>

<sup>2</sup> Zübeyde Füsün Üstel ve Diğerleri (B. No: 2018/17635)

<sup>3</sup> <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-211060%22%5D%7D>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/aihm-baris-akademisyenleri-icin-hukumetten-istedigi-savunmanin-suresini-10-ocaka-uzatti-haber-1539143>

<sup>5</sup> <https://bilimakademisi.org/bilim-akademisi-akademik-ozgurlukler-raporu-2020-2021/>