

Minister of Justice
Abdulhamit Gul
Ministry of Justice
Adalet Bakanligi
06659 Ankara
Turkey

Dear Minister;

I am writing this to express my grave concern on four students from the Middle East Technical University (ODTÜ) who have been ordered to be released on bail. They had been detained for more than a month for 'insulting the President' over a banner displaying a caricature of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. They face up to four years in prison if found guilty.

I respectfully call on the authorities to ensure that all charges against the students are dropped.

I strongly call on the authorities to repeal Articles 299('insulting the president') and 125('criminal defamation') of the Turkish Penal Code which unfairly restrict the right to freedom of expression as guaranteed under international human rights law.

I lastly call on the authorities to ensure full respect and protection of the right to freedom of expression in Turkey.

Sincerely yours,