

Istanbul, April 12, 2021

Friends in solidarity,

Today is April 12, 2021. I have been detained in Turkey for two years.

It was two years ago today that my passport was confiscated in Istanbul, as a way to punish me for exercising my freedom of speech in France. Since that day I had to confront the stubborn silence of an autocracy, imprisonment, unfounded prosecutions, the obstinate recalcitrance in the face of my acquittals, the constant refusal to return my passport. The State that put me through this ordeal did not hesitate to violate its own laws.

During these two years, an international movement of solidarity has grown up around me. I wish to thank all those who have taken part. Before such a massive support of democratic values, the dykes of autocracy have crumbled: unlike most political prisoners in Turkey, I was quickly released from jail; I was acquitted; the Regional Court ruled promptly on the appeals. Finally, on April 2, the administrative court to which I had submitted an appeal of the refusal to return my passport has ruled in my favor.

Friends in solidarity, do not be abused! This is not the end. Before us stands a lawless and arbitrary power. The administrative court actually reached its decision as early as January 25, 2021, that is two months and a half before I was notified. Such a delay has no legal grounds. The State, which forced its own judges to this outrageous deferral, will not neglect to submit its appeal within 30 days (the legal deadline).

I call on all democratic forces in France. A new phase, hopefully the last, of this race of indefinite duration has just begun. We must remain mobilised.

Tuna Altunel