



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación
Bildungsinternationale

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President of the Republic of Turkey
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Brussels, 5 January 2016

Re: The urgent situation of teachers and students in the East of Turkey

Dear President,

Education International (EI), the global union federation of teachers representing 32 million members in more than 170 countries, is deeply concerned about ongoing violence in the East of Turkey.

We are particularly concerned about the safety and wellbeing of students and teachers. Our members in Turkey have brought to our attention that school buildings have been appropriated by army and police forces. We have also learnt that school teachers have received text messages from the authorities summoning them to leave the region and to attend ad hoc training programs without any further explanation given to them. As a result, hundreds of thousands of school children are unable to attend school.

EI calls on the Turkish authorities to bring the violent confrontations in Eastern Turkey to an end, to allow teachers to return to their workplaces, including those employed in Cizre and Silopi, and to have military and police forces vacate all school buildings they currently occupy, so that classes can be resumed as soon as possible.

We urge you to make every possible effort to protect the rights and interests of all children in the conflict area. Giving them unlimited access to their schools, which are to be safe sanctuaries, would be an important first step.

We have informed UNICEF and UNESCO about our concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary

Copies to:

Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu
Minister of Justice, Bekir Bozdağ
Minister of Interior, Efkân Ala
Minister of National Education, Nabi Avcı
Speaker of the Parliament, İsmail Kahraman