**Truth Commissions: Turkey in Light of World Experience**

**Biographies of Speakers**

**İsmail Beşikçi**

Sociologist and writer Beşikçi has publications on Kurds, founding of the Turkish Republic and one party era. When he was a research assistant at Erzurum Atatürk University, he was tried for Marxism and separatism after the 1971 coup; and finally he was fired from the university. Because of his research and books on Kurdish question, Beşikçi was sentenced to prison 8 times and has been in prison for 17 years. 32 of his 36 published books were banned in Turkey. His doctoral dissertation titled “A Sociological Analysis of the Alikan Clan” is accepted as one of the milestones of sociological research in Turkey.

**Aryeh Neier**

Aryeh Neier is the president of Open Society Foundation. Prior to joining Open Society Foundations in 1993, he served for 12 years as executive director of Human Rights Watch, of which he was a founder in 1978. Before that, he worked 15 years at the American Civil Liberties Union, including eight years as national executive director. As a human rights activist, Neier has led investigations of human rights abuses around the world, including his role in the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

Neier is a frequent contributor to the New York Review of Books, and has published in periodicals such as the New York Times Magazine, the New York Times Book Review, and Foreign Policy. For a dozen years he wrote a column on human rights for The Nation. He has contributed more than a 150 op-ed articles in newspapers including the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Boston Globe, and the International Herald Tribune. Author of six books, including his most recent, Taking Liberties (2003), Neier has also contributed chapters to more than 20 books.

Neier served as an adjunct professor of law at New York University for more than a dozen years. He has lectured at many of the country’s leading universities. He is the recipient of six honorary degrees and the American Bar Association’s Gavel Award and the International Bar Association’s Rule of Law Award.

**Madeleine Fullard**

She is a historian and former researcher at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Her research for the TRC included extensive archival analysis of the security records of the previous apartheid government, regional studies of political violence, studies of particular perpetrator groupings and analysis of amnesty applications. She currently works with the National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa on post-TRC prosecutions and investigations into persons who disappeared during political conflict. She works especially on truth commissions and forced disappearances.

**Hüsnü Öndül**

Graduated from Ankara University Faculty of Law, Öndül is one of the founders of Human Rights Association (İHD), Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TİHV) and Progressive Lawyers Association (ÇHD). He served in managerial positions in all three organizations. Currently, he is the president of İHD Human Rights Academy and the member of the Human Rights Joint Platform board. He wrote the "Ankara Torture Reports" of 1988, 1989 and 1990 for İHD Ankara branch, the book entitled "The Copenhagen Political Criteria and Turkey" for the İHD head office, and "Turkish Urban Rights Legislation" for the Turkish Union of Chamber of Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) together with lawyer Cengiz Çekiç. He prepared the "Training of Lawyers in Individual Appeals to the European Court/Commission of Human Rights" and "Training of Trainers Program" for İHD head office. He won Human Rights Award from the German Judges Association in 1995, Human Rights Award from Mazlum-Der in 2001, and Peace and Democracy Award from the Chamber of Physicians in 2005.

**Félix Reátegui-Carrillo**

Mr. Félix Reátegui is a professor at the Social Science Department of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP) in Lima, Perú. He is a member of the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights of the PUCP where he works as director of the Research Unit. During 2001-2003, Mr. Reátegui-Carrillo worked in Perú Truth and Reconciliation Commission as senior advisor to the Chairman of the Commission, Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres, and as chief of the Final Report Unit. The Final Report was delivered in August, 2003. Mr. Reátegui-Carrillo was commissioned to write the abridged version of the Report, *Hatun Willakuy* (“A High Narrative” in quechua), which was published in 2004. Since 2004, Mr. Reátegui-Carrillo has been working as a consultant on memory and truth commissions, mainly with the International Center for Transitional Justice.

**Fikri Sağlar**

Graduated from Hacettepe University Department of Business Administration, Fikri Sağlar was elected deputy of the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) in 1983. He served as a member of the Presidential Board, Culture and Art Publishing Committee, Planning and Budget Commission, Public Enterprises Commission, National Defense Commission and National Education Commission at the Parliament and took part in Susurluk Investigation Commission. He served as Secretary General of SHP, Vice Chairman, Deputy Secretary General and a member of Central Executive Board of CHP (the Republican People's Party). He also served as the Minister of Culture and the Minister of State in charge of Marine during the 49th, 50th and 52nd governments. He is also the author of two books entitled “Code Name Susurluk” and “Contemporary Culture from National to the Global” (4 volumes).

**Şefika Gürbüz**

Şefika Gürbüz graduated from Anadolu University School of Social Sciences. In 1996, she served as the head of HADEP’s (People’s Democracy Party) Bakırköy organization and in 1999 she was a member of the board of the party’s Istanbul provincial organization. Between 2000 and 2009, she was president of the Social Cooperation with Migrants and Culture Association (GÖÇ-DER), which works for Kurdish IDPs. She was a member of BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) party assembly. Currently, she has been working on a book on IDP issues in Turkey.

**Nataša Kandić**

Nataša Kandić is the founder and executive director of the Humanitarian Law Center –a Belgrade based human rights NGO. She leads the Humanitarian Law Center in its mission to assist post-Yugoslav societies to re-establish the rule of law and come to terms with the legacy of massive and systematic violations of human rights. She advocates a regional approach to transitional justice and the official establishment of a regional commission to investigate and disclose the facts about war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. Nataša Kandić is a recipient of over 20 international, regional and national human rights awards.

**Tahir Elçi**

Tahir Elçi graduated from Dicle University Faculty of Law. He has been working as a lawyer in Diyarbakır since 1992. He has represented many victims of torture, extra-judicial killings, and forced disappearances in ECHR. Currently, he is representing the victims in the cases of “Temizöz and others” and “JITEM” (one of the counter-guerilla organizations), which are strategically important in the transitional justice process. He is also one of the founders of Human Rights Foundation of Turkey and was a member in the administration of Diyarbakır Bar Association.

**Vasuki Nesiah**

Vasuki Nesiah is Assoc. Prof. of Practice at the Gallatin School in New York University where she teaches human rights, law and social theory and international legal studies. Prior to joining Gallatin, she taught in the International Relations and Gender Studies at Brown University where she also served as Director of International Affairs. She has taught at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and continues as core faculty in the summer workshop of the Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard Law School. Before entering the academy full time, Nesiah spent several years in practice at the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) where she worked on law and policy issues in the field of post-conflict human rights. At ICTJ Nesiah was Senior Associate heading ICTJ's work in several countries in Asia and Africa; she also founded and headed ICTJ's Gender Program, overseeing gender and transitional justice work across all its programs globally.

**Eren Keskin**

Eren Keskin is a lawyer who has served as vice chairperson of Human Rights Association and chairperson of the Istanbul branch. She has been working on a legal support project for sexual harassment and rape in custody cases for the last ten years. She has been sent to trial for several times; imprisoned for 6 months because of an interview published in a magazine in 1995; taken under custody countless times; her attorney license has been annulled for one year and she has been subject to armed attack twice. She has been rewarded by Amnesty International, Basque Government, Laborer Women Union, Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association and Progressive Lawyers Association for her work in the human rights field and received Aachen Peace Award, 2005 Theodor Haecker Civic Courage and Political Sincerity Prize and 2006 Diyarbakir Kurdish PEN Freedom of Thought Award.