

**Dr. Alan Mitchell**

President of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and  
Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)

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**Dear Dr. Mitchell,**

We, the concerned members of an international network comprised from various NGOs, trade unions, political parties, and European Parliament members, are writing to you following our EP conference with an urgent appeal that requires your immediate consideration. We are joined by thousands of supporters who will peacefully gather around the headquarters of the CPT and CoE for five days of protest in the hope of gaining your attention.

For the past 36 months, Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is seen by millions of Kurds as their rightful political representative, has been held in an extreme form of incommunicado detention by the Turkish state on the prison island of Imrali. During this illegal and inhumane isolation, Mr. Öcalan has been “disappeared” and dropped into a void of “non-existence,” while being denied all contact with the outside world, including his lawyers and family. Throughout this period, Turkey has attempted to transform Imrali Island into a “floating coffin”. Mr. Öcalan, who is now 75 years old, has been subjected to cruel torture through isolation for 25 years and over the last three years, no information has been provided concerning his health. At this point, even his whereabouts cannot be confirmed, and his physical condition is a highly sensitive issue for many Kurds who see him as embodying their national voice.

This is why we are kindly asking you, the CPT, to act. As the CPT, you are entitled to visit all places of detention of states which are party to the Convention, including Turkey. This affords you the ability to send your team of experts to Imrali, where the Turkish government must grant you unrestricted access to visit where Mr. Öcalan is being held captive and allow you to interview him in private so he can communicate with you freely.

We would like the CPT to act in accordance with Article 3 of the CoE Statute, which states that: *“Every member of the Council of Europe must accept the principles of the rule of law and the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”* Mr. Öcalan is a citizen of a CoE member state that has been denying him his human rights for two and half decades, and for the last three years, has been depriving him of his legal rights to meet with his lawyers and speak with his family.

All we ask, with complete sincerity, is that you please immediately send a delegation to visit Imrali Island to speak with Mr. Öcalan and check on his well-being. Following that, we would greatly appreciate if you could encourage Turkey to allow him to receive a visit from his family and lawyers, so that they are in compliance with CoE and CPT obligations. This would help address an urgent human rights issue and concern for millions of Kurds and could also renew the spirit of reconciliation, which is needed to find a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue in Turkey.

With gratitude for your time and hope that you receive this as a heartfelt plea,

The International Solidarity Network behind the

‘Freedom for Ocalan: A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question’ Campaign