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WHRC STANDS WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS IN TURKEY AS THEIR GOVERNMENT WITHDRAWS FROM THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

The Women's Human Rights Campaign stands with the women and girls of Turkey, as they demand their government reverse its decision to withdraw from the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

The Istanbul Convention was the first legally binding instrument to establish a comprehensive legal framework to combat violence against women. Turkey was the first country to ratify the convention in May 2011, setting an example for the global community. The Convention recognised that violence against women was a social mechanism by which women, as a sex, are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. It was designed to address these societal inequalities by requiring governments to adopt legislation to prosecute domestic violence, child marriage, marital rape and female genital mutilation.

Turkey's withdrawal from the Convention is a backward step in the struggle to protect women's rights and is deeply concerning. In the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic, a "shadow pandemic" of violence perpetrated by men has exploded on to the female populations across the globe (WHO 9.3.21). Figures for femicide in Turkey, collated by Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz (<http://www.kadincinayetleriniurduracagiz.net>), show that 409 women were killed in 2020.

WHRC is concerned that the actions of the Turkish government risk compromising the protection and fundamental rights of women and girls in Turkey, secured without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin and sends a dangerous example.

We add our voice to the thousands raising theirs in protest across Turkey, as we say, honour the commitment you made.

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The Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights has been signed by 16,001 individuals in Turkey and 128 other countries, and by 317 organisations around the world.

The Women's Human Rights Campaign advocates for the sex-based rights of all women and girls through the reaffirming of existing rights as laid out in the Women's Human Rights Declaration (website). Article 8 reaffirms the elimination of violence against women. The WHRC has been signed by 16,001 individuals in 129 countries, and by 317 Organisations around the world.