

International Human Rights Academy of the Aegean

Autumn Workshop of 2017

Background of the Academy:

The International Human Rights Academy of the Aegean (IHRAA) was founded by the Committee of International Law of the ÖHP (Platform of the Lawyers for Freedom) in 2017. Turkey and especially its Aegean shores are known for their thousands of years of history and their contributions to philosophy, science and democratic institutions of the world. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Herodotus, Homer, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, Xenophanes all lived in the areas that belong to today's Turkey. Most of them were prosecuted, criminalized, tried, imprisoned and even killed by the rulers of ancient times. However, in spite of this oppression their work and ideas have given inspiration to following generations. People's advancement has never stopped and those who were punished have been immortalized through their work.

Today, Turkey is in a catastrophic situation. Fights between rival reactionary powers ended with a coup attempt in the summer of 2016. In the days following the coup attempt the Turkish government declared a State of Emergency which still continues. Many fundamental rights have been suspended for an indefinite time period and the government has not hesitated to use its extraordinary powers against the progressive forces of Turkey. Thousands of workers and officers were dismissed by statutory decrees, hundreds of journalists were arrested without any legitimate explanation, the rights of the lawyers to represent their clients were denied, and human rights activists have faced harsh penalties. Hundreds of academics were among those who lost their jobs.

The founders of the International Human Rights Academy of the Aegean believe that the situation that we are living in is one of the worst in the history of Anatolia. However, we are not hopeless. As the progressive human rights lawyers of Turkey we believe that we should raise our voices in one of the darkest times. We should take joint action with our colleagues and comrades in the other countries of the world. We should show the oppressors that we were here in ancient times, we were here before, we are here now and we will be here in future, despite all atrocities!

Our Goals:

The aim of the International Human Rights Academy of the Aegean is to show that the culture of learning, discussion, production and sharing of land persists even in the darkest days. Turkey risks distancing itself further from the modern democracies of the world. Therefore, IHRAA wishes to bring human rights defenders from all countries together to discuss and analyze human rights norms and develop strategies for applying these norms in Turkey and around the world.

IHRAA's ultimate goal is to establish a human rights village in the Aegean coast with educational and organizing purposes, where the largest human rights library would be built and a human rights museum would be founded. The IHRAA is aiming to work throughout the year. It will organize

different types of human rights activities such as conferences and education programs until its ultimate objectives are reached.

Subject of the Autumn Workshop of 2017: “Academic Freedom”

The Autumn Workshop of 2017 is one of these activities of the IHRAA. “Academic Freedom” has been chosen as this year’s topic. Turkish academics have faced all types of oppression during the last year. Many of the speakers of our workshop are among those who lost their positions in universities and other institutions over the past year. Their experiences will undoubtedly be shared with the participants. However, the Autumn Workshop of 2017 aims to include a wider discussion of academic freedom with outside perspectives and contributions from the national and international participants. The workshop will be translated simultaneously in English so as to be inclusive for all participants.

Some of the subjects planned for discussion in this workshop include; the legal basis of academic freedom in human rights law, the concept of academic freedom in international law, academic freedom as a constitutional right, the relationship between a free society and academic freedom, and academic freedom and its effect on production of knowledge. Our activities would use a multidisciplinary method incorporating international law, political science, sociology and philosophy. After the morning sessions in larger amphitheatres, participants will form smaller groups sessions to share their experiences. We also expect the participants to determine thematic areas for activities for the following years.

Target Group:

Our target group are human rights activists and professionals, academics, lawyers, university students and those who have a demonstrated interest in human rights issues .

Fees, Application Procedures, Facilities:

Due to the limited accommodation facilities in the Nesin Maths and Philosophy Village the IHRAA Autumn Workshop had to restrict the number of participants to 60 individuals.

All the IHRAA activities are free, however, the participants should pay for room and board: 20 Euros for the tents and 30 Euros for the dormitory rooms per day. Payments should be made directly to the accounts of Nesin Village/Foundation. Internet, meals (4 times in a day), accommodation and other basic needs are included in this price.

Nesin Village is also a non-profit progressive organization aiming to provide care and education for children and others. Nesin Village was founded through the estate of the famous Turkish writer and humorist Aziz Nesin. (See: <https://www.nesinkoyleri.org/eng/>)

Cultural Events:

The cultural events and day trips to ancient cities are also included to our program. There will be a film screening night and the Maestro İbrahim Yazıcı has agreed to perform a classical music concert in the village theatre. (Please see one of Mr. Yazıcı's works in the following link: <https://youtu.be/e32iN2rmUXs?t=6m1s>)

Organizers:

The IHRAA Autumn Workshop of 2017 on the Academic Freedom is organized with the support of ÖHP (Platform of Lawyers for Freedom), IADL (International Association of Democratic Lawyers) and ELDH (European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and Human Rights).

Application Link:

The applications should be made online from the following link:

<https://tr.surveymonkey.com/r/K9W8BH7>

Link of the Program:

The program of the workshop can be seen here:

http://85.111.17.208/nvetkinlik/etkinlikler/2017_eiho/eih_program_en.pdf

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Web Site of IHRAA:

www.egeinsanhaklariokulu.org

Related Web Page of Nesin Village:

<https://www.nesinkoyleri.org/etkinlik-detay.php?egitimkod=204#hakkinda>

Facebook Page of IHRAA:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/egeinsanhaklariokulu/>