

The Better Justice Association presented the “Turkish Judicial Reform A to Z” at the Council of Europe

Att. Mehmet Gün: “Our proposals sparked interest”

18.04.2024

On 16-18 April 2024, a delegation representing the Better Justice Association presented the “Turkish Judicial Reform - A to Z” proposal, aiming at a better qualified and higher quality judicial service, to the members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (“PACE”) and CoE Committees in Strasbourg, France.

On 16 April, the delegation represented by the Better Justice Association President Att. Mehmet Gün, Board Member Prof. Ali Murat Vural, Secretary General Ms Tuğçe Özbilen and Director of Communications Ms Beyza Berber, met with Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (“Monitoring Committee”) member, Austrian parliamentarian Mr Stefan Schennach; UK Delegate to PACE, British parliamentarian Lord George Foulkes, and Chairman of the PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Lord Richard Keen. A meeting with Ms Eriha Bicakcic, Deputy Director of the Office of the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, was also held. The following day on 17 April, the delegation held meetings with Mr Pierre Garrone, Head of Division of Elections and Political Parties of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (better known as the “Venice Commission”); Mr George Panandreu, General Rapporteur on Democracy for the PACE Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy and also former Greek President and Minister of Foreign Affairs; and PACE member Mr Jeremy Corbyn. The day ended with a meeting with representatives of the PACE Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (the ALDE Group).

The last meeting of the mission was held on 18 April with Ambassador Sandy Moss, the UK Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe.

During the meetings at the Council of Europe, President of the Better Justice Association, Att. Mehmet Gün shared the following information:

“A decade ago, our politically neutral, non-governmental organisation was established with the aim to identify judicial challenges in Türkiye, to develop solutions challenges and problems identified, to work towards social consensus on proposals for solutions and to implement these solutions. Our objective is to contribute to the transformation of Türkiye, for a more peaceful, productive, internationally competitive and prosperous society, where a culture of conciliation prevails through the advancement and improvement of the judiciary. In striving toward this goal, we have been sharing our proposal with the public by means of the “Turkish Judicial Reform - A to Z” during the Economy and Law Meetings we have been organising at the national level for the last two years. In addition, we take all possible opportunities to present and introduce our proposals abroad. In the recent past, we have

had the opportunity to share our reform proposals at the Parliament of the United Kingdom and EU institutions in Brussels. And now we had the pleasure of being able to present our proposals for reform to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Our approach to the issue from the perspective of designing a judiciary which provides quality services was deemed impressive, and our nine fundamental reform proposals, among which we proposal a Supreme Authority of Justice and a Supreme Court of Justice, sparked interest. In our meetings with representatives of the Council of Europe, there certainly was agreement that, in order for a national to ensure both protection of human rights and improved welfare, there is a need for an effective and efficient, fully independent and accountable judiciary.

We shall continue to maintain our contacts abroad. Our aim is to show European institutions and counterparts working with and monitoring Türkiye that they have a politically neutral and expert contact in the judicial sector in Türkiye, and to be a focal point which European institutions can consult in regard to discussions on judicial independence, rule of law, human rights violations and judicial processes in Türkiye. The positive reactions we received during our meetings in Strasbourg was an indicator that we can contribute to the work of European institutions in our areas of expertise. We will continue to present our proposals on judicial reform.”