



Dear Yilmaz,

We are contacting you on the subject of the past month alleged acts of tortured and other in-treatment inflicted on students detained during the raids carried out between 5 and 7 at Boğaziçi University (Istanbul).

Witnesses have reported to the media and several global organizations that law enforcement officers used tear gas against the generally peaceful crowd - some 500 people - and several protesters (approximately 17 people) were detained on the ground, arrested or abused including two LGBTI + students who received threats of rape with batons and insults related to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

The election of a new university public officer, in this case Professor Melih Bulu as rector of the university, must be transparent and students have the right to civically protest if there are suspicious of manipulation and influence of government parties in such decision.

In accordance with the two international human rights law conventions to which Turkey is a State Party, and with its own national legislation, the exercise of the right to peaceful assembly cannot be arbitrarily impeded. The OSCE Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly found that “the use of violence by a small number of participants in a meeting (including the use of provocative language) does not automatically turn an otherwise peaceful meeting into a non-peaceful one, therefore, possible interventions should focus on the specific people responsible and not on the dissolution of the act”. In addition, both Turkish law and international law prohibit torture and other ill-treatment in all circumstances.

In this regard, we are calling the Turkish authorities to investigate the aforementioned reported acts by protestors, dissolve the charges against them and to provide clarity on how the election of the new Boğaziçi University rector.

Madrid, 12 of February of 2021.

Yours Sincerely,

**Carmen García de Merlo**  
President of COGAM