CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE USA
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

4.18.13

TURKEY | Court Case Continues on Anniversary of Malatya Murders

April 18 marks the sixth anniversary of the murders of three Christians at a publishing house in Malatya, eastern Turkey.

On April 18, 2007, Turkish citizens Necati Aydin and Ugur Yuksel and Tillman Geske, a German citizen, were tortured and killed at the offices of Zirve Publishing House, a Christian publishing house, by five young Muslims.

The trial of the five alleged murderers began on Nov. 22, 2007 at the Third Criminal Court in Malatya. It has been prolonged due to the prosecutors' desire to prove the killings were part of a high-level clandestine scheme to undermine the government through acts of terror. In September 2012, and just two days before the next phase of the trial, two judges and two prosecutors were removed by the Turkish Justice Ministry, leaving just one judge familiar with the case.

Erdal Dogan, a prominent human rights defender who works as legal counsel for the victims' families, has received death threats, including from one of the defendants, Varol Bulent Aral, who threatened him during a hearing on March 8, 2013.

CSW's Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, "On the sixth anniversary of their deaths, we celebrate the lives of Necati, Ugur and Tilman, and once more offer up prayers for their families, friends and for all those working on this case. They have not been forgotten, and we are committed to monitoring the progress of this case through the courts until justice is finally served."