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## With Grief and Anger

In 2008 IFE-EFI members were invited to represent and to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> of March in Urfa, Kurdish city in Turkey. Every year thousands of Kurdish women come to Urfa to celebrate Women's Day. On the way to Urfa the cars were stopped several times by the Turkish military police searching for weapons, also in the Mayor's Car. The Mayor was a female Kurdish politician. The guests from IFE-EFI felt these interventions as harassments in order to delay the celebrations in Urfa and to humiliate the women. After the celebration they participate in Diyarbakir to a demonstration for Kurdish young women, victims of honour killing from all over the world. During the following days they visited a lot of women's organisations. They heard in the centres many harsh stories from women/victims of harassments and abuse or punished by their own family blamed on honour in the Kurdish rural districts. One of the last days of the visit IFE-EFI representatives were invited to Leyla Zana's home and got a personal talk with her for some hours. She was at that time prohibited to access to any meeting neither was she allowed to speak.

*Leyla Zana*

*Kurdish deputy, MP, politician and freedom fighter Leyla Zana was sentenced on May 24<sup>th</sup> to 10 years in prison for speeches she made four years ago. In 1994 she was the first Kurdish woman in the Turkish parliament, but she was sentenced to prison for 15 years for wearing the Kurdish colours (red, yellow and green) as a hair band and speaking Kurdish on the floor of the parliament after being sworn in, together with four other colleagues.*

*When taking the parliamentary oath, she ended with this in Kurdish:*

*"I swear by my honour and my dignity before the great Turkish people to protect the integrity and independence of the State, the indivisible unity of people and homeland, and the unquestionable and unconditional sovereignty of the people. I swear loyalty to the Constitution. I take this oath for the*

*brotherhood between the Turkish people and the Kurdish people."*

*She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995 and in 1998 and was awarded the 1995 Sakharov Prize by the European Parliament, but was unable to collect it until her release in 2004. She was also awarded the Rafto Prize in 1994 after being recognized by the Rafto Foundation for being incarcerated for her peaceful struggle for the human rights of the Kurdish people in Turkey and the neighbouring countries.*

Now we have heard the bad news that Leyla Zana once again has been sentenced to prison.

IFE-EFI strongly protest against this and express our support to Leyla Zana and the Kurdish people in Turkey for Human Rights and Freedom of Speech and Expression.

IFE-EFI Coordination Meeting

Paris, The 3rd of June 2012