



*“He who touches gets burnt”**

A debate on dwindling freedom to publish in modern Turkey

29 September, 2017

Gothenburg Book Fair

Time: 15:00 Room:

The relentless erosion of freedom of expression and freedom to publish in Turkey is well known. Human rights defenders worldwide have watched in horror as a stream of writers, publishers and journalists, as well as teachers, academics and anyone else who crosses the government has been marched off to prison.

The failed putsch in July 2016 that left more than 200 people dead handed President Erdogan a convenient pretext to declare a state of emergency and assume sweeping powers that would enable him to purge any remaining dissenters.

No one has been spared: publishers, authors, journalists, media executives, broadcasters, social media users. Anyone with the means to voice an alternative opinion of what is best for Turkey can expect retribution through the full force of what passes for the law under Erdogan.

In this discussion, organized by the Geneva-based **International Publishers Association**, we will hear from some of the courageous people on the front line in the fight for freedom to publish in Turkey today.

Moderator:

Kristenn Einarsson, chair of the IPA Freedom to Publish Committee

Panellists:

Yonca Cingöz, head of international relations, Turkish Publishers Association.

Using data gathered on the ground, Yonca will detail the deterioration of freedom to publish in Turkey over the last year.

Elif Günay, daughter of Turhan Günay, recipient of the 2017 *IPA Prix Voltaire*

Elif will speak on behalf of her father, **Turhan Günay**, an executive at the Cumhuriyet newspaper's book publishing section, Cumhuriyet Books, and this year's joint recipient of the *IPA Prix Voltaire*. Turhan was arrested in November 2016 and accused of aiding terrorism through his work. After 270 days behind bars his trial opened on 24 July, and he was released four days later with seven of his 16 Cumhuriyet co-defendants.

Cavit Nacitarhan, Editor in Chief, Evrensel publishing house, recipient of the 2017 *IPA Prix Voltaire*

Cavit will give an insider's view of the period leading up to the summary closure of Evrensel and the challenges of operating as a free and independent publisher in Turkey today.

Kenan Kocatürk, president Turkish Publishers Association

The ongoing state of emergency in Turkey is posing enormous challenges for the TPA and the industry it represents. Kenan Kocatürk explains.

Elisabeth Åsbrink, author and journalist, chair of Swedish PEN.

Elisabeth will explore how the Turkish situation fits into the international picture of human rights advocacy, and describe the most effective responses from international free expression defenders.

*The subtitle of 'The Imam's Army', by imprisoned Turkish writer Ahmet Şık