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# OPEN LETTER

PROTECTING TRANSLATORS  
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September 2015

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan  
President of the Republic of Turkey  
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi  
06560 Beştepe, Ankara  
Turkey

## **Re: Appeal for Mohammed Ismael Rasool**

Dear President Erdoğan,

The undersigned are writing to express our concern about the detention of Mohammed Ismael Rasool. As you are aware, Mr. Rasool was working as an interpreter for a VICE News team reporting from your country when its three members were arrested on August 27 and charged with aiding a terrorist organization. While the British journalist and cameraman were released after six days, we are deeply dismayed that the Iraqi interpreter is still being held.

By providing linguistic services to journalists reporting on topics of vital interest to the world, interpreters play a significant role in guarding the right to freedom of expression. As a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Turkey should respect that right rather than intimidate and prosecute interpreters using terrorism legislation.

On behalf of the international language community, Red T, a non-profit advocacy for translators and interpreters in high-risk settings, and the five major international language associations – the International Association of Conference Interpreters, the International Federation of

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Translators, the International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters, Critical Link International and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters – urge you to release our colleague, Mr. Rasool, without delay.

Sincerely,

Maya Hess  
President, Red T

Linda Fitchett  
Chair, AIIC Conflict Zone Interpreters

Henry Liu  
President, FIT

Aurora Humarán  
President, IAPTI

Angela Sasso  
President, Critical Link International

Debra Russell  
President, WASLI

Cc:

Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister  
Mr. Kenan İpek, Minister of Justice  
Mr. Selami Altınok, Minister of Interior  
Mr. İsmet Yılmaz, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly  
Mr. Talal Jameel Salih Hasan Al-Obaidi, Ambassador of Iraq to Turkey