

Assassination Plot Puts IN Network's Turkey Director at Risk

✖ Tensions are high for Christians in Turkey as the IN Network director continues to be under guard and surveillance following death threats.

An assassination plot by the ultra-nationalist group Ergenekon to kill the IN Network Turkey director, as reported earlier in March. Since then, the government has stepped up measures to protect him.

Rody Rodeheaver with IN Network says: "Our staff person continues to have a bodyguard that goes with him everywhere. And there are other types of surveillance that the police are using to protect both him and his family."

Ergenekon is a group whose sole purpose is to prevent the government from entering into the European Union. The Turkish government applied for entrance in 1987 and became a candidate country in 1999. This terrorist group wants to prevent this process from going any further.

Rodeheaver says the group hatched the assassination plot "in order to embarrass the Turkish government and impede their entry into the European Union."

While the government historically has been slow to bring justice, this case seems to have prompted more action on their part.

According to Rodeheaver: "This terrorist organization has been spotlighted by the government, and various members of that group have been arrested. Those members are in various levels of society, all the way from retired army generals to professors in universities to just the average person on the street."

With all the tension and persecution Christians receive in Turkey, this latest incident has members of IN Network a little on edge. The emotional toll on team members will not stop their ministry, but it does have an effect.

"You always have to ask the question, 'What will happen if ...?'" says Rodeheaver. "And being a Christian, I think that puts an extra edge on ministry and everything you do. They will continue to do their ministry, but the emotional impact of this can't be denied."

It makes for a confusing situation, since the government says they are committed to religious diversity. But the overarching mindset of society is this: if you are a Turk, then you are a Muslim. Rodeheaver states that Turks who go on to say they are Christians are often treated with suspicion and are seen as a threat. Unfortunately, often that

suspicion
turns into persecution.

Please pray that the threats on the director's life would leave. Pray
for justice in the government as they handle cases of persecution in the church.

IN Network's mission to proclaim the name of Christ to the people of Turkey will not stop. If anything, the church grows and flourishes in times of trial and fire. And when the Gospel is being shared, not even threats or persecution or death itself can stop faithful followers of Christ.