

Turkish Prosecutor Seeks 35 Years Imprisonment for Pastor Andrew Brunson

Pastor Andrew Brunson's Turkish attorney was able to confirm today that the prosecutor has indeed turned in an indictment to the court covering two of the five allegations and asking for 35 years in prison, which in reality amounts to a life sentence for pastor Brunson, who is 50 years old.

This action finally occurring almost one and a half years after pastor Brunson's arrest. The court will now have 15 days to return a decision on the indictment. If approved, the case will proceed and the prosecution phase will begin.

As you recall, pastor Brunson was originally detained by Turkish authorities in Izmir on Oct. 7, 2016, despite having committed no crime and having peacefully lived out his religious beliefs in service to the people of Turkey for over two decades. Pastor Brunson's case has not only caught the world's attention, but also that of President Trump, who himself has demanded pastor Brunson's release on several occasions. However, as indicated by President Erdoğan's recent demand to swap pastor Brunson for Fethullah Gülen, it seems pastor Brunson has become a political prisoner and bargaining chip for Turkey.

Incredibly, no evidence has been put forth to substantiate any of the ridiculous accusations against pastor Brunson, and although he has been allowed legal representation since Dec. 9, 2016, all discussions with his attorney are recorded, and his legal file has been sealed, completely destroying the ability to prepare an adequate defense and obliterating all rights to due process. If the case now moves forward, the file should no longer be sealed, and pastor Brunson and his

attorneys should finally be able to have access to the alleged evidence and secret witness.

These actions by Turkey will now be evaluated by the incoming secretary of state, former Congressman Mike Pompeo, an attorney and former military captain, who is currently the head of the CIA. He is replacing Secretary Rex Tillerson, who just recently visited Turkey as a part of a newly established working group created to repair U.S. and Turkey relations.

We have been working closely with the State Department fighting for pastor Brunson's release, and we look forward to continuing to do so under the leadership of the new secretary of state. Join with us in this fight for freedom. Sign our petition today.

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