

Reporters Without Borders

http://www.rsf.org/cyprus-concern-over-car-bomb-attack-and-07-04-2011_39975.html

Europe & ex-USSR - Cyprus

Worrying resumption of violence against journalists

Concern over car bomb attack and threats against journalists

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Reporters Without Borders is outraged by a bomb attack during the night of the 5 April 2011 in Nicosia on **Mutlu Esendemir**, who is the news editor of *Kanal T* (a Turkish-Cypriot TV station owned by finance minister Ersin Tatar) and a reporter for the Turkish-Cypriot daily *Kribrisli*.



Mutlu Esendemir

The improvised explosive device, which was placed underneath **Esendemir's** car while he was inside the TV station, exploded as he tried to open the car's door at about 1 a.m. He was hospitalized with minor leg injuries. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

"A thorough enquiry must be carried out by the authorities to identify not only the perpetrators of this murder attempt but also those behind it," Reporters Without Borders said. "If this attack goes unpunished it will only encourage the perpetrators to continue their attempts to create a climate of violence, which would have very negative consequences for all the media. We also urge authorities to provide Esendemir

and his family with protection if he requests it."

Reporters Without Borders also strongly condemns the threats made by Mehmet Salih Bayramoglu of the "London Solidarity Association," a UK-based group that supports Northern Cyprus's ruling National Unity Party (UBP), against **Cenk Mutluyakah**, the editor of Turkish-Cypriot opposition daily *Yeniduzen*.

Cenk Mutluyakah

Using crude and insulting language in an email sent directly to Mutluyakah, Bayramoglu wrote: "You would do well not to underestimate us. You dreamed up this article (...) If you are so sure of yourself, I promise you that we will meet. If you fail to apologize tomorrow in your newspaper, we will show you (...) I expect you to publish an apology to the UBP's London Solidarity Association or else you will be responsible for what could happen to you."

The threat was prompted by an article in *Yeniduzen* that included content originally published by the official Turkish press agency *TAK*. The *TAK* story reported that the UBP's London Solidarity Association had issued a press release in which it apologized for including erroneous Internet links in a letter to the state prosecutor. In the letter, the association accused the general-secretary of the Turkish-Cypriot teachers union, Sener Elcil, of treachery for participating in a demonstration in



Brussels denouncing Turkey's assimilation of Turkish Cypriots.

"We call for an urgent investigation into the president of UPB's London Solidarity Association, who must take full responsibility for what he writes," Reporters Without Borders said. "Such remarks are not covered by freedom of expression. Pressure brought to bear in the form of written words couched in such violent terms is unacceptable, especially when they emanate from a well-known individual occupying such a position."

The organization added: "The attack on **Esendemir** demonstrates, if it were needed, that such threats should not be taken lightly and that they cannot be allowed to slip by without legal action. To do nothing in this affair would be quite simply intolerable."
