



Ban Tear Gas Initiative

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Ref: Minister of DAPA

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To DAPA representatives and Dear people of Korea,

We are Ban Tear Gas Initiative. There are more than 50 organisations in our Initiative which includes human rights defenders, physicians, chemical engineers, defenders of children rights, animal rights defenders, trade unions, democratic organisations, etc. We are a voluntary organisation and our Initiative was started just after Gezi Protests.

What is our aim?

Our initial aim is to create public awareness about the hazards of riot control agents (especially tear gas) on human, animals and environment. We have organised two big scientific symposiums on this topic. We have prepared reports of how much tear gas was used and how many people were killed and injured by this. We made press releases for the authorities to ban tear gas and to stop importations. And also tried to get a clear information from the government bodies about the actual amount of how much money is spent to buy these weapons and how many are used.

How are riot control agents are used in Turkey?

In Turkey tear gas (we as professionals choose to call it a chemical weapon and a device of torture) is not only used to prevent people make press releases or peaceful demonstrations, but also used as a firearm. The police uses this weapon in big masses, in closed areas, and moreover any people in his/her house, school, workplace, hospital can be subjected to this violence. At the beginning of any peaceful demonstration the police starts to use it without any warrant and they claim their aim is to prevent people come together and spread them, when they start to use this weapon they leave no place for people to leave the area. They aim directly at people. Many people have lost their lives and were injured by direct impact of the tear gas cartridges.

According to Gündem Çocuk's report, between the years 2006-2014, 8 children have died and 146 children have been injured due to tear gas. According to the Turkish Medical Association,

during Gezi protests only, 8000 people were injured, 104 suffered from serious head injuries, and 11 people have lost an eye.

According to our 2014 report, in 224 days/year people were subjected to this chemical weapon regardless from wherever they are, at least 453 people were injured and 8 people were killed. The names of the people who died of tear gas are:

- Ahmet Küçüktağ
- Ramazan Ertaş
- İbrahim Aras
- Yusuf Özer
- Mesut Menekşe
- Aynur Kudin
- Elif Çermik
- Berkin Elvan

Berkin Elvan was 14 years old and was going to buy bread for breakfast when he was shot in the head by a tear gas cannister. He was in hospital for 269 days but couldn't make it. Nobody has been punished due to his death. Because the government doesn't share the exact numbers, and many people who are injured during a protest do not feel comfortable to be on the records and that's why do not go to hospitals; therefore these numbers are as much as we could find from the media.

According to our 6 months report of 2015, we have been subjected to tear gas for 102 days in 24 cities and at least 187 people were injured. Apart from our reports, please refer to Annex 1 for various incidents and reports on how tear gas is used in Turkey.

These are only some examples. We do not want to be killed and lose our body parts due to tear gas anymore. The state continues to be more and more violent. The forces who have killed and injured people by tear gas never gets a punishment and besides the government representatives keep blaming people.

Where does the state buy riot control agents from?

At the end of 2014, we have heard that the main supplier of the tear gas cartridges for 2015 would be DaeKwang and the numbers were defined as millions unfortunately. From that moment on we have tried every way to stop this shipment. Because we knew from Bahrein example that DAPA had the power to exterminate the shipment of the tear gas if they were informed that these weapons cause human rights violation. Though afterwards, there came the news that DaeKwang was under investigation due to illegal raw material supply from China. It was said all the exportations were paused and wouldn't be allowed to leave the country.

Stop the shipment of tear gas to Turkey!

However sadly, as far as we have been able to get some information we believe more than 1.7 million of tear gas have been sent to Turkey from DaeKwang during 2015. With each tear gas

cartridge you approve to be sent, you contribute to people's killings and injuries. We believe you do not want to participate in this violence of the state in Turkey.

DAPA representatives and our brothers and sisters from Korea, please stop these shipments. Do not allow DaeKwang which is still under investigation of corrupt manufacture of these lethal weapons or any other manufacturer to send us tear gas. We hope you would be exporting solidarity instead of deaths and violence.

With solidarity,
Ban Tear Gas Initiative
September 9, 2015

Annex 1 – Use of Tear Gas in Turkey

- A video by out initiative: <https://goo.gl/r7Ngdz>
- Amnesty International calling for suspension of tear gas shipment to Turkey: <http://goo.gl/EiqX5n>
- Detailed report of Amnesty International about tear gas usage in Turkey: <http://goo.gl/hYNI46>
- 65 year old Elif Çermik died due to tear gas: <http://goo.gl/1BMM7o>
- Tear gas kills policeman in Dersim: <http://goo.gl/4kujrE>
- Çayan Birben (asthmatic person) died of tear gas: <http://goo.gl/1IHFD3>
- Metin Lokumcu is died due to tear gas: <http://goo.gl/Kik822>
- Story of police violence against Hakan Yaman: <https://goo.gl/2fbGgb>
- Police killing 14 year old Berkin Elvan with tear gas canister: <http://goo.gl/5jc5iF>
- Police injuring Lobna Allami by hitting her head with tear gas canister: <http://goo.gl/UyUhqp>
- Lobna Allami video: <http://youtu.be/pl6fLOTpAOk>
- Police injuring Dilan Alp by hitting her head with tear gas cannister: <http://goo.gl/HPwibT>
- Police confessing to the court: □Tear cas cannister can kill someone, but we don't care□ (in Turkish): <http://goo.gl/hdb2fM>
- Human Rights Watch reporting tear usage in confined spaces: <http://goo.gl/Gptjg7>
- Human Rights Watch full report on Turkey and misuse of tear gas: <http://goo.gl/xfEKRZ>
- Turkish Medical Association reporting on life endangering use of tear gas: <http://goo.gl/C13Xdx>
- Physicians for Human Rights report on use of tear gas as a weapon: <http://goo.gl/sVRRZJ>
- World Medical Association reporting the misuse of tear gas in Turkey: <http://goo.gl/XxfdCB>
- Police attacking infirmaries by tear gas: <http://goo.gl/u5x7F8>
- Selim Önder, 88 year old musician was killed because of the excessive usage of tear gas: <http://goo.gl/WdWuu0>
- Journalist Ahmet Sik was injured by tear gas canister fired at his head deliberately from 10 metres distance: <http://goo.gl/0S4zj5>
- Police broke the skull of Mustafa Ali Tombul by tear gas canister: <http://goo.gl/gnrmus>
- Ahmet Atakan, killed by tear gas canister hitting his head: <http://goo.gl/A0OFuh>
- Casualties of the protests in 2013 and 2014: <http://goo.gl/TFTGGi>
- The funeral of Günay Özarslan who was executed by police without due process was attacked by the police and Cemevi (the pray hall of Alevi people) were attacked <https://goo.gl/isPDv3>
- 7-year-old boy shot with tear gas canister <http://goo.gl/OltS7Q>
- 17 year old Serhat Savaş is killed by a tear gas <http://goo.gl/PnaCnz>
- 11-year-old child wounded by tear gas canister in Cizre <http://goo.gl/HnVtGz>
- Turkey fire tear gas on Syrian refugees <http://goo.gl/7vTtns>
- Police attack Gay Pride March <http://goo.gl/WR0nGj>
- Police attack workers from the union <http://goo.gl/iC0qLG>