

Report

Istanbul Bar Trial, 7 January 2014

The trial of the President and the board members of the Istanbul Bar Association was held in the Silivri courthouse on 7 January 2014 and ended in a further adjournment to 24 February 2014.

The President and 9 other board members are standing trial on charges of “attempting to influence the member of judiciary” in the “Balyoz Trial” (Sledgehammer Trial).

The President of the Istanbul Bar Association Dr. Kocasakal presented his arguments and explained chronologically the acknowledged facts and then the legal arguments. Then the other accused board members presented their own further arguments as well.

Then the video of the intervention of the President and the board members of the Istanbul Bar Association at the “Balyoz Trial” (Sledgehammer Trial), which is the base of the accusation against them, has been played.

After the defense finished, the prosecutor was asked to present his arguments. The prosecutor wasn't able to do this and asked for adjournment. He explained that he was a substitute and not familiar with the case.

The judge tried to end the trial on the same day and gave the prosecutor 3 hours to prepare his pleading.

After the break ,the prosecutor explained, that he needed 1 month more to prepare his pleading. Although the defense lawyers protested against adjournment, with the argument that it is only a legal issue and it's not the fault of the accused that the prosecutor is not able to plead, the judge adjourned the hearing to 24 February 2014.

The legal arguments and the video shows that the accused committed no crime and probably they will be acquitted of the accusation. This could be the real reason behind the adjournment. Without any doubt a second reason is the thought that there will be less foreign observers at the next hearing. So it is important to have an observer at the next hearing too, to show the solidarity with the accused colleagues and guarantee a fair trial.