



**Yusuf ALATAS**

**Vice President**

**Executive Board member of the Association İnsan Hakları Derneği (İHD)**

**Profession:** Lawyer

**Nationality:** Turkish

**Date and place of birth:** February 12, 1948, Malatya, Turkey

**Languages:** Turkish, English, Kurdish

**Expertise:** Human rights law

Yusuf Alataş graduated from the Faculty of Law in Ankara in 1971 and began practicing immediately. After a brief experience at the Radio and Television Corporation of Turkey, he returned in 1979 to his legal career with the Ankara Bar Association.

In 1980, Turkey witnessed a military *coup d'Etat* and martial law was declared. During the years that followed, Yusuf Alataş took various cases in Istanbul's and Ankara's Emergency Courts. In 1986, he joined the Human Rights Association İHD in order to defend the people who were subject to human rights violation during the military regime. From 1990 until today, he has been an active member of the İHD, serving successively as Board member, Deputy Secretary General and Deputy President. He was elected President of the İHD in 2004 and served until 2008.

Moreover, Yusuf Alatas was elected Vice-President of FIDH for the first time in 2007. He was re-elected to this position in 2010 and 2013.

Beside his engagement with İHD, Yusuf Alataş continued to defend opposition leaders and institutions. In 1988, he was elected to the Executive Board of the Ankara Bar Association. He was involved in several cases launched against the People's Labour Party (HEP) – a party defending the political and cultural rights of the Kurds – the Democracy Party (DEP) and the People's Democracy Party (HADEP). More specifically, he was very active in the defense of Leyla Zana and four other members of the Democracy Party (DEP) arrested in 1994. He became the leader and spokesman of the 100 lawyers who participated in the hearings at the State Security Court.

By submitting cases to the European Human Rights Court, Yusuf Alataş facilitated the condemnation of the Turkish government on three occasions and contributed to the release of DEP members in 2004.

There have been numerous cases launched against him in ordinary courts and State Security Courts. He was judged twice before the High Criminal Court but the sentences were converted into fines.