



***Cherie Blair, Alan Dershowitz and Nicolas Muzin seek justice for Mubariz Mansimov Gurbangolu***

*28 April 2020, London, UK*

**Cherie Blair CBE, QC of Omnia Strategy LLP, Alan Dershowitz, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, and Nicolas Muzin MD, JD of Stonington Global LLC, announce they are working together on the high profile case of the businessman, Mubariz Mansimov Gurbangolu, who has been arrested and detained in Turkey. Mrs Blair, Professor Dershowitz and Dr Muzin join a team including Turkish lawyers Çaka Kul and İsenbike Bilgili.**

**While Mr Mansimov maintains his innocence and fights to clear his name, Mrs Blair will lead investigations into apparent human rights violations in the case while Professor Dershowitz and Dr. Muzin pursue international remedies.**

Mr Mansimov is the founder and owner of the Palmali Group of companies, known for its successful shipping business. He was arrested and detained regarding terrorism allegations, despite being cleared of the same accusations less than a year ago.

Mr Mansimov's case comes amidst rising international concern regarding the rule of law and abuses of power in Turkey. Earlier this month, it was reported that a UN committee of preeminent human rights experts accepted eight individual complaints alleging systematic rights violations and arbitrary detention in Turkey.

Although Mr Mansimov suffers from underlying health conditions, putting him at heightened risk from COVID-19 while he is incarcerated in Silivri Prison outside Istanbul, and despite the release of other prisoners, Mr Mansimov's requests for release under house arrest have so far fallen on deaf ears. International NGO *Human Rights Watch* has called on Turkish authorities to consider alternatives such as parole or house arrest for hundreds of prisoners currently detained under antiterrorism laws.

The newly-assembled global legal team will be responsible for investigating possible human rights abuses, calling on Turkish authorities to make sure international standards on judicial fairness and impartiality are met, and coordinating domestic and international advocacy efforts in an effort to promote transparency and justice.

Cherie Blair CBE, QC commented:

*"We are repeatedly seeing the misuse of criminal justice systems to target legitimate business executives who fall out of favour. This is driven by a lack of respect for fundamental rights and enabled by a dangerous weakening of the rule of law. This case raises many troubling questions regarding prosecutorial and judicial independence and arbitrary detention. We will investigate this fully and seek answers."*

Professor Dershowitz commented:

*“Civil liberties and due process form the cornerstone of all credible legal systems and must be observed at all times. Our team will work together to ensure that all international and domestic legal obligations are observed and international and domestic action is taken as required.”]*

Dr. Muzin commented:

*“Mubariz is a beloved friend to thousands around the world, and a well-respected philanthropist in Turkey and in his native Azerbaijan, providing scholarships for disadvantaged youth, building hospitals and financing sports clubs. He has worked for over a decade to strengthen economic and cultural ties between the United States and Turkey. His sudden detention in the midst of the COVID outbreak did not go unnoticed here, and we will pursue all avenues to ensure justice.”*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Notes to editors

1. Mr Mansimov is a leading business executive and the founder and owner of the [Palmali Group of companies](#). He was detained on 17 March 2020, purportedly in connection with alleged ties to the network of US based Muslim cleric, Fethullah Gulen. Mr Mansimov is being detained in Turkey’s Silivri Prison and remains there despite serious risks posed by Covid-19.
2. Cherie Blair CBE, QC is a leading human rights lawyer and the Founder and Chair of [Omnia Strategy LLP](#), based in London in the UK. Mrs Blair is a Queen’s Counsel (senior barrister) and the wife of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Mrs Blair has over 40 years’ experience working on human rights cases, including those relating to arbitrary detention and a lack of judicial independence.
3. Professor Alan Dershowitz is a Brooklyn native who has been called America’s “*most peripatetic civil liberties lawyer*”, one of its “*most distinguished defenders of individual rights*”, “*the best-known criminal lawyer in the world*” and “*the top lawyer of last resort.*” Dershowitz is the Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law Emeritus at Harvard Law School and joined the Harvard Law School faculty at age 25 after clerking for Judge David Bazelon and Justice Arthur Goldberg.
4. Nicolas Muzin is the Founder and Chairman of Stonington Global, where he focuses on strategic international advisory and private equity work and practices as an attorney. He has served as Chief of Staff to two current U.S. Senators, Director of Coalitions for the

House Republican Majority, and Senior Advisor to a Republican presidential campaign. He has been called one of "Washington's most influential deal makers." He is a graduate of Yale Law School and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

5. Çaka Kul and İsenbike Bilgili are founding partners of [Kul & Bilgili law firm](#) in İstanbul, Turkey, a full service law firm providing services to local and international clients.
6. On 5 April, the Stockholm Center for Freedom [reported](#) that the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention had accepted eight individual complaints from Turkey under an "Urgent Action" procedure.
7. The Omnia Strategy team comprises Cherie Blair CBE, QC, James Palmer, Adam Smith-Anthony and Lauren Lederle, together with Jonathan Worboys of [4 New Square](#).
8. For more details, please contact [media@omniastrategy.com](mailto:media@omniastrategy.com).