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There's been lots of talk lately surrounding the idea that Interpol is issuing Red Notices almost automatically, with no actual review of the request taking place. Jago Russel of Fair Trials Europe and ex-political prisoner Bahar Kimyongur say that Interpol is ripe for abuse by certain member countries, while Interpol counters that it has procedures in place to avoid such abuses.

Support for Interpol's position is found in one example of Interpol rejecting a Red Notice request from Thailand. The ex-prime minister, Thaksin Thongphakdi, was the subject of a warrant issued after he was sentenced to a prison term, but the country's request for a Red Notice in his name was rejected by Interpol. The stated reason for the rejection was that the request did not meet Interpol's criteria, which could mean anything from the paperwork not being properly submitted to the request being obviously politically based.

Another example comes from India, where Red Notice requests for wanted terrorists were reportedly rejected by Interpol. In an article discussing the Indian cases, the author writes that Indian officials complain that "It is very difficult to build a strong case and provide the exact details that Interpol is looking for."

That last line would honestly astound some Red Notice subjects, who complain that the information submitted to obtain a Red Notice typically does not require much detail at all about the underlying charges, nor does it require any details regarding the strength of any given case. Nonetheless, it seems that in certain cases, this particular part of the application process has frustrated Indian officials.

There does appear to be some anecdotal support for Interpol's assertion that it not only possesses but utilizes mechanisms to prevent member country abuses and improper Red Notice requests. There also appears to be anecdotal support for the position of many Red Notice subjects, which is that member country abuse occurs with some frequency.

Who is Bahar Kimyongur?

Bahar Kimyongur was born on 28th of April 1974 in Belgium, and got the Belgian citizenship in 1994.

In 2006 he was convicted, as part of a group, by the Court of First Instance for terrorist offences (specifically membership of the DHKP-C), and imprisoned. In November the same year the Ghent Court of Appeal upheld his conviction. Imprisoned in Ghent, Kimyongur appealed to the Supreme Court, and again, to the Antwerp appellate court a year later. Antwerp court announced the acquittal of all the accused on 7 February 2008. A year later, the Brussels appeals' court also

acquitted him of further charges relating to membership of a proscribed organization. However, it was not until early in 2010 that the Prosecution of Belgium announced it would not appeal Kimyongur's (and others) release. The television channel RTBF has claimed that his arrest in the Netherlands was at the instigation of the Belgian security services. He was subsequently arrested in Córdoba, Spain on 18 June 2013, and released under caution; he was then arrested in Bergamo, Italy, on 21 November the same year. He was released in March 2014 by the Brescia court of appeal.

Kimyongur and his wife had good relations with Fehriye Erdal, who is an accomplice to a triple murder in Turkey as DHKP-C militant. On 28th of November 2000 Kimyongur showed the flag of DHKP-C to the former Foreign Minister of Turkey, İsamın, during the speech in the European Parliament in Brussels. Belgian federal attorney found a picture of Kimyongur with a Bazooka, Kimyongur said it was for a joke. Kimyongur translated and read also press releases of DHKP-C. He was an active employee at the information center of this terrorist organization.

DHKP-C espouses an anti-US, anti-NATO, and anti-Turkish establishment ideology and has targeted US interests intermittently for several decades, including a February 2013 when a suicide bomber targeted the US Embassy in Ankara, killing a Turkish security guard. DHKP-C concentrates its attacks against current and retired Turkish security and military officials. The group finances its activities chiefly through armed robberies and extortion.

Gerald Seymour once said in his book *Harry's Game*: "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter".

Jago Russel, Chief Executive of Fair Trials Europe, asked to the countries of OSCE region to not trust the Red Notices of Interpol, but the exchange of information via Interpol channels offers legal guarantees. The basis for the legal guarantees offered by Interpol is found in the organization's constitution, which provides that the organization's action is taken within the limits of the laws existing in different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 2 of Interpol's Constitution).

Sources:

- Retour à la case départ pour "l'affaire Erdal", RTBF
- Michel Molitor, "DHKP-C: l'arrestation de Bahar Kimyongür en Italie, un acharnement?", RTBF
- Red Notice Law Journal, Michelle A. Estlund, 2011
- De Wereld Morgen, Allegorische scènes uit de oorlog tegen de terreur in België, Lieven De Cauter, 2011