



Report

Turkey -- Guide to Ergenekon

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1. Overview

"Ergenekon" is the name of an alleged illegal neonationalist organization accused of planning to oust the pro-Islamic Justice and Development Party (AKP) government through a military coup. The organization, in turn, has been linked to the so-called "Deep State," alleged to be a vast, underground network of secular Turks plotting criminal acts to destabilize the government. The detention of a number of high-ranking military officers in February was the latest in a series of operations linked to the alleged conspiracy dating back almost 10 years. Initial information about the organization appeared in documents belonging to journalist Tuncay Guney in 2001, and alleged coup plans were found in the diaries of former Naval Forces Commander Ozden Ornek in 2007. The seizure of 27 hand grenades in a police operation on a house in Istanbul's Umraniye District in June 2007 prompted an ongoing comprehensive investigation in which, thus far, more than 200 prominent civilian and military figures have been detained. The investigation revealed additional coup plans, which were all reported by the antimilitarist and liberal daily Taraf. Two trials, involving nearly 200 defendants, are currently underway in conjunction with Ergenekon, but no one has yet been convicted.

2. Early Evidence: Ornek, Guney Documents

Evidence obtained from two figures as far back as 2001 played a significant role in the launch of the investigation. In 2001, a police raid on the house and office of journalist Tuncay Guney -- a fugitive witness currently residing in Canada in connection with another probe -- revealed a mass of documents that now make up the bulk of the Ergenekon case indictment.

- Among the documents seized was one entitled "Ergenekon Analysis New Structuring Administration and Development Project 29 October 1999 Istanbul," which referred to planned assassinations and so-called activities by the Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counterterrorism Center (JITEM), an alleged military unit that has been blamed for unsolved murders in Turkey (*Radikal*, 5 April 2008).
- On 7 April 2008, *Today's Zaman* reported that the Ergenekon document seized from Guney "openly reveals links between Ergenekon and JITEM, a secret and illegal intelligence unit of the gendarmerie whose existence has been officially denied by the state."
- Guney's claims that he served as a state agent and infiltrated Ergenekon as well as many other secret organizations before he fled to Canada, were denied by the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) (*Today's Zaman*, 27 November 2008).

In 2007, diaries allegedly belonging to former Naval Forces Commander Ozden Ornek revealed coup plans drawn by several commanders.

- According to a 29 March 2007 article in the now-closed weekly *Nokta*, prior to the 24 April 2004 referenda in Cyprus, a coup plan named "Blondie" was prepared by then Admiral Ornek, former Land Forces Commander Aytac Yalman, former Air Forces Commander Ibrahim Firtina, and former Gendarmerie Forces Commander Sener Eruygur, who was also the head of the Ataturkist Thought Association.

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- The plan was scrapped because of then Chief of the General Staff Hilmi Ozkok's objection. According to *Nokta*, the diaries said that Eruygur, who was "champing at the bit" for a coup, single-handedly prepared a plan for another coup called "Ayisigi" [Moonlight] when "Sarikiz" [Blondie] was scrapped (*Taraf*, 26 March 2008).
- Ornek, who has been charged with "preparing grounds for a military coup," disowned the diaries, although he was shown an expert report that stated that the diaries containing the details of the "Blondie" and "Moonlight" coup attempts had come from his computer (*Taraf*, 8 December 2009).

3. Umraniye Raid Launches Probe; Waves of Operations Follow

The probe into Ergenekon was initiated following the June 2007 discovery of 27 hand grenades belonging to a retired noncommissioned army officer in a shanty house in Istanbul's Umraniye District. The raid was followed by what have mostly become to be known as "waves" of operations in which more than 200 people -- some prominent figures from the military, media, and academia -- were detained. Although the documents seized in 2001 referred to an organization called Ergenekon, the media started to widely use the Ergenekon name after the seizure of organizational documents in the Umraniye raid.

The following chart outlines the major operations, key figures detained, and evidence seized:

Operation	Date	Place	Prominent Detainees	Seized Material
1st Wave (NTV, 20 June 2007)	12 Jun 2007	Istanbul	Ret NCO Oktay Yildirim Ret Lt Muzaffer Tekin Mehmet Demirtas Ali Yigit Ret NCO Mahmut Ozturk Bekir Ozturk Ret Maj Fikret Emek Ret Lt Gazi Guder Ismail Yildiz	27 hand grenades, documents entitled "Ergenekon" and "Lobby."
2nd Wave (<i>Today's Zaman</i> , 8 January 2009)	26 Jun 2007	Eskisehir		11 kg of plastic explosives, 12 hand grenades, 1 Kanas rifle, and 1 Kalashnikov assault rifle
3rd Wave (Kanal 7, 22 January 2008)	21 Jan 2008	Istanbul Adana Izmir Duzce Malatya	Ret Gen Veli Kucuk Ret Col Fikri Karadag Lawyer Kemal Kerincsiz Sevgi Erenerol Sami Hostan Ali Yasak Lawyer Fuat Turgut Journalist Guler Komurcu	Secret documents entitled "National Security Document," "Ergenekon," and "Lobby"

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Operation	Date	Place	Prominent Detainees	Seized Material
4th Wave (NTV, 11 November 2009)	22 Feb 2008		Asst Prof Emin Gurses Asst Prof Umit Sayin Ret Sgt Orhan Tunc Muammer Karabulut Hayrettin Ertekin Coskun Calik Journalist Vedat Yenerer	1 Glock-type handgun
5th Wave (CNN Turk, 21 March 2008)	21 Mar 2008	Ankara	Party leader Dogu Perincek Prof Kemal Alemdaroglu Journalist Ilhan Selcuk Journalist Ferit Ilsever Ibrahim Benli Journalist Serhan Bolluk Yusuf Beserik Journalist Adnan Akfirat	
6th Wave (NTV, 1 July 2008)	1 Jul 2008	Istanbul	Ret Gen Hursit Tolon Ret Gen Sener Eruygur Journalist Mustafa Balbay Journalist Ufuk Buyukcelebi	Secret documents
7th Wave (<i>Yeni Asya</i> , 24 July 2008)	23 Jul 2008	Konya Istanbul Kocaeli Mersin Elazig	Prof Uckun Geray Yusuf Buldu Nuran Gokdemir Mevlut Sungur	
8th Wave (<i>Hurriyet</i> , 18 September 2008)	18 Sep 2008	Istanbul Ankara	Lawyer Levent Temiz Actress Nurseli Idiz Artist agent Seyhan Soylu	
9th Wave (<i>Hurriyet</i> , 23 September 2008)	23 Sep 2008	Istanbul	Journalist Tuncay Ozkan Gurbuz Capan Adnan Bulut Ret Col Tanju Guvendiren Ret police chief Adil Serdar Sacan	A chart detailing the hierarchy of Ergenekon
10th Wave (<i>Today's Zaman</i> , 8 January 2009)	7 Jan 2009	Tokat Izmir Ankara Istanbul	Prof Yalcin Kucuk Ret Gen Erdal Senel Ret Gen Kemal Yavuz Ret Gen Tuncer Kilinc Ret Col Ilyas Cinar Ret police chief Ibrahim Sahin Engin Aydin	3 light flame throwers, TNT blocks, hand grenades, bullets, arms, and ammunition

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Operation	Date	Place	Prominent Detainees	Seized Material
11th Wave (<i>Today's Zaman</i> , 23 January 2009)	22 Jan 2009		Union leader Mustafa Ozbek Ferruh Kavlak Muharrem Asliyuce Suleyman Erdinc Pevrul Kavrat Journalist Unal Inanc Savas Avci Researcher Erhan Goksel	
12th Wave (<i>Hurriyet Daily News</i> , 14 April 2009)	13 Apr 2009	Istanbul Ankara Samsun Van Izmir Adana	Prof Mehmet Haberal Prof Fatih Hilmioglu Prof Ferit Bernay Prof Mustafa Yurtkuran Prof Erol Manisali	
Poyrazkoy Operation (<i>Hurriyet Daily News</i> , 27 January; AA, 25 April 2009)	21-27 Apr 2009	Istanbul's Poyrazkoy District	Ret Maj Levent Bektas Lt Col Ercan Kirectepe Navy Commander Emre Onat	21 disposable flame throwers (15 armed and six used), 14 hand grenades, 24 hand-grenade detonators, 450 grams of C3 explosives, seven highly explosive blast bombs, seven booby traps (two of them used), 23 signal flares, 45 fog bombs, 15 signal lights, reels of different types of fuses, 3,017 gun shells of various calibers, and a tube of black camouflage paint
13th Wave (<i>Aksam</i> , 4 June 2009)	4 Jun 2009	Marmaris Ankara Istanbul Izmir	Lawyer Serdar Ozturk 20 unnamed suspects, most of whom are naval officers	

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Operation	Date	Place	Prominent Detainees	Seized Material
Sledgehammer Operation 1 (<i>Milliyet</i> , 23 February)	22 Feb 2010	Istanbul Ankara Izmir Bursa	49 high-ranking retired and serving military officials, including: Ret Gen Cetin Dogan Ret Gen Ibrahim Firtina Ret Gen Ergin Saygun Ret Adm Ozden Ornek Ret Adm Ahmet Feyyaz Ogutcu	
Sledgehammer Operation 2 (AA, 26 February)	26 Feb 2010	13 provinces including Istanbul, Konya, Batman, Sirnak, Elazig, Mardin, Diyarbakir	17 serving and 1 retired military officers	

4. Investigation Uncovers More Coup Plans

Evidence seized in the course of the investigation revealed a number of new plans to overthrow the government.

4.1. Action Plan To Fight Reactionaryism

A military plan entitled "Action Plan to Fight Reactionaryism" was confiscated in the office of lawyer Serdar Ozturk and published by *Taraf* on 12 June 2009.

- According to the plan -- allegedly drawn up by Navy Captain Dursun Cicek in April 2009 -- "information support activities will be conducted in order to reveal the truth about the Justice and Development Party [AKP] government and the various groups that provide support to it, as well as the radical religious formations such as the Fethullah Gulen group in particular, which are dreaming of destroying the secular and democratic order and establishing an Islamic state based on Shar'iah, to break the public support for them, and to put an end to their activities" (*Taraf*, 12 June 2009).
- The plan, which was rejected by the military in June 2009, was placed on the agenda again when the Office of the Republican Prosecutor received its original copy carrying the "wet signature" of Cicek on 30 September 2009. Cicek was detained and released twice during the investigation over the authentication of the signature (Semiofficial Anatolia Agency (AA), 1 July 2009, 13 November 2009, 1 March 2010; *Taraf*, 3 March 2010).

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- Third Army Commander General Saldiray Berk and Erzincan Chief Public Prosecutor Ilhan Cihaner appeared as the leading figures of the alleged plan. Berk refused to testify to prosecutors, while Cihaner was arrested for trying to implement the plan in Erzincan (*Today's Zaman*, 16, 17 February, 4 March).
- On 1 March, the General Staff announced that in view of evidence "proving the existence of the original document with a wet signature," the Office of the Military Prosecutor has reopened a probe into the plan (General Staff website).

4.2. Operation Cage Plan

Another alleged military plan entitled "Operation Cage Action Plan" was confiscated in the office of Retired Major Bektas and published by *Taraf* on 19 November 2009.

- According to the plan -- allegedly drawn up by Naval Lieutenant Colonel Ercan Kirectepe -- assassinations would be carried out against non-Muslims living in Turkey, and explosives would be set off in minority neighborhoods in order to increase domestic and foreign pressure on the AKP (*Taraf*, 19 November 2009, 28 January 2010).
- Vice Admiral Kadir Sagdic, commander of the Southern Naval Region, and Junior Rear Adm Mehmet Fatih Ilgar, commander of the Landing Fleet in Foca, Izmir, whose names were mentioned in the Cage plan, testified as suspects on 16 February (*Taraf*, 17 February).

4.3. Sledgehammer Security Operation Plan

On 20 and 22 January, *Taraf* outlined the 5,000-page "Operation Sledgehammer Plan," which was taken from the computer of Suha Tanyeri, who was then chief of staff for First Army with the rank of full colonel.

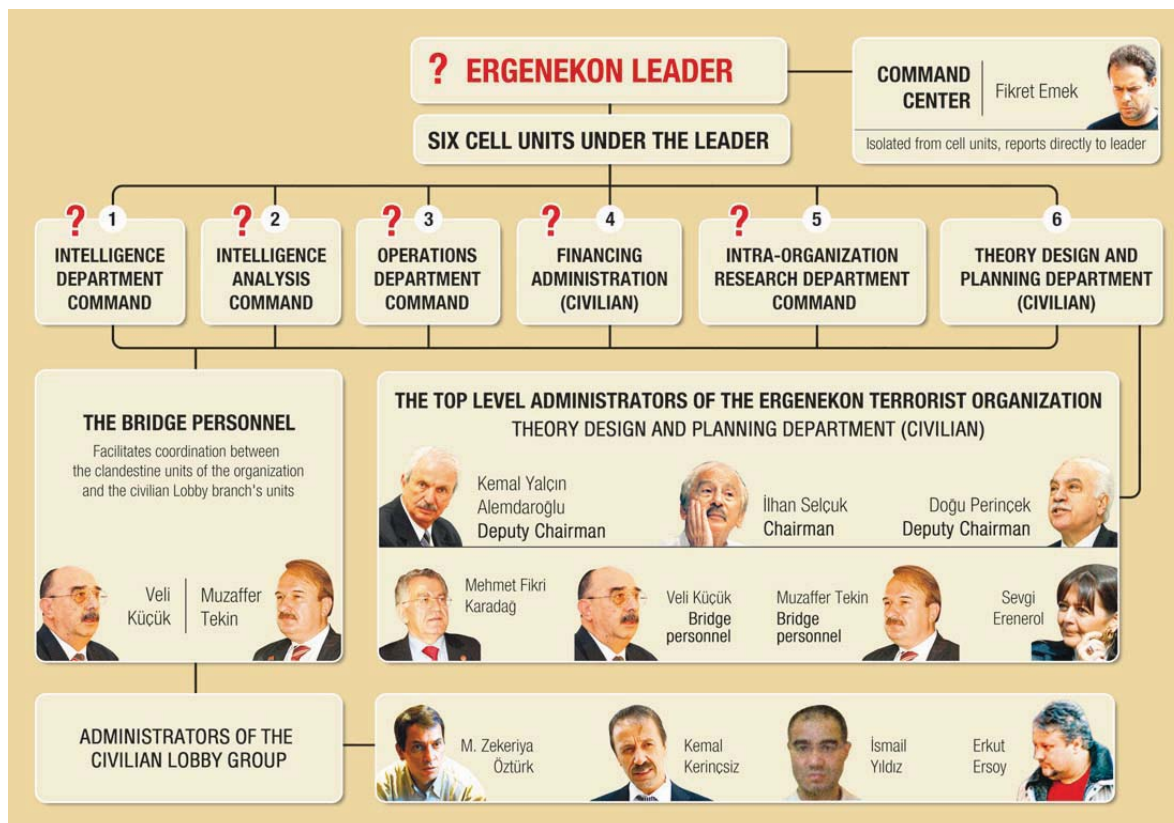
- The plan -- allegedly drafted by then First Army Commander General Cetin Dogan in 2003 -- aimed to remove the AKP government from power and reestablish the secular state by "violently eliminating the existing reactionary body and by installing specific cadres in government" (*Taraf*, 21 January).
- It also called on the military to "systematically foment chaos in society through violent acts," including planned bomb attacks on the Fatih and Beyazit mosques in Istanbul, and "the shooting down one of Turkey's own F-16 fighters over the Aegean Sea, which was to be blamed on the Greeks" (*Today's Zaman*, 25 January).
- The plan -- agreed upon at a military seminar attended by 162 active Turkish Armed Forces [TSK] members, including 29 generals -- was made up of separate action plans codenamed "Sheet, Beard, Suga, and Oraj" (*Taraf*, 20 January; *Today's Zaman*, 21 January).
- The masterminds of the plan were allegedly retired generals Dogan, Firtina, and Ergin Saygun. The name of Ret Adm Ornek was "frequently mentioned" in the plan (*Taraf*, 20 January, *Today's Zaman*, 21 January)

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5. Ergenekon Organizational Structure

The Ergenekon organizational chart that was submitted by the prosecution to the court indicates that Ergenekon's leader, also referred to as "Number One," has not yet been identified, but that the organization consists of two bodies: The "Secret Body" -- made of six cells -- and a civilian wing known as the "Lobby."



(Today's Zaman, 22 September 2008)

6. First Indictment

The first indictment -- 2,455 pages-long -- was accepted by the Istanbul 13th High Criminal Court on 25 July 2008 and listed 86 suspects. The prosecutors in charge are Aykut Cengiz Engin, Zekeriya Oz, Mehmet Ali Pekguzel, and Nihat Taskin.

6.1. Ergenekon's Goals

The indictment maintains that the organization's short-term goal was to carry out activities and create chaos with the aim of weakening the government and undermining the public order. Its ultimate goal was to take over the government through an unlawful intervention that would have gained the people's approval (AA, 25 July 2008).

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- It lists Ergenekon's "four-stage action plan strategy" as preparation, organization, acts of terrorism in rural and urban settings, and civil war -- all with the aim of usurping control of the state and bringing it down from within.
- It asserts that Ergenekon also aimed to form phantom terrorist organizations in a bid to create chaos and that it attempted to infiltrate the General Staff, the police, the MIT, and political parties (NTV, 25 July 2008).
- Furthermore, it states that the National Forces Association, a part of the Ergenekon terrorist organization, planned to stage attacks against Kurdish citizens in order to trigger a Turkish-Kurdish conflict, which would ultimately serve Ergenekon's primary purpose of creating an atmosphere of chaos and conflict (*Today's Zaman*, 30 July 2008).

6.2. *Incidents, Groups Linked to Ergenekon*

The indictment charges that Ergenekon was behind many criminal actions and high-profile assassinations in Turkey over the past two decades, which include the following:

- The attack on the **Council of State** in 2006 that left a senior judge dead; this was based on the testimony of Osman Yildirim, who was sentenced to life for this attack, and who revealed that Veli Kucuk and Muzaffer Tekin were the organizers and planners of the attack.
- Three separate bomb attacks against the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper in 2006; this was based on the testimony of Osman Yildirim, who claimed that Veli Kucuk and Muzaffer Tekin planned these attacks and gave him the three hand grenades.
- The shooting at a coffee shop in the **Gazi neighborhood** in Istanbul and the consequent death of 17 persons in 1995; a secret witness noted that Veli Kucuk gave the orders for the Gazi neighborhood shooting.
- The murder of Associate Professor **Dr Necip Hablemitoglu**, a secularist academic who was said to have been killed by Islamic groups in 2002 (NTV, 27 July 2008).
- The assassination of **Ugur Mumcu**, a secularist journalist long believed to have been assassinated by Islamic extremists in 1993, and of **Ozdemir Sabanci**, head of a business conglomerate who was said to have been shot dead by militants of the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front, (DHKP-C), in 1996 (*Today's Zaman*, 28 July 2008).
- The murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist **Hrant Dink** in 2007 (*Today's Zaman*, 20 October 2008).
- The attack on the **Zirve Publishing** House in Malatya in 2007 (*Today's Zaman*, 20 October 2008).
- The killing of Priest Santoroin Trabzon in 2006 (*Today's Zaman*, 20 October 2008).

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The indictment also links Ergenekon to the following groups:

- The testimonies of secret witnesses established ties between Veli Kucuk and the **DHKP-C** and claimed that Ergenekon directed **Hizballah**, whose militants were trained by the Gendarmerie General Command.
- The indictment describes the **National Forces Association**, which was established in 2005, as a criminal organization carrying out activities under the Ergenekon network. It accuses the association of conducting activities with the aim of engaging in terrorism. Retired Colonel Mehmet Fikri Karadag is portrayed as the leader of the organization (NTV, 27 July 2008).

6.3. *Assassinations, Actions Planned*

The indictment further charged that Ergenekon was planning to assassinate several figures, including the following:

- Former Ground Forces Commander General Yasar Buyukanit in 2005
- Defunct Democratic Society Party deputies Ahmet Turk and Sebahat Tuncel, as well as Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir -- aimed at triggering clashes between Turks and Kurds
- Former Higher Education Council Chairman Erdogan Tezic, Fener Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomeos, Armenian Patriarch Mutafyan, Jewish businessman Ishak Alaton, journalist Fehmi Kuru, and Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk (NTV, 27 July 2008)
- The Turkish Revenge Brigade, allegedly under the direction of Veli Kucuk, intended to assassinate Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the chief of police intelligence, and a top Council of State administrator (*Today's Zaman*, 9 January 2009).
- It also charged that the organization was planning an attack on NATO facilities.

6.4. *Main Charges*

- Establishing, directing, and being a member of an armed terrorist organization
- Aiding and abetting the terrorist organization
- Attempting to overthrow the government and rendering it incapable of governing through the use of force and coercion
- Inciting people to armed rebellion against the government
- Acquiring, stocking, and using explosives and urging others to commit crimes using explosives
- Accessing classified documents regarding state security
- Recording personal data through illegal means

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- Provoking military disobedience
- Inciting people to hatred and enmity (AA, 25 July 2008).

6.5. *Main Suspects, Accusations*

- **Retired Brigadier General Veli Kucuk:** Forming and running an armed terrorist organization; inciting people to engage in armed insurrection against the Turkish Government and to commit first-degree homicide; and possessing explosives in a manner to create fear and panic. He faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Labor Party Chairman Dogu Perincek:** Forming and running a terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in armed insurrection against the government. He faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Retired Captain Muzaffer Tekin:** Being a command figure of a terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in armed insurrection against the government. He faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Cumhuriyet senior columnist Ilhan Selcuk:** Forming and running an armed terrorist organization; he faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Chairman of the National Forces Association (Kuva-i Milliye) Mehmet Fikri Karadag:** Forming a terrorist organization and working to bring down the government by force. He faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Former Istanbul University Rector Kemal Alemdaroglu:** Forming and running an armed terrorist organization; he faces two consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole.
- **Lawyer Kemal Kerincsiz:** Inciting others to engage in armed insurrection and possessing and recording classified documents.
- **Warrant Officer Oktay Yildirim:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in armed insurrection.
- **Umit Sayin:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in armed insurrection.
- **Sami Hostan, Sedat Peker, Ali Yasak, and Guler Komurcu:** Belonging to a terrorist organization.
- **Lawyer Fuat Turgut:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in insurrection.
- **Mehmet Zekeriya Ozturk:** Illegally recording personal data.
- **Writer Engin Poyraz:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization and inciting others to engage in armed insurrection against the government.

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- **Ayşe Asuman Özdemir:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization, illegally recording personal data, and attempting to influence the judiciary.
- **Muzaffer Senocak:** Stealing and possessing information pertaining to national security.
- **Fikret Emek:** Stealing and possessing information pertaining to state security and providing weapons to an armed terrorist organization (NTV, 25, 27 July 2008; *Today's Zaman*, 26 July 2008).

7. Second Indictment

The second indictment -- 1,909 pages-long with 248 appendices -- was accepted by the Istanbul 13th High Criminal Court on 25 March 2009 and charges 56 suspects. There are seven prosecutors in the case, including Zekeriya Oz, who headed the first indictment. Of the 56 suspects, 19 were in custody when the indictment was presented.

7.1. Ergenekon's Goals

The second indictment includes allegations made in 2008 by the newsweekly *Nokta*, accusing former military commanders of plotting a coup against the ruling AKP. The allegations were reportedly confirmed by the diaries of journalist Mustafa Balbay and Admiral Ornek (*Today's Zaman*, 26 March 2009).

- Ergenekon first worked to prepare the ground for a coup. Various activities were conducted by means of the Republic Working Group, which was illegally formed within the Gendarmerie General Command (*Taraf*, 26 March 2009).
- Ergenekon planned to remove the obstacles before the coup. It prepared and put into implementation the coup plans with the codenames "Sarıkız (Blondie), Ayisigi (Moonlight), and Yakamoz (Sea Phosphorescence)" The coup was to be carried out in 2003 or 2004 (*Taraf*, 26 March 2009).
- Ergenekon planned to transform the military from top to bottom. The basis of the second indictment consisted of the coup diaries of Ornek and Balbay. The force commanders at the time -- Yalman, Ornek, and Firtina -- were included in the "Republic Working Group" that Eruygur had founded with the aim of starting a coup. Ergenekon's coup plan "Yakamoz" discussed the need to restructure the TSK and set out "the post-coup command echelon and the structure within the Turkish Armed Forces" (*Taraf*, 26 March 2009).
- Eruygur and Yalman transferred a total of \$1.5 million to Hakan Sanli, another suspect in the case, to be used for building the infrastructure for wiretapping; a key preparation for the coup (*Today's Zaman*, 28 March 2009).
- The organization had used, directed, or taken under its control the terrorist DHKP-C, Hizballah, and the PKK in-line with its goals.

7.2. *Main Charges*

- Plotting a coup by forming a terrorist organization
- Plotting to transform the military from top to bottom
- Plotting to restructure the civil administration under three separate headings: legislative, executive, and judiciary (*Taraf*, 26 March 2009)
- Planning to wiretap illegally
- Planning to restructure the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Nationalist Action Party by bringing down their leaders (*Today's Zaman*, 26 March 2009)
- Terrorizing locals in the Southeast in the 1990's by means of JITEM (*Today's Zaman*, 26 March 2009, *Bianet*, 27 March 2009)
- Assassinating Armenian journalist Hrant Dink in 2007 (*Today's Zaman*, 26 March 2009)
- "Trying to extend the term of former President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, a fierce secularist, and ensure that as many AKP members left the party as possible" (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009)
- "Trying to instigate ethnic conflict between Turks and Kurds" and "having links with several terrorist groups," including the PKK (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009).
- Having links with the DHKP-C, Hizballah, and Hizb ut-Tahrir.

7.3. *Main Suspects, Accusations*

- **Former Commander of the Gendarmerie Forces Sener Eruygur:** Head of the nationalist Atatürkist Thought Association; founding or leading an armed terrorist organization, attempting to either eradicate or obstruct the Turkish Grand National Assembly, being behind a grenade attack on *Cumhuriyet's* offices in 2006, drug trafficking, influencing the judiciary, illegally storing weapons, encouraging subversion within the military, collecting and making public state secrets, illegally collecting information on individuals, and tampering official documents (*Today's Zaman*, *Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Former Commander of the 1st Army Corps Hursit Tolon:** Founding or leading an armed terrorist organization, attempting to either eradicate or obstruct the Turkish Grand National Assembly, being behind a grenade attack on *Cumhuriyet's* offices in 2006, drug trafficking, influencing the judiciary, illegally storing weapons, encouraging subversion within the military, collecting and publicizing state secrets, illegally collecting information on individuals and tampering official documents" (*Today's Zaman*, *Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009, *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).

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- **Retired Brigadier General Levent Ersoz:** Trying to topple the government and inciting armed insurrection (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Cumhuriyet's columnist and Ankara representative Mustafa Balbay:** Stealing secret information linked to state security (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Journalist Tuncay Ozkan:** One of the organizers of the Republic rallies, accused of attempting to topple parliament and CHP leader Deniz Baykal (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Ankara Chamber of Commerce (ATO) head Sinan Aygun:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization and trying to topple the government (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009).
- **Turhan Comez,** former AKP deputy and former aide to Prime Minister Erdogan: Trying to topple the government (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Former State Security Court Judge Tanju Guvendiren:** Membership in an armed terrorist organization (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009).
- **Ferda Paksut:** Wife of Constitutional Court Deputy President Osman Paksut; knowingly aiding a terrorist group (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009).
- **Halka ve Olaylara Tercuman Chief Editor Ufuk Mehmet Buyukcelebi:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009).
- **Former AKP deputy Emin Sirin:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009).
- **Former police chief Adil Serdar Sacan:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and publicizing state secrets (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 March 2009; *Sabah*, 20 July 2009).
- **Former Esenyurt Mayor Gurbuz Capan:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapon (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009).
- **Retired Gendarmerie Colonel Arif Dogan:** Believed to be one of the founders of JITEM; belonging to an armed terrorist organization, revealing state secrets, and possessing weapons (*Bianet*, 26 March 2009; *Vatan*, 19 July 2009).

8. Third Indictment

The third indictment was accepted by the 13th High Criminal Court on 5 August 2009. The 1,454-page document was drawn up in five individual parts and contains accusations against 52 people. It focuses on the operations carried out between 10 January and 17 April 2009 and is the first indictment to deem Ergenekon a terrorist organization in accordance with Articles 1,

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3, and 4 of the Counter-Terrorism Law and Articles 220, 302, 314, and 316 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK).

8.1. Ergenekon's Goals

- Ergenekon planned to assassinate journalist and author Fehmi Koru, Turkish Nobel laureate author Orhan Pamuk, Democratic Society Party (DTP) leader Ahmet Turk, Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir, and DTP Deputy Sebahat Tuncel.
- Ergenekon possessed weapons and munitions, including 424 hand grenades, land mines, booby traps, 12 rocket launchers, approximately three kilograms of explosives, 43 ready-to-use light anti-tank weapons, seven shells for light anti-tank weapons, 34 anti-aircraft missiles, 35 mortar shells, dynamite, rifles, handguns, and tens of thousands of cartridges, to prepare the grounds for a coup.
- Ergenekon carried out attacks on *Cumhuriyet* and the Council of State in order to create chaos and prepare the grounds for a coup.
- Ergenekon initiated an attack in Sivas in 1993 by a fundamentalist mob on a hotel where visiting Alevi poets and intellectuals were staying with the aim of stirring anger against the government (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 6, 7 August 2009; *Milliyet, Taraf*, 6 August 2009; *Today's Zaman*, 26 August 2009, 31 December 2009; *Bianet*, 9 August 2009).

8.2. Incidents, Groups Linked to Ergenekon

The third indictment quotes an anonymous witness identified as "Ilkadim [First Step]" as saying that retired Brigadier General Levent Ersoz, former head of the Gendarmerie Intelligence Department, held two meetings with Cemil Bayik, one of the leading figures within the PKK, near Turkey's common border with Iraq. The witness also asserted that Ersoz and Bayik exchanged letters (*Yeni Safak*, 23 August 2009).

8.3. Main Charges

- Setting up and leading a terror organization attempting to destroy the government of the Republic of Turkey or blocking it from performing its duties
- Attempting to destroy the Turkish Parliament and blocking it from performing its duties
- Recording personal data; destroying, distorting, stealing, and acquiring secret documents on national security
- Carrying explosives
- Firing weapons that pose a threat to people's lives
- Disclosing footage and voice recordings belonging to private life (*Today's Zaman*, 7 August 2009).

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8.4. *Main Suspects, Accusations*

- **Former deputy head of the Police Department's Special Forces Bureau Ibrahim Sahin:** Establishing death squads for Ergenekon, planning attacks on various NATO installations, forming and leading an illegal armed terrorist organization, attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly, having large number of weapons and dangerous substances, obtaining secret documents relating to state security, and collecting personal information through illegal means.
- **Sociologist and Writer Prof Yalcin Kucuk:** Forming and leading an illegal armed terrorist organization and attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly
- **Former Secretary General of the National Security Council Ret Gen Tuncer Kilinc:** Belonging to an illegal armed terrorist organization and obtaining secret documents related to state security.
- **Ret Gen Kemal Yavuz:** Belonging to an illegal armed terrorist organization and obtaining secret documents related to state security.
- **Prof Mehmet Haberal:** Forming and leading an illegal armed terrorist organization and attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly.
- **Turk Metal Union President Mustafa Ozbek:** Belonging to an illegal armed terrorist organization and obtaining and keeping secret documents.
- **Prof Kemal Guruz,** former head of Higher Education Council: Forming and leading an illegal armed terrorist organization, obtaining secret documents related to state security
- **Former Rectors Fatih Hilmioglu, Mustafa Yurtkuran, Riza Ferit Bernay:** Belonging to an illegal armed terrorist organization and attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly.
- **Ret Gen Erdal Senel:** Forming and leading an illegal armed terrorist organization and attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly.
- **Columnist Prof Erol Manisali:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization and attempting to overthrow the government and the National Assembly.
- **Lt Col Mustafa Donmez:** Belonging to an illegal armed terrorist organization and obtaining secret documents related to state security (www.nethaber.com, 6 August 2009).

9. Fourth (Poyrazkoy) Indictment

The fourth indictment was accepted by the 12th Criminal Court of Istanbul on 27 January. The 300-page document drafted by prosecutors Ercan Safak and Murat Yonder, charges 17 people - five of whom are under arrest and including 15 naval officers -- in connection with the munitions found in excavations in Poyrazkoy.

9.1. Ergenekon's Goals

- An "illegal entity" -- which operated within the Naval Forces Command under the name "West Working Group" without any legal basis in the 28 February period, the nonviolent military intervention that ousted the then coalition government led by a pro-Islamic party in 1997 -- has still not ceased its activities and continues its unlawful actions and activities today within the framework of the "Cage Action Plan," which comes on the footsteps of the "Action Plan To Fight Reactionaryism" (*Taraf*, 28 June 2009).
- The "Cage Plan" exposed Ergenekon's plans to assassinate prominent figures of Turkey's non-Muslim communities and place the blame for the killings on the AKP. The desired result was an increase in internal and external pressure on the party, leading to diminishing public support for the government (*Today's Zaman*, 19 January).
- The arm cache would be used in an assassination attempt against the prosecutors involved in the Ergenekon case in the event that retired Captain Levent Goktas was not released from prison (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 18 January).

9.2. Main Charges

- Possessing one firearm and a commensurate quantity of ammunition
- Purchasing, carrying, or possessing unlicensed firearms and ammunition
- Purchasing and possessing arms or ammunition that poses a serious danger in terms of their quantity and nature
- Membership in an armed terrorist organization
- Possessing or transacting dangerous materials without license
- Attempting to abrogate the Turkish Grand National Assembly or to prevent it from performing its functions
- Attempting to abrogate the government of the Turkish Republic or to prevent it from performing its functions (*Taraf*, 28 January).

The 12th Criminal Court of Istanbul set the first hearing of the trial on 9 April 2010.

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9.3. *Main Suspects, Accusations*

- **Ret Lt Col Ercan Kirectepe:** Attempting to destroy Parliament and the government.
- **Navy Commanders Emre Onat and Eren Gunay:** Attempting to destroy Parliament and the government.
- **Navy Junior Cpt Mustafa Turhan Ecevit:** Attempting to destroy Parliament and the government.
- **Ret Maj Levent Bektas:** Attempting to destroy Parliament and the government.
- **Adm Levent Gorgec:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **NCO Naval Officer Ergin Geldikaya:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Naval Staff Cpt Ali Turksen:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Senior Sgt Halil Cura:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Senior Sgt Ferudun Arslan:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Senior Sgt Saadettin Dogan:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Ibrahim Koray Ozyurt:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Muharrem Nuri Alacali:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Safak Yurekli:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Dora Sungunay:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Tayfun Duman:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons.
- **Navy Staff Cpt Mert Yanik:** Belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing unlicensed weapons (*Today's Zaman*, 19 January).

10. Fifth (Erzincan) Indictment

The fifth indictment was accepted by the Specially Empowered 2nd Criminal Court in Erzurum on 1 March. The 61-page document drawn up by prosecutor Taner Aksakal charges 14 suspects, 11 of whom are under arrest, in connection with the "Action Plan to Fight Reactionaryism." For the first time, a senior general on active duty, Third Army Commander General Saldıray Berk, is listed as a suspect in the investigation into Ergenekon.

10.1. Ergenekon's Goal

- Ergenekon attempted to put into action the "Action Plan to Fight Reactionaryism" in Erzincan to undermine the government and the pro-Islamic Fethullah Gulen Movement (*Today's Zaman*, 3 March).

10.2. Main Charges

- Planting weapons, drugs, and other incriminating items in homes belonging to members of the Gulen Sect and carrying out raids on those places, ensuring that the Gulen Sect be treated as a terrorist organization (*Star*, 2 March)
- Setting up smaller terrorist organizations; controlling the mafia's international drug trade; attempting to control some media, civil society organizations, and political parties; attempting to stage political assassinations; and using illegal means to find funding and new recruits for the organization (*Today's Zaman*, 3 March).

The 2nd Criminal Court in Erzurum set the first hearing of the trial on 4 May 2010.

10.3. Main Suspects, Accusations

- **Third Army Commander General Saldıray Berk** (prime suspect): Forming and running a terrorist organization, pressuring subordinates to foment unrest in Erzincan by exploiting the Alevi, Sunni, and Kurdish ethnic structure of the province with an eye to spreading this unrest to the rest of Turkey (*Milliyet*, *Hurriyet*, 2 March)
- **Chief Public Prosecutor Ilhan Cihaner**: Belonging to an armed terrorist organization, committing fraud on an official document as a public official, and threatening multiple persons (*Hurriyet*, 2 March).
- **Erzincan Provincial Gendarmerie Regiment Commander Col Ali Tapan**: Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **Eskisehir Provincial Gendarmerie Regiment Commander Sr Col Recep Gencoglu**: Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **Erzincan Provincial Gendarmerie Intelligence Department Director Nedim Ersan**: Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **Erzincan Provincial Gendarmerie Intelligence Department Deputy Director Esin Ergut**: Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.

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- **Yaylabasi Post Commander NCO Murat Yildiz:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **NCOs Orhan Esinger and Senol Bozkurt:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **MIT Erzincan Department Director Sinasi Demir:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **MIT members Sadri Barkin Ince and Kivilcim Ustel:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **Third Army Intelligence Department Planning and Training officer Ahmet Saraclar:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization.
- **Erzincan hunting goods store owner Yasar Bas:** Belonging to an armed terrorist organization (*Today's Zaman*, 3 March).

11. Ergenekon Trials

Two separate trials, which the media named as the "first Ergenekon case" and the "second Ergenekon case," are being held by the 13th High Criminal Court in Istanbul on the basis of the first three indictments prepared by the Prosecutor's Office.

11.1. First Ergenekon Case

The trial of the 86 Ergenekon suspects started on the basis of the first indictment in Silivri, a town close to Istanbul, on 20 October 2008.

- The trial combined the first Ergenekon case with the attacks against the Council of State and *Cumhuriyet* on 3 August 2009. In the case of the attack against members of the Council of State, the High Criminal Court in Ankara previously sentenced Alparslan Arslan to life imprisonment twice in February 2008 (AA, 17 July, 3 August 2009; *Today's Zaman*, 4 August 2009).
- The 13th High Criminal Court had to adjourn the first hearing shortly after it started because of the chaos caused by the large number of demonstrators and journalists who tried to enter the small courtroom. Hundreds of protesters demonstrated against the trial, waving Turkish flags and chanting: "The traitors are in Parliament, the patriots are in prison" (*Today's Zaman*, 21 October 2008).
- On 14 October 2009, the 11th High Criminal Court in Ankara merged the case against the two members of the Association for the Union of Patriotic Forces with the Ergenekon file. The president and the former deputy secretary of that neonationalist organization are accused of deliberately aiding and abetting Ergenekon (*Today's Zaman*, 15 October 2009).
- During the 125th hearing of the first Ergenekon case on 8 December 2009, detainee Asst Prof Umit Sayin demanded a closed hearing and addressed the court after the other

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suspects were removed from the room. Sayin said that he was told of the presence of a secret organization within the military by Hursit Tolon and Sener Eruygur (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 8 December 2009).

The 137th hearing of the first Ergenekon case was held on 26 February. The trial has been adjourned to 22 March.

11.2. Second Ergenekon Case

The 13th High Criminal Court in Istanbul began to try the suspects under the second indictment of the "Ergenekon" probe in Silivri on 20 July 2009 (AA, 20 July 2009).

- Ret Gen Tolon's lawyer Koksal Bayraktar had expressed his and his client's "serious reservations" about the judge at the first hearing. As a higher court, the 14th High Criminal Court rejected the change for the Ergenekon trial (*Bianet*, 24 July 2009).
- On 6 August 2009, the court ruled to combine the second and third Ergenekon cases. The new trial has a total of 108 defendants. The court announced its decision to merge the two cases during a hearing of the trial based on the second indictment. The decision effectively connects all allegations that the organization actively tried to overthrow the government during the 2003-2004 period (*Today's Zaman*, 8 August 2009).
- In accordance with an appeal by suspect Tuncay Ozkan, the panel of judges headed by Judge Hasan Huseyin Ozese decided to ask the General Staff whether or not any group was formed within the TSK in an attempt to stage a military coup between 2000 and 2009. The court also decided to ask the General Staff to provide all information related to alleged coup plans that are mentioned in the indictment (*Yeni Safak*, 26 September 2009).
- On 24 November 2009, Balbay asked why former force commanders have not been included in the judicial process. The three retired force commanders were questioned by the Ergenekon prosecutors on 5 December 2009.

The 46th hearing of the second Ergenekon case was held on 12 March. The trial has been adjourned until 16 March.

12. Officials Spar Over Case

As Ergenekon turned into Turkey's most comprehensive legal case involving coup plans, it caused a war of words between political leaders, particularly Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and CHP leader Deniz Baykal, though President Gul remained neutral.

Erdogan expressed support for the Ergenekon probe and denied the accusation that it was controlled by the ruling AKP in an effort to silence its opponents.

- Following the detention of Tolon, Eruygur, Balbay, and Aygun, Erdogan urged the prosecutor to prepare the indictment on the probe as soon as possible, adding that "darkness would be illuminated at the end of this investigation" (AA, 1 July 2008).

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- He said that "operations have been carried out by the decisions of the court" and that "nobody should see himself as an attorney, nor should he try to portray the government as a 'prosecutor'" (*Today's Zaman*, 24 January 2009)
- The prime minister expressed support for the detention of 49 military officers, including former Retired General Dogan, by saying: "No one is above the law. No one is untouchable. No one is privileged" (*Today's Zaman*, 27 February).

Opposition leader Baykal, however, adopted a critical and skeptical approach toward the probe, blaming the government for establishing an "empire based on fear."

- Baykal maintained that "what is happening is not a result of a democratic period. The AKP is trying to create its own 'deep state.' The coup rhetoric serves to conceal the AKP's own civilian coup" (*Hurriyet Daily News*, 4 July 2009).
- In response to criticism that he is an advocate of the Ergenekon network, Baykal said that the CHP will struggle against putting pressure on honest, honorable, intellectual, and republican people of Turkey and against unjust behaviors toward them. He stated: "We will, of course, fight against the deflection of Turkey's agenda and delivering the country to a fear empire" (*Today's Zaman*, 12 January 2009).

Chief of the General Staff Ilker Basbug denied the TSK's involvement in coup plans and viewed the allegations as a slander campaign against the military forces. He vowed, however, to launch an investigation in the event of evidence pointing to antidemocratic plans.

- Commenting on the munitions found in Poyrazkoy, General Basbug insisted that "there are no buried weapons and munitions caches belonging to the TSK anywhere in Turkey" (AA, 29 April 2009).
- Gen Basbug claimed that the "Action Plan To Fight Reactionaryism" was prepared with the purpose of discrediting and slandering the TSK," adding that "personnel who think and behave contrary to the principles of democracy and a state of law cannot find shelter within the TSK" (AA, 26 June 2009).

President Gul, however, preferred to view the issue from a wider angle and pointed to the importance of democracy in the effort that is made to strengthen Turkey in the world.

- Gul maintained that "everyone should be able to give their account and should act in accordance with the requirements of a democratic state of law" (*Today's Zaman*, 30 October 2009).

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