Mr. Senator,

It has now been two years that the Turkish government has been targeting its dissident citizens abroad. The issue, until very lately, was a concern of countries where some kidnappings and abductions took place and where authorities acceded to Ankara’s demands for their extradition.

While the issue generated little attention in the U.S. despite concerns expressed by human rights organizations regarding that matter, the U.S. administration eventually came to face unpleasant reality of such practices after the unlawful arrests and imprisonment of American citizens in Turkey.

Those arrests brought the U.S. public closer to grasp the nature of events taking place in Turkey in the aftermath of the 2016 coup. But Turkey’s relentless pursuit of its critical citizens may force the U.S. to confront another reality closer to home.

In similar to operations in which opponents of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan were captured in Moldova, Ukraine, Kosovo, Malaysia, Gabon and many other countries, Erdogan’s spokesperson Ibrahim Kalin hinted that Turkey would conduct such operations on the U.S. soil as well.

Speaking to reporters in Ankara in late September, Kalin vowed that Turkey’s relevant units and institutions would continue their operations in countries where Gulen Movement is present, “whether in the U.S. or another country.” He said: “The Turkish Republic will not let them rest.”

Kalin’s remarks appear as no mere speculation or wishful thinking. Rather, his statement points to the existence of determination and a certain policy course on behalf of the Turkish government to haunt Gulen sympathizers and government opponents in the U.S.

We write to you to emphasize our great concern about such threats and urge the U.S. authorities to seek clarification from the Turkish administration over Kalin’s threatening remarks. In this respect, the State Department may summon the Turkish Ambassador to the U.S. to demand further elaboration and elucidation of Kalin’s remarks.

A determined stance by the U.S. would play a deterring role for any reckless attempt by the Turkish government against Turkish dissidents living in the U.S. We would be glad to see you address this point and attract attention to Kalin’s remarks in your official capacity.

Best Regards,