Name: Grey Wolves

Type of Organization:
- Cultural
- political party
- violent extremist group
- nationalist movement

Ideologies and Affiliations:
- Far-right
- nationalist
- fascist

Place of Origin:
Turkey

Year of Origin:
1981

Founder(s):
Alparslan Türkeş

Places of Operation:
Turkey, Germany, Azerbaijan, Cyprus

Overview

Executive Summary:

The Grey Wolves is an international fascist, Turkish nationalist, and pan-Turkic organization and movement which rose to prominence in the late 1970s in Turkey. While the group, which is usually called the Ülkü Ocakları (Idealist Hearths) in Turkish, formally operates as a political and cultural organization, their extremist ideology has also inspired non-members to violent acts. Breakaway groups, including the Osmanlı Ocakları and the Alperen Hearths, have also carried out attacks on groups demonized by the Grey Wolves. In recent years the group’s members and sympathizers have attacked Kurds and Armenians and members of the opposition Democratic Peoples’ Party in Turkey.

Attacks perpetuated by pan-Turkic nationalist extremists are commonly attributed to the Grey Wolves based on their ideological similarity, regardless of whether the individual culprits are affiliated with the organization. While the movement is often referred to as Grey Wolves in western media, in Turkey this name is only used in reference to the 1970s death squads. The name “Grey Wolves” comes from a Turkish Bozkurt legend in which a mother wolf protects the original Turkish settlers who arrived in Anatolia from Central Asia.

Turkish politician Alparslan Türkeş formed the Wolves in 1966, just three years after he founded the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), a participant in Turkey’s current (as of July 2021) governing coalition. The Wolves functioned as the MHP’s armed branch in the 1970s, carrying out attacks and assassinations on leftists, journalists, and dissidents. The group is still tied to the MHP, and Grey Wolves members view the political party’s current chairman, Devlet Bahçeli, as the leader of the organization. In 2019, a former president of the Wolves for seven years, Olcay Kilavuz, described Bahçeli as “Leader Devlet Bahçeli, who sees and embraces Idealists as his own children and enlightens our way with his ideas,” adding, “We will not hesitate to be under the command of Devlet Bahçeli, the Leader of the Nationalist-Idealist Movement, as it has been until today.” Kilavuz also claimed that Bahçeli directly appointed him.
Grey Wolves

From 1976 to 1980 more than 5,000 people died in the Turkish conflict between leftists and nationalists, including the Wolves. In 1981, the Wolves made international headlines when member Mehmet Ali Aca attempted to assassinate Pope John Paul II. The group has organizations, affiliates, and ideologically aligned movements in Germany, Azerbaijan, and Cyprus.

Doctrine:

Anti-Leftist/Communist

Throughout the 1970s, the group battled with Turkish communist organizations, and was sometimes referred to by its allies as the Anti-Communist Street Forces. A member of the Adana branch, who was “found guilty of establishing a group to commit crimes, including murder, attempted murder, shooting a house, and throwing explosives,” described his indoctrination as an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality. The organization ingrained in him that “since [communists] wanted to divide the homeland, all of them had to be killed.” According to a 2014 study by Turkish academic Meral Cinar, Wolves viewed the leftists as an existential threat, and consequently, moderates also represented a danger since they “were ‘accomplices’ of the enemies but they were hiding this fact.” Wolves also believed that many Turkish leftists were a fifth column, working for foreign organizations and governments.

Racism

The Wolves’ support is highest in cities with large Azeri and Turkmen populations, a phenomenon that is explained by their pan-Turkic ethnic nationalism. The founder of the Grey Wolves, Alparslan Turk, included “Turkmen, China’s Uighurs, Russia’s Tatars, Azeris, Kazakhs and others” in his definition of the Turkic nation. The Wolves idealize their conception of a “pure Turk” and adopt the folkloric ideology known as Turanism as evidence of Turkic superiority. Turanism involves the belief in superior Turkic peoples with a shared language and culture.

Türk’s Doctrine

The Turanist nationalist movement and Alparslan Türk himself were greatly influenced by the Turkish nationalist writer Nihat Atsiz, a self-identified racist and “intellectual father of non-Kemalist nationalism.” Kemalism is a political ideology introduced by modern Turkey’s founder, Kemal Ataturk, that sought to modernize the new Turkish Republic through rejection of Islam—viewed as a retrograde and subversive influence—and assimilation of all non-Turk citizens under one homogenous Turkish identity. Atsiz went further, viewing nearly every non-Turkic ethnic group as an inherent enemy of the Turkic people. Atsiz was an important ideologue of the pan-Turkic movement and defined Turkishness based on ethnic terms, rather than the Kemalist version by which assimilation was an acceptable form of Turkishness and ethnic differentiation is considered taboo. Later, Nihat Atsiz split from the Republican Villagers Nation Party when it became the MHP and changed its emblem from the Grey Wolf to the three crescents (which symbolize the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic faith).

Devlet Bahceli’s Ülkücü

At its inception the Grey Wolves movement was anti-communist, in response to a perceived threat from the Soviet Union against Turkey. However, the 1981 coup led to a crack-down on violent anti-communist groups and the imprisonment of Türke. The Grey Wolves doctrine subsequently evolved and, according to Turkey analyst Soner Cagaptay, by the 1990s, the Wolves changed from a group that idealized Turks to idealizing “Turkish Muslims.” Following Türke’s death in 1997, Devlet Bahceli briefly pushed for a more centrist political agenda. However the MHP’s electoral alliance with the AKP has emboldened Bahceli to make greater demands for nationalist, anti-minority policies from
Organizational Structure:

The Grey Wolves organization is decentralized, with chapters and sympathetic movements spread across cities and universities in Turkey and abroad, as well as provincial branches in Turkey. The group has chapters in universities and cities as well as provincial unions, such as the Istanbul Union. The group constantly reformed under new names in the 1970s and exists alongside several breakaway movements, such as the Alperen Hearths and the Ottoman Hearths.

The Grey Wolves are also active in Cyprus, Azerbaijan, and Germany. In Europe, related organizations go by different names. Ties between Azerbaijan’s Wolves and those in Turkey are reportedly largely based on ideological links rather than organizational cooperation. The Cyprus branch, however, is more directly linked. The Cyprus Idealist Hearths (KKTC) organization was led by Fatih Ar?ca as of July 2020. In 2016, the president of Turkey’s Grey Wolves visited the Cyprus branch.

The Wolves also operate across Europe. In France, sympathizers and members of the group are not believed to be part of any organized movement. In Germany, the organization had two affiliated branches as of 2019, the Federation of Associations of Turkish Democratic Idealists—also known as the Germany Turkish Federation (ADÜTDF)—and the Turkish-Islamic Union in Europe (AT?B). These groups have hundreds of local associations and umbrella organizations. In 2017, the German public-service television broadcaster ZDF estimated that the groups had 18,000 members. The Turkish Federation was connected to the attempted assassination of the Pope through the relationship between the failed assassin, Mehmet Ali A?ca, and Musa Cedar Celebi, the leader of the Federation in 1979 in West Germany. Celebi also had ties to illegal smuggling activities and was previously a customs inspector. He was extradited to Italy in 1983 for allegedly paying A?ca 3 million German marks to kill the Pope. After Hewas’s extradition to Italy in 1983, Ali Batman filled his position.

The Wolves are also closely linked to the MHP, a member of Turkey’s ruling coalition, and acts at times as the street movement or paramilitary organization of the party. Both groups were formed by Alparslan Türke?. After Türke?’s arrest in 1980, the Wolves reportedly kept a lower profile, especially abroad. Nevertheless, Wolves refer to current MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli as their own leader, despite having a separate president of the organization. In 2019, Ülkü Ocaklar?’s former president of seven years, Olcay Kilavuz, described Bahçeli as “Leader Devlet Bahçeli, who sees and embraces Ülkü Ocaklar? as his own children and enlightens our way with his ideas. We will not hesitate to be under the command of Devlet Bahçeli, the Leader of the Nationalist-Idealist Movement, as it has been until today.” He also claimed that he was appointed to lead the Grey Wolves indirectly by Bahçeli in 2012. While Kilavuz acted as the President of Ülkü Ocaklar? he was also an MHP representative.

The Wolves have also been linked to Turkey’s mafia, illicit drug trade, and state security and intelligence forces (MIT). The group was most directly linked to state security forces at the height of its violent acts in the late 1970s, when the organization received weapons from the Counter-Guerrilla Organization. Allegations that the Wolves function as a paramilitary organization are bolstered by Grey Wolf, mafia ringleader, and assassin Alaattin Çak?k’s employment with Turkish intelligence and connections to state officials. A former Turkish intelligence officer claimed that he “served in Paris for 4 years, and … acted against Armenian terrorism with Çak?k at that time.” He said that the MIT used Çak?c? for operations in Europe and Lebanon. MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli’s insistence on releasing individuals such as Çak?c? from prison reflects the seeming impunity of these persons. On May 12, 2018, Bahçeli tweeted that the Grey Wolf assassins Çak?c? and Kür?at Y?lmaz were “brothers who love their nation and country,” and suggested that they should be released from prison. Çak?c? threatened six journalists from prison, claiming, “They will be punished by the people who love me in Turkey or abroad.” Journalists report that Çak?c? is a member of the Turkish mafia and continues to wield power from inside his jail cell.

A 1998 report from the Turkish parliament explicitly revealed the Wolves’ connections to the Turkish security forces. The report cited a senior member of the organization’s connection to “organized crime, heroin smuggling, and political assassinations carried out in collaboration with the Turkish security forces.”

The Abdullah Çat? scandal offered further evidence of collusion between the Grey Wolves and Turkish security forces. Çat? served as the organization’s deputy leader in Turkey in 1978 but later went undercover when he was linked to the murder of seven trade unionists. Çat? also helped A?ca escape from prison in Turkey. In November 1996 Çat? was killed in a car accident while wanted for heroin trafficking and murder. A 1998 report from the Turkish parliament revealed Çat?’s connection to “organized crime, heroin smuggling, and political assassinations carried out in collaboration with the Turkish security forces.” Çat? was employed by the Turkish secret police on multiple
occasions and became involved in anti-Kurdish operations.\textsuperscript{70}

The following list details some of the known ties Grey Wolves leaders and members have had with mainstream political parties, security services, and criminal organizations:

- **Devlet Bahçeli**: Leader of the Grey Wolves and the MHP.\textsuperscript{71}
- **Ahmet Yi?it Y?ld?r?m**: President of the Grey Wolves.\textsuperscript{72}
- **Mehmet Ali A?ca**: Attempted assassin of Pope John Paul II. A?ca denied his involvement with the Grey Wolves but was known to have been a member.\textsuperscript{73}
- **Musa Cedar Celebi**: Leader of the Grey Wolves / Turkish Federation in 1979 in West Germany. He allegedly had ties to smuggling activities and was previously a customs inspector. Celebi was extradited to Italy for allegedly paying A?ca 3 million German marks to assassinate the Pope.\textsuperscript{74}
- **Ali Batman**: Replaced Celebi as the leader of the Turkish Federation in West Germany in 1983.\textsuperscript{75}
- **Alaattin Çak?c?**: Çak?c? was arrested after the Turkish military coup in 1980 for the murder of 41 leftists. A former Turkish intelligence officer claimed that he “served in Paris for 4 years, and that they acted against Armenian terrorism with Çak?c? at that time.” He said that the MIT used Çak?c? for operations in Europe and Lebanon.\textsuperscript{76}
- **Olcay Kilavuz**: President of the Grey Wolves from 2012 to 2019.\textsuperscript{80} In January 2019, he stepped down from the position after seven years as the president. He is also a member of MHP.\textsuperscript{81}
- **Abdullah Çatl?**: Çatl? served as the deputy leader of the organization in Turkey in 1978 but later went undercover when he was linked to the murder of seven trade unionists.\textsuperscript{82} Çatl? had also aided Mehmet Ali A?ca, who went on to shoot the Pope, in his escape from Turkish prison. In November 1996 Çatl? was killed in a car accident. Items found in his car revealed that he was a hired hitman involved in a national conspiracy. Çatl? was wanted at the time for heroin trafficking and murder.\textsuperscript{83} A 1998 report from Turkish parliament revealed Çatl?’s connection to “organized crime, heroin smuggling, and political assassinations carried out in collaboration with the Turkish security forces.” Çatl? was employed by the Turkish secret police on multiple occasions and became involved in “anti-Kurdish” operations.\textsuperscript{84}

**Financing:**

There is little open-source information about the Wolves’ financing networks. The organization has been funded in the past in part by member dues, which were $4 a month in 1983.\textsuperscript{85} The Wolves have also been linked to illicit activities and organizations in the 1980s and 1990s such as heroin smuggling, weapons smuggling, and the Turkish mafia, with smuggling primarily focused in Bulgaria and West Germany.\textsuperscript{86} In the 1970s, the organization was given weapons by the Turkish Counter-Guerrilla Organization.\textsuperscript{87}

**Recruitment:**

As of 1983, the group was “said to number about 18,000 in Europe, serve as the enforcement arm of the so-called Turkish Federation, [as part of] an amalgam of about 100 Turkish right-wing groups with 50,000 members.”\textsuperscript{88} In 2017, the German Federal Agency for Civic Education stated that the Wolves had “outgrown the neo-Nazis as the largest far-right group” in Germany.\textsuperscript{89} While exact numbers of membership in Turkey are unknown, the organization has chapters in most cities in Turkey, including predominantly Kurdish areas.\textsuperscript{90} Increasing nationalist fervor across Turkey may indicate a greater potential for recruitment in the coming years.\textsuperscript{91} In the 1970s, the group created commando camps and recruited retired soldiers and others for them.\textsuperscript{92}

Wolves have also engaged in recruitment for armed militias in Cyprus, Iraq, and Syria.\textsuperscript{93} In 1974, the Ülkü Ocaklar? Headquarters recruited volunteers for the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.\textsuperscript{94} In 2017, Devlet Bahçeli said that there were “5,000 idealist volunteers” prepared to fight in “Turkish cities where Turkmen live, especially [the Iraqi city of] Kirkuk.”\textsuperscript{95}

**Training:**

In 1968, the Wolves began founding paramilitary “commando” camps in several provinces across Turkey and in Cyprus to train members in combat.\textsuperscript{96} In 1983, the Washington Post claimed the Grey Wolves received “rigorous training in civil warfare.”\textsuperscript{97} Former West Germany Grey Wolves leader Ali Batman reportedly received training from a guerilla camp "where he learned shooting and bomb making."\textsuperscript{98} The group
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began founding “commando camps” in 1968. A report prepared by the Turkish Interior Ministry’s Security Department, found that there were 28 “commando camps” in total.99

Former MHP Mardin Deputy Rifat Baykal allegedly opened a commando camp in Gumuldur Akrepkaya region in Izmir.100 A 100-member camp run by retired soldiers was created along the Ankara-Eskisehir highway by MHP board member Dundar Taser.101 The Silivri province camp in Istanbul was founded by Mustafa Ok and was later visited by Ülkü Ocaklar? founder Alparslan Türke?.102 In 1969, Ruhi Unal founded a 350 member camp in Yumurtalik, Adana province.103 In 1970 a secondary camp was created in Adana province, under the name “the Southern Region Commando Camp.”104 The camp attracted 80 participants at first, armed with at least 17 rifles.105 In 1970 Alparslan Türke? ordered the establishment of a training camp in Bursa’s Mudanya province and the camp was constructed by MHP board member Kamil Koc and the MHP Bursa City Organization.106

Also Known As:

- Bozkurtlar (Grey Wolves)107
- Ülkü Ocaklar? (Idealist Hearths)108
- Idealist Youth109
- Anti-Communist Street Forces110
- Ülkücüler111
- Ülkü Ocaklar? E?itim ve Kültür Vakf? (ÜBD)112
- Büyük Ülkü Derne?i (BÜD)113
- Boz Gourde114


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Key Leaders

Alparslan Türkeş
Founder, deceased

Devlet Bahçeli
Chairman of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)

Ahmet Yiğit Yıldırım
President of the Ülkü Ocakları (since July 2020)

Olcay Kilavuz
President of Ülkü Ocakları (2012-2019), member of MHP

Alaattin Aldemir
President of the Ülkü Ocakları (1992-1996)

Ali Batman
Leader of the Turkish Federation in West Germany (1983)

Musa Cedar Celebi
Leader of the Turkish Federation in West Germany (1979-1983)

Abdullah Çatlı
Deputy leader of Ülkü Ocakları in the 1970s, hitman, Turkish Secret Police officer, deceased

Grey Wolves
Alaattin Çakıcı
Turkish mafia leader and Ülkü Ocakları'n assassin
History:


- **June 7, 2022:** The European parliament calls for the EU and its member states to examine the possibility of banning the Grey Wolves in EU countries. The call was made due to fears that the group is gaining influence not only in Turkey but also in EU member states. Source: Siranush Ghazanchyjan, “In new report on Turkey, European Parliament calls for recognition of Armenian Genocide, urges ban on Grey Wolves,” Public Radio of Armenia, June 7, 2022, [https://en.armradio.am/2022/06/07/in-new-report-on-turkey-european-parliament-calls-for-recognition-of-armenian-genocide-urges-ban-on-grey-wolves/](https://en.armradio.am/2022/06/07/in-new-report-on-turkey-european-parliament-calls-for-recognition-of-armenian-genocide-urges-ban-on-grey-wolves/).


- **December 30, 2022:** Turkey sends more than 40 extradition requests to West Germany for extremists, but West Germany does not extradite to countries with the death penalty. Source: “Former leader of Grey Wolves fatally shot in Ankara by two unidentified assailants on motorcycles,” Turkish Minute, December 30, 2022, [https://www.turkishminute.com/2022/12/30/former-leader-grey-wolves-shot/](https://www.turkishminute.com/2022/12/30/former-leader-grey-wolves-shot/).


- **February 29, 1968:** The group founds the Organization of Young Nationalists under the name of the Ülkü Ocakları. Throughout the year the organization founds new branches in prominent universities, including the University of Ankara; University of Hacettepe; University of Gazi; Middle East Technical; and universities across İstanbul. Source: “Hakkımızda,” Ülkü Ocakları website, accessed July 12, 2021, https://www.ulkuocaklari.org.tr/pages/i/hakkimizda.


- **May 27, 1960:** As part of the “National Unity Committee,” Alparslan Türkeş carries out a coup d’état in Turkey but is later kicked out of the committee and sent to India as an undersecretary in the Turkish embassy. Source: Esin Isık, “Turkey Remembers Türkes on His 22nd Death Anniversary” Anadolu Agency, April 4, 2019, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-remembers-turkes-on-his-22nd-death-anniversary/1442516.
Violent history:
Throughout the late 1970s, Wolves “launched a wave of bomb attacks and shootings that killed hundreds of people, including public officials, journalists, students, lawyers, labor organizers, left-wing activists and ethnic Kurds.” The violence against dissenters devolved into a civil-war environment, with attacks and counterattacks occurring daily. The group was supported by the Counter-Guerrilla Organization of the Turkish Army’s Special Warfare Department. This department then received U.S. funding to combat alleged Soviet threats. In the late 1970s, the group carried out assassinations and multiple massacres. In one, the Mara? Massacre, the Wolves killed more than 100 people in the Alevi majority city. The group has also been connected to the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in 1981.

According to a study by ?efika Kumral, “While violent events associated with the Ülkücu movement were very low during the military junta regime in the early 1980s, these violent events rose dramatically in the course of 1990s, temporarily declined between 1999 and 2002, and accelerated rapidly after 2002.”

- **June 28, 2022:** Suspected members from the Grey Wolves Bosnian branch send threats via phone calls, text messages, and social media to Nermina Kuloglija and Hamdi F?rat Buyuk, two journalists who published an investigation into the Grey Wolves organization. No further developments have been reported.

- **July 30, 2021:** A Kurdish family is ambushed by suspected Grey Wolves members in Konya, central Turkey. The assailants kill seven before setting the family’s home on fire. According to media sources, the family was previously targeted and sustained injuries two months earlier in May by suspected Grey Wolves members.

- **May 14, 2021:** Suspected members of the Grey Wolves ambush a Kurdish family in southern Mersin province, Turkey. The attack injures two. Security forces later arrest the assailants who claimed violence erupted due to a traffic accident. Ten people are detained, but four are eventually released.

- **April 3, 2021:** Suspected members of the Grey Wolves attack a Kurdish cultural association in Lyon, France. The assailants, who are armed with baseball bats and knives, injure four.

- **January 5, 2021:** The head of the Ankara Ülkü Hearths Secondary Education Unit, Abdurrahman Gülseren, attacks Gelecek Party representative Selçuk Özdağ. Gülseren also released a video threatening Erdoğan, comparing him to the last Ottoman sultan, Abdulhamit II, and stating that the October 2014 massacre in Ankara “could have been better.”

- **October 28, 2020:** Turkish extremists parade down streets near Lyon, France, “looking for” Armenians, shouting, “We are going to kill the Armenians.” During the protests, the Armenian Genocide memorial near Lyon was vandalized. A French anti-racism organization claims the Grey Wolves organized the gatherings. The International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA) and the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations in France (CCAF) call for the Grey Wolves to be banned in France.

- **June 2020:** Grey Wolves members, alongside other Turkish extremists, repeatedly attack Kurdish protestors in Vienna, Austria, during a week of protests and marches.

- **March 14, 2020:** Members of the Ülkü Ocaklar? threaten to mutilate deceased leftist folk musician Ibrahim Gokcek’s body and behead his family anticipating his burial in Kayseri. Members of the Ülkü Ocaklar? attempted to block the funeral procession. The head of the Kayseri Grey Wolves threatens on Twitter to behead Gokcek’s family members if they return his body to Kayseri.

- **December 17, 2016:** Nationalists attack HDP offices after a PKK suicide attack. In Kayseri, rioters “broke into the building where the HDP office is located, scattering papers and furniture on the street and removing the HDP sign…” The rioters also set fire to the building and hung the MHP flag. Attacks against HDP offices occurred in seven other districts across Turkey.

- **September 8, 2015:** The group has also been connected to the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in 1981.

- **August 18, 2015:** A Uighur and a Turk bomb a Hindu shrine in Thailand, killing 20. Some newspapers speculate that the suspects were members of the loosely affiliated Grey Wolves movement in Thailand. The suspect was later apprehended with forged Turkish passports.

- **December 17, 2016:** Members of the Grey Wolves break into and vandalize a pro-Kurdish political party office in Kayseri.
September 2015: Grey Wolves members attack pro-Kurdish political party offices in multiple cities. Violent protesters set fire to buildings and vandalize the properties. Some protesters shout, “We want a massacre!”

June 2015: The Kars provincial head of the Ülkü Ocaklar?, Tolga Adıgüzel, threatens Armenians after an Armenian pianist held a concert in Kars. Adıgüzel was sentenced to seven years in prison for hate speech by the Kars Criminal Court.

July 9, 2015: MHP supporters attack the Thai embassy after the Thai government detained 173 Uighurs who had entered Thailand illegally to flee the Chinese authorities.

July 9, 2015: Members of the Ülkü Ocaklar? march through Istanbul and allegedly attack Chinese tourists with knives. The head of Ülkü Ocaklar? in Istanbul denies that any tourists were harmed.

December 25, 2014: Members of Ülkü Ocaklar? attack university students commemorating the Robaski Massacre in Kahraman, Mara?, Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Izmir, and Istanbul. A Dicle News Agency journalist was also injured while covering the protests. Police allegedly support the nationalist attackers and teargas the students taking part in the commemoration.

April 24, 2011: On the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a sympathizer of Abdullah Çatlı and the Great Unity Party shoots an Armenian completing his compulsory military service.

May 25, 2010: Two men who had described themselves as “Ülkücü” and who were allegedly involved with the Ülkü Ocaklar? organization attack a DIHA journalist. The journalist had recently produced a report covering attacks on Kurdish protesters. Prior to the attack, two other DIHA journalists has also sustained injuries from nationalist attackers.

January 5, 2006: A violent skirmish breaks out after the General Directorate of Ülkü Ocaklar? dismisses the head of Erzurum Ülkü Hearths. One person is killed and several injured.

October 17, 2003: Members of the Ülkü Ocaklar?, including Erhan Arikli, attack journalist Murat Kanatlı during “a protest in Nicosia to protest the intervention of EU and USA in TRNC elections.”

May 5, 1998: A member of HADEP is murdered by ultranationalists in Istanbul. Members of Ülkü Ocaklar? allegedly kidnapped him and attempted to force him to join the organization several times prior to his murder.

May 3, 1998: Ultranationalists allegedly affiliated with the Grey Wolves beat two students—one of them to death—passing in front of the Bolu Ülkü Ocaklar? Association building.

1994: The Grey Wolves published a list of names of Armenians who had changed their names to avoid persecution in Nagorno Karabakh.

1992: On May 28, 1993, the remains are discovered of Armenians allegedly murdered by the Grey Wolves while attempting to flee to Armenia from Nagorno Karabakh.


December 19–26, 1978: Members of the Grey Wolves carry out a massacre in Mara?, Turkey, against local Alevi citizens. Alevi organizations estimate that “111 people died, over 1,000 people were wounded and that 552 houses and 289 offices” were destroyed.

October 9, 1978: Members of the Ülkü Ocaklar?, including leaders Abdullah Çatlı and Haluk K?rc?, murder seven leftist university students.

1974–1980: Turkish sources claim that the organization committed 694 murders during this period.

December 1978: Members of the Grey Wolves kill more than 100 minority Alevis in a week-long massacre in Mara?.

March 1978: Grey Wolves member ?brahim Çiftçi assassinates the Chief Republican Prosecutor Do?an Öz, who was investigating a network of assassins.

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Grey Wolves


Designations:

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:

- **Kazakhstan**
  
  On October 15, 2004, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan banned the group, referring to it as a terrorist association.\textsuperscript{155}

- **Austria**
  
  In 2019, the Austrian government banned the Grey Wolves symbol and hand gesture (i.e. a raised pinky and index finger and pinched thumb and middle and ring finger).\textsuperscript{156}

- **France**
  
  On November 4, 2020, French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin announced a ban on the Grey Wolves organization, citing recent violent protests in Armenian neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{157}


\textsuperscript{156} “France Bans Turkish Ultra-Nationalists: Who Are the ‘Grey Wolves’?,” \textit{Arab News} (Riyadh), November 4, 2020, \url{https://www.arabnews.com/node/1758216/world}.

Associations:

**Ties to Extremist Entities:**

The Ülkü Ocakları espouse an ultranationalist, racist ideology that has reached beyond its members. Many attacks and extremist individuals have been inspired by the movement without being directly involved. The group was also tied to the Turkish intelligence agency and ideologically to the Alperen Hearths.

- **Alperen Hearths:**

  The Alperen Hearths are a similar organization that is connected to a breakaway MHP party called the Great Unity Party. The Party harbors many of the same beliefs and extremist tendencies. Members of the Alperen Hearth have been involved in attacks against LGBT persons, leftists, Kurds, and synagogues.

- **Syrian Turkmen Brigades:**

  Alparslan Celik, who formerly held many senior positions in the Grey Wolves organization, commanded the Second Coastal Division of the Syrian Turkmen Brigades and, famously, killed a Russian pilot in 2016. Burak Misinci, another member of the Ülkü Ocakları was killed in Syria while fighting with the Turkmen Brigade. Several high-level MHP politicians attended his funeral. Some sources allege that the Grey Wolves organized recruitment for the Turkmen Coastal Brigades as well as procuring funds. MHP Esenler District President Suat Yılmaz, Başçilar District President Onur Yeşil, and Ülkü Ocakları 2nd Regional President Oğuzhan Bağdadoğan traveled to Turkmen Mountain in Syria and posted pictures of themselves armed and in militant uniforms.

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Rhetoric:

**Olcay Kilavuz, September 22, 2015**

“It is the main duty of the security forces to combat terrorism. We would only take on responsibility for this if the duty cannot be fulfilled.”

**Olcay Kilavuz, March 18, 2017**

“If this nation is in trouble, if our country needs us, we will take our weapons, and if necessary fight.”

**Devlet Bahçeli, April 5, 2016**

Urged the government to “level Nusaybin to ground and leave no one alive” during anti-PKK fighting in the city.

**Tolga Adiguzel, local Ülkü Ocakları branch leader, June 2, 2015**

“Everybody should know their place and watch their step. Do they want to try our patience with the minds of traitors from inside and out? Should we go on the hunt for Armenians on the streets of Kars?”

**Banner hung outside of multiple Ülkü Ocakları buildings in 2015**

“We crave Chinese blood.”

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