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## ["Harun Yahya" sentenced to prison](#) [3]

Adnan Oktar, the Islamic creationist who writes under the pseudonym "Harun Yahya," was sentenced by a Turkish court to three years in prison for "creating an illegal organization for personal gain," according to a [report](#) [4] from Reuters (May 9, 2008). The charges reportedly stemmed from a previous trial in which Oktar was "charged with using threats for personal benefit and creating an organization with the intent to commit a crime." A spokesperson for BAV confirmed the fact of Oktar's sentencing to Reuters, but claimed that the judge was influenced by pressure groups and stated that Oktar would appeal the verdict.

Oktar is the head of the Foundation for Scientific Research (Bilim Arastirma Vakfi, or BAV) in Ankara, Turkey. BAV originally adopted its arguments from young-earth creationist organizations in the United States, but discarded claims about a young earth and a global flood not vouched for by the Qur'an or Islamic tradition. Subsequently, BAV evinced a degree of sympathy for "intelligent design" creationism instead, employing catchphrases like "irreducible complexity" and using the phrase "intelligent design" as equivalent with "creation." Later, however, Harun Yahya denounced "intelligent design" as insufficiently Islamic.

According to the historian of creationism Ronald L. Numbers, "Initially BAV focused its missionary activities on Muslims in the Turkic Republics and in the Balkans, but it quickly expanded to reach Muslims throughout the world," with speakers dispatched to Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Britain, South Africa, and, as Pat Shipman [reported](#) [5] in *RNCSE*, the United States. And its efforts have lately not been limited to Muslims: in 2007, unsolicited copies of a lavishly produced tome entitled *The Atlas of Creation* were distributed to bemused teachers and scientists in France, the Netherlands, and the United States, as NCSE [reported](#) [6].

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