

INTERVIEW |

Public Prosecutor Ali Yeldan

Alanya is a peaceful place. This is the conclusion of attorney-general Ali Yeldan. The biggest problems occurring in and around the bathing place are unbalanced checks and theft of mobile phones. Foreigners usually get in touch with the law when something goes wrong while buying a house or land. "But those problems are often their own fault", Yeldan says. 'People have to be more careful who they trust.'

Ali Yeldan is the highest in rank at the courthouse of Alanya and surroundings. He is the one who makes the decisions about development of laws and is also the person who controls everything related to justice in this area. Yeldan looks surprisingly young for someone with such a high position. Friendly but extremely careful he chooses his words; every now and then he makes a joke in between and he laughs out loud. For instance when talking about the new prison in Mahmutlar. This is being built about one kilometre from the centre into the countryside. The prison, which is provided with all modern extras, looks from the outside like a massive grey block in the middle of the green back land. Not exactly a sight for sore eyes, Ali Yeldan says "But everybody has to be patient for a little longer", he says. "You'll see, in a while this prison will look like paradise! We will plant orange- and olive trees around it so that no one can see what's behind it. It will look better than the gardens of many newly constructed building complexes", he laughs. The new prison will house almost 500 prisoners. It is expected that the first ones will arrive in April.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the country hero who strived for independence in Turkey in 1919, founded the foundation for the current Turkish law-system. He wanted Turkey to live by a western model and created the justice system after western criterions.

Since the conversations about Turkey being part of the European Union started in October 2005, the Turkish justice system is a sensitive discussion point. Ali Yeldan realizes that a special commission of the European Union is investigating it. But he emphasizes that the Turkish justice system is hardly any different from any of the other European countries. "Our justice system has always been good", he says. "The past years some changes were made and we apply those changes now. The European Union often talks about the human right situation in Turkey, for instance in prisons. But we have laws to protect the human rights. We have had them for years. Our officers go to European countries to see how it is there, and European officers come here for the same reason. We learn from each other."

