

URGENT ACTION

INJURED, STRANDED, IN NEED OF EMERGENCY CARE

An estimated 24 injured people are stranded in a building's basement in the town of Cizre, Şırnak province, in south-eastern Turkey. Some of them are seriously injured and require emergency medical care. Four people among the injured have reportedly died from their injuries while waiting for emergency medical care. The town of Cizre has been under a 24-hour curfew since 14 December as police and army conduct operations against the armed group Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement (YDG-H).

On 23 January, an estimated 28 people, some seriously injured during clashes,, sought refuge in the basement of a nearby building and have been there since. Four people have since died. Speaking to Amnesty International on the phone, an injured man who is in the basement said that there are at least 10 people there with serious injuries including bleeding wounds. They are not able to leave the basement because of continuing gunfire and heavy artillery shelling. They report that artillery shells continue to hit the building where they are stranded. According to the lawyer representing the injured, the authorities have refused permission for ambulances to be sent, arguing that they cannot attend on "security grounds". The building where the injured are located is only several hundred metres from the centre of Cizre and medical facilities.

On 25 January an application was filed with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on behalf of 13 people who are currently sheltered in the basement, requesting that an interim measure is granted requiring the Turkish authorities to take every possible step to provide urgent medical care. The decision is pending.

Five interim measures have already been granted by the ECtHR in similar cases in Cizre since 18 January calling on "the government of Turkey to take all measures within their powers to protect the applicant's life and physical integrity". According to the applicants' lawyer, Serhat Altun, Hüseyin Paksoy and Cihan Karaman died from their injuries because they were not able to access emergency medical care despite the interim measures. Helin Öncü, is receiving medical treatment in hospital. There is no information on the fate and whereabouts of Orhan Tunç, the fifth applicant.

Please write immediately in Turkish or your own language:

- Urging the Turkish authorities to immediately ensure ambulances' access to the building where the injured are currently located and ensure that all necessary emergency and other medical treatment is provided to all the injured;
- Calling on them to ensure that emergency medical treatment is provided at all times to all those who need it in areas under curfew;
- Urging them not to use firearms except in the event of imminent threat of death or serious injury, to cease the use of artillery in Cizre and to ensure prompt, independent and impartial investigations into deaths and injuries that have occurred in curfew areas.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 MARCH 2016 TO:

Minister of Interior

Efkan Ala
İçişleri Bakanlığı
Bakanlıklar
Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 418 1795
Salutation: Dear Minister

Prime Minister

Mr Ahmet Davutoğlu,
Vekaletler Caddesi Başbakanlık Merkez
Bina
P.K. 06573
Kızılay / Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 403 62 82
Email: ozelkalem@basbakanlik.gov.tr
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

And copies to:

Chair of the Human Rights Institution
Dr Hikmet Tülen
Yüksel Caddesi No. 23, Kat 3, Yenışehir
06650 Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 422 29 96
Email: tihk@tihk.gov.tr

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The town of Cizre in Şırnak province have been under a curfew since 14 December, as security forces launched operations against the armed Revolutionary Patriotic Youth Movement (YDG-H), the youth wing of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Local lawyers and activists told Amnesty International that there had been more than 40 reported deaths in Cizre since the start of the curfew, including women, children and elderly people, many due to alleged sniper fire from security forces. In the Sur district of the city of Diyarbakır, six neighbourhoods have been under curfew since 11 December. Lawyers reported at least 13 residents to have been killed. Around half of the district's population is reported to have left for neighbouring areas, currently not under curfew. Protests and vigils taking place daily outside the curfew areas are routinely dispersed by police using tear gas and water cannons, and protestors are detained.

In all areas under curfew many residents are facing prolonged power outages and severe water shortages and they cannot leave their homes to access basic food supplies. Residents requiring medical care have also been unable to safely leave their neighbourhoods to access such care. Ambulances in some cases have been unable to enter areas under curfew due to the security situation or because they were denied access by the security forces.

Since the breakdown of the peace process between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the government in July, armed clashes between the YDG-H and security forces have taken place in urban areas in south-eastern Turkey.

According to the Minister of the Interior, over 3,000 "terrorists" have been killed in this latest round of violence. In mid-December, clashes intensified after a mass deployment of police and military personnel to the region.

In towns and cities where security forces have mounted operations against the YDG-H, town and district Governors have imposed extended, round-the-clock curfews, confining residents to their homes. The authorities state that the curfews are required in order to enable "the capture of members of the separatist terrorist organization [PKK] and to protect the security of the people and their property".

Amnesty International received footage apparently showing a group of over 20 people with white flags being fired upon while attempting to take injured persons on wooden carts out of the Cudi neighbourhood to a hospital in Cizre on 20 January. Several people were injured including cameraman Refik Tekin, a journalist with IMC TV (a national television channel in Turkey) who was filming before and during the armed attack.

Turkey has an obligation to uphold the right to freedom of movement. While this right may be subject to certain limitations, any restriction must meet the "necessity and proportionality test". This means that they must be provided by law, imposed for a legitimate purpose and be necessary and proportionate. Restoring public order can serve as a legitimate reason for restricting movement. However, an indefinite, 24-hour curfew is a disproportionate restriction that has now entered its fourth week in several locations, and has resulted in violations of other human rights. Other security measures also must meet the "necessity and proportionality test" to be lawful. Cuts to water have been reported in all areas under curfew. Forcing residents to remain without electricity and water constitute disproportionate measures. In any event, preventing residents from seeking safety in others areas cannot be justified as a necessary security measure.

International standards protecting the right to life require that lethal force by law enforcement agents, and particularly their use of firearms, be limited to self-defence or defence of others against imminent threat of death or serious injury. Intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable to protect life (Principle 9, UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms). Use of artillery in a policing operation in a populated urban area cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Name: Asiye Yuksel (f), Mehmet Tunc (m), Mahmut Duymak (m), Mehmet Yavuzel (m), Rohat Aktaş (m), Sercan Uğur (m), Murat Aslan (m), Muharrem Erbek (m), Azad Yılmaz (m), Abdullah Zileyaz (m), Feride Yıldız (f), İslam Kalkan (m), Faik Özkan (m)

Gender m/f: both

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