

TURKEYMedeni Alpkaya (m), teacher & trade unionist, aged 30

Teacher Medeni Alpkaya was detained by police officers on 3 February, apparently because of his work as an activist with a teachers' trade union. He is now held at the Anti-Terror Branch of Diyarbak_r Police Headquarters, where he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment in custody.

He was detained after he gave a talk at a meeting of the *Haber-Sen* trade union in Diyarbak_r. He has reportedly been detained and ill-treated by police officers numerous times. In May 1999, he was reportedly detained and beaten by plainclothes police officers in Diyarbak_r.

Medeni Alpkaya, who is Kurdish, is a board member of the teachers' trade union *E_itim-Sen*. It is alleged that he was detained because he had criticised the police's confiscation of *E_itim-Sen* posters, and the authorities' ongoing crackdown on students who have requested Kurdish language education.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since November 2001, hundreds of people have been arrested after they began campaigning by submitting petitions to their schools or universities, asking either for courses in the Kurdish language, or for their education to be delivered in Kurdish. Although a recent constitutional amendment guarantees the right of petition, many have been detained by police or gendarmerie and arrested. Some have reportedly been tortured or ill-treated while in detention or been expelled from their places of study.

Torture is rarely reported from prisons, but in police stations it appears to be regularly used to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as unofficial punishment for presumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods in Turkey documented by Amnesty International include severe beatings, being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, suspending by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Medeni Alpkaya, who is held at Diyarbak_r Police Headquarters, and asking the authorities to ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated while in police custody;
- urging them to ensure that Medeni Alpkaya is given immediate access to a lawyer, brought promptly before a judge and either charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released immediately;
- reminding the government of its obligations as a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights, which says that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

Mr Rütü Kaz_m Yücelen

Ministry of Interior

Çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95
Salutation: Dear Minister

Diyarbakır Police Headquarters

Mr Atilla Çınar

Diyarbakır Emniyet Müdürü

Diyarbakır Emniyet Müdürlüğü

Diyarbakır, Turkey

☒ Emniyet Müdürü, Diyarbakır, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Chief of Police

Governor of the Provinces under Emergency Rule

Olağanüstü Hal Valisi

Diyarbakır, Turkey

Telegrams: Olaganustu Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 412 224 3572

Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Nejat Arseven

Office of the Prime Minister,

Bakanlık,

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 04 76

Salutation: Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 March 2002.