

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 45/00 (EUR 44/08/00, 28 February 2000) - Fear of torture

TURKEY **Feridun Çelik, lawyer, Mayor of Diyarbakır, HADEP**
 M. Selim Özalp, Mayor of Siirt, HADEP
 Feyzullah Karaaslan, Mayor of Bingöl, HADEP
 Ramazan Tekin, deputy Mayor of Diyarbakır, HADEP

On 28 February 2000 mayors Feridun Çelik, M. Selim Özalp and Feyzullah Karaaslan were released from prison.

On 24 February they were charged by the Diyarbakır State Security Court with aiding and abetting the illegal PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party), under Article 169 of the Turkish Penal Code, and remanded to Diyarbakır E-Type Prison. They were released after successful applications by their lawyers. An order by the Minister of the Interior that they be removed from their posts as mayors was rescinded following their release but they have, however, been banned from leaving the country.

M. Selim Özalp has spoken of his treatment at Diyarbakır Gendarmerie Headquarters: he has described being kept blindfolded, being subjected to a form of strangulation where the hollow of his throat was repeatedly pressed by the thumb of his assailant, having strong pressure applied to his underarms by the hands of his assailant, having his testicles compressed, his hands cuffed behind his back for eight hours at a time and how he was beaten and threatened. A doctor from Diyarbakır State Hospital who was reportedly summoned to the gendarmerie to examine him after he became ill and lost consciousness was, according to Feyzullah Karaaslan, who was in earshot, forced by the gendarmerie to alter his report to read that he had observed abrasions rather than bruises under the arms.

Feridun Çelik and Feyzullah Karaaslan have reported being made to sit blindfolded in cold rooms, being deprived of sleep, being kicked, slapped and verbally abused and having their hair pulled.

The lawyers of the three mayors have lodged formal complaints with the authorities.

Ramazan Tekin is still detained at Diyarbakır E-Type Prison

Amnesty International is urging the authorities to carry out a comprehensive and impartial investigation into the reported torture and ill-treatment of the four men.

No further action is required by the Urgent Action network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals on their behalf.