

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 17/96 Health concern / Probable prisoner of conscience 6 February 1996

TURKEY Abdülmelik F_rat, former member of parliament, aged 63

Former member of parliament Abdülmelik F_rat, currently in Bayrampa_a Prison in Istanbul awaiting trial, is reported to be suffering from a serious heart condition. In view of the seriousness of his illness and his advanced age, Amnesty International believes that consideration should be given to this probable prisoner of conscience receiving medical treatment outside prison.

Abdülmelik F_rat complained of chest pains after his arrest on 13 January 1996.

Medical records show that he suffers from hypertension and circulatory insufficiency resulting from narrowing of the blood vessels in the heart. He was prescribed medication, but needs further specialist treatment and appropriate follow-up. However, his application for release on health grounds has been refused by Erzincan State Security Court.

Abdülmelik F_rat, who was an independent Kurdish member of parliament until he lost his seat in the general elections in December 1995, was detained on 13 January at his home in Istanbul on charges of supporting the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party). Some years ago, a former PKK member, in exchange for a reduced sentence, made a statement which incriminated Abdülmelik F_rat, among others.

The trial is to start on 7 March 1996 at Erzincan State Security Court. Although Amnesty International has not yet seen the indictment, the organization considers that there are strong grounds for believing that Abdülmelik F_rat is a prisoner of conscience.

Abdülmelik F_rat was parliamentary deputy for Erzurum from 1991 until 1995 and is the grandson of Sheik Said, who led a Kurdish uprising in 1925 and was later executed. Abdülmelik F_rat had criticized the government's policies concerning Turkey's Kurdish minority and had advocated a political solution to the conflict in southeast Turkey. He is reported to have commented on his arrest saying: "*The first time I was introduced to prisons was when I was two. Now I am 63 and still in the same place... We try to reach our hands out for peace and love, but the way we are treated is like this*".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern about the reported ill-health of Abdülmelik F_rat, thought to be a prisoner of conscience, held since 13 January in Bayrampa_a Prison, who is suffering from a serious heart condition;
- urging that he be given all medical treatment he may require and that, in view of the seriousness of his illness and advanced age, consideration be given to his receiving treatment outside prison.

APPEALS TO:

1. Head of State:

President Süleyman Demirel

Office of the President

Cumhur Ba_kanl____

06100 Ankara

Telegrams: President Demirel, Ankara, Turkey

Telex: 42303 kosk tr

Faxes: +90 312 468 5026

Salutation: Your Excellency

2. Minister of Justice:

Mr Firuz Çilingiro_lu

Adalet Bakanl____

06659 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 3954

Salutation: Dear Minister

3. Chief Prosecutor at Erzincan State Security Court:

Erzincan DGM Ba_savc_s_

DGM Savc_l____

Erzincan, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Erzincan, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

President of the Turkish parliament:

Mr Mustafa Kalemli

TBMM Ba_kan_

TBMM

Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 420 5165 and +90 312 420 6941

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 10 March 1996.