

**PUBLIC**

AI Index: EUR 44/28/00  
Distrib: PG/SC

To: Health professionals  
From: Medical office / East Adriatic & Aegean Team  
Date: 7 June 2000

**Further information on  
MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION  
Prosecution of doctors**

***Dr H Zeki UZUN***

**TURKEY**

[update on AI 44/24/00]

**Key words** freedom of expression / torture / harassment of human rights defenders / doctor

**Summary**

On 23 May 2000 Dr Zeki Uzun was found not guilty of "aiding an illegal organization" under Article 169 of the Turkish Penal Code. His trial had started on 19 January 2000. Dr Uzun had been detained and tortured from 19 - 25 October 1999.

Many thanks to all members of the medical network who sent appeals on behalf of Dr Uzun. Amnesty International welcomes Dr Uzun's acquittal, but is still urging the authorities to launch an independent investigation into the torture allegations, to bring the perpetrators to justice and to compensate Dr Uzun.

**Statement Dr Uzun**

During the final hearing on 23 May 2000 Dr Uzun submitted a statement to the court as his defence. An edited extract from his statement:

" I am a gynaecologist working in Izmir for 15 years and I have been loyal to the Hippocratic Oath without making any discrimination based on religion, language, sex or class, and I will continue to perform my profession. I am of the opinion that my prosecution at the State Security Court is the result and reflection of the practices of a police state. I was kept at the Anti-Terror Branch for six days. During this period I was subjected to all kinds of degrading physical and psychological treatment. I was additionally presented in the newspapers as the gynaecologist of the PKK. My pictures and statements at the Anti-Terror branch were disclosed to the public. In addition, the files of my patient records in the computer were checked , breaching the confidentiality of the patient-physician relationship. The days I spent in detention and during the trial left me, my professional career, my family and my affiliates in a very difficult situation. I never doubted that all the issues would be enlightened in time and that the distinction would be made between right and wrong".

**Background information on the detention Dr Uzun**

Dr Uzun was prevented from sleeping during the first night of detention and in the early hours of 20 October 1999 he was taken to his flat which was searched. At around 08.30 he was returned to his

surgery where police searched files and took away patient information. He was then returned to police headquarters where interrogation and physical and psychological torture continued until 21 October. Among other abuses, he had a plastic bag placed over his head to induce a feeling of asphyxia, he had his testicles squeezed and he was menaced with the insertion of a bottle into his anus. He was released from detention late on 25 October 1999.

On 28 October 1999, three days after his release, he was examined by specialists from the Turkish Medical Association (TMA) who issued an alternative report documenting both psychological signs of torture (acute stress disorder) and physical signs of torture (using dynamic scintigraphy, sonography and magnetic resonance imaging). The report concluded that Dr. Uzun was subjected to "physical and psychological trauma caused by humans" during the detention period which was consistent with his reports of being beaten, receiving blowing punches to the head and chest, kicking, squeezing of the testicles, and being kept breathless by a plastic bag placed over his head.

### **Recommended actions**

Please send appeals on professional letter head paper to the addresses below:

- introducing yourself and your professional background. You may also mention that you are a member of Amnesty International's health professional network;
- welcoming the acquittal of Dr Zeki Uzun;
- urging the authorities to launch an independent investigation into Dr Uzun's torture in custody as documented by specialists from the Turkish Medical Association, to hold the perpetrators responsible and to compensate Dr Uzun.

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow up letter seeking a response. Please check with the medical team if you are sending appeals after 5 August 2000, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

### **Addresses**

Mr Bulent Ecevit  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Basbakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 417 0476  
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Professor Hikmet Sami Turk  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Adalet Bakanl\_g\_  
06659 Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 417 3954 or 418 5667  
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Osman Durmu\_  
Minister of Health and Social Welfare  
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare  
Sagl\_k ve Sosyal Yard\_m Bakanl\_g\_  
06434 Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 431 4879  
Salutation: Dear Minister

**If you can only write to one address, please send your appeal to the Minister of Justice.**

## Copies

Please send copies of your letters to the addresses below and to the diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country or to the nearest Turkish embassy.

Dr Sema Piskinsut  
President of the Parliamentary  
Human Rights Commission  
Insan Haklar\_ Inceleme Komisyonu Baskan\_  
Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi  
Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 420 5394  
Salutation: Dear President

Human Rights Foundation [TIHV]  
Izmir Branch  
1432 Sokak No:5, Daire:10, 35230 Alsancak-IZMIR  
Phone: (232) 463 46 46  
Fax: (232) 463 46 46  
E-mail: [tihvizm@turk.net](mailto:tihvizm@turk.net)

Rü\_tü Kaz\_m Yücelen  
State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights  
Devlet Bakani  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey  
Fax: + 90 312 417 0476  
Salutation: Dear Minister

Human Rights Foundation [TIHV]  
Menekşe 2. sokak 16/6  
06440 Kızılay  
Ankara  
Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 425 4552  
E - <mailto:tihv@tr-net.net.tr>

Human Rights Association [IHD]  
Tunal\_hilmi Cad. 104/4  
Kavakl\_dere  
Ankara  
Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 4259547  
E- <mailto:ihd@tr-net.net.tr>

Turkish Medical Association  
Mithatpasa Cad. 62/15-17-18  
06420 Yenisehir  
Ankara  
Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 417 2672  
E - <mailto:ttb@ttb.org.tr>