

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "disappearance"/ Fear of Extrajudicial Execution

23 February 1995

TURKEY

Nevzat Ersönmez

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Nevzat Ersönmez who was detained on 14 February 1995 in the Yenihal neighbourhood of Diyarbak_r by officers of the Anti-Terror Branch. He has since been held in unacknowledged police custody. His wife has appealed repeatedly to the Chief of Police and the prosecutor at Diyarbak_r State Security Court for information about her husband's whereabouts, but without success. Netice Ersönmez fears for her husband's life.

Nevzat Ersönmez was, until five months ago, a minibus driver on the Diyarbak_r-Lice route. The minibus was owned by Salih Genç. Nevzat Ersönmez was detained by members of the Anti-Terror Branch in January 1995. When he was released he told his wife, "The policemen who came to the minibus stop where I work put me into their car and drove me around Diyarbak_r for two hours. They questioned me about Salih Genç, the owner of the minibus. Also they told me that Salih and I would soon be killed by the police."

On 15 February, the bodies of Salih Genç and three other men, so far unidentified, were found on the road between Diyarbak_r and Silvan. Reportedly, Salih Genç was detained on 1 February and had since "disappeared".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) has claimed more than 14,000 lives since it began in August 1984. Police operations against suspected PKK supporters and other Kurdish activists are being carried out all over Turkey. A state of emergency remains in force in 10 provinces in the east and southeast including Diyarbak_r.

Any person suspected of supporting the PKK is at serious risk of torture, "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution. Detainees taken into custody on suspicion of political offenses may be held without charge for up to 15 days. In the 10 provinces under emergency legislation the maximum detention period for political detainees may be doubled to 30 days.

In 1994 there were more than 50 reported "disappearances", and more than 400 people were killed in unclarified circumstances. In most cases the victims were shot by unidentified assailants in the streets of cities in the southeast, such as Batman where a member of parliament was shot in 1993. Their relatives believe that they have been killed for political reasons by agents of the state.

In February 1993, a cross-party parliamentary commission was established to investigate these "murders by unknown persons", but two years later, when the total death toll had risen to well over 1,200, the commission had still not submitted a final report nor proposed any concrete measures to put a halt to the murders.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Nevzat Ersönmez, detained on 14 February in Yenihal/Diyarbakır and since held in unacknowledged police custody;
- urging that his detention be duly registered at the prosecutor's office and that his family and lawyer be informed of his whereabouts without delay;
- urging also that a prompt and full investigation be conducted into the death of Salih Genç, reportedly detained on 1 February, and of three unidentified men found killed on the Silvan road on 15 February;
- asking to be informed of the outcome of the investigations.

APPEALS TO

1) Diyarbakır Chief of Police:

Mr Rıdvan Güler

Diyarbakır Emniyet Müdürlüğü

Diyarbakır, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Mudurlugu, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

2) Chief Prosecutor at Diyarbakır State Security Court:

Mr Bekir Selçuk

DGM Başsavcısı

Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi

Diyarbakır, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

3) Deputy Prime Minister:

Mr Murat Karayalçın

Başbakanlık

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Deputy Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telex: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr

42099 basb tr

42875 bbk tr

Faxes: +90 312 417 0476 Deputy PRIME MINISTER

+90 312 230 8896

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Sabri Yavuz

İnsan Hakları Araştırma Komisyonu Başkanı

TBMM

Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 420 5394

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 23 March 1995.