

Note to UA Coordinators: This is a very URGENT case and is therefore being issued as an EXTRA

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 38/92

Fear of Torture/Health Concern

30 March 1992

TURKEY:

Sevgi Saymaz (female)

Sevgi Saymaz was detained in the street in Adana on 25 March 1992, following an armed attack on a police car in which the driver was killed and another person working at Adana Police Headquarters was seriously injured. According to newspaper reports, the police authorities allege that Sevgi Saymaz participated in the attack. Two and a half hours after being detained Sevgi Saymaz was presented to television and press photographers. Pictures in the newspapers of 26 March 1992 are said to show her blindfolded, the blindfold stained with blood and her face bruised and swollen. When shown on television she appeared barely able to stand. The newspapers reported that she had been transferred to hospital in a coma.

According to a press statement issued by her parents on 28 March, they travelled to Adana on seeing these press reports. They went to the Forensic Medical Institute where they were told by a doctor that he knew about the case, but that Sevgi Saymaz was not there. The parents then went to the State Hospital and were told that no patient was recorded under that name and that she had not been taken there. They then appealed to the Adana State Prosecutor for permission to see their daughter which he allegedly promised to arrange. However, when the parents went to the Adana Police Headquarters to see their daughter, access was refused.

Sevgi Saymaz is said to have been in good health before being detained and reportedly there was no resistance or violence when she was being detained. Her parents and lawyers now fear for her life. Amnesty International is concerned at her reported state of health which may be the result of torture and that she may be subjected to further torture during interrogation in incommunicado detention.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (note to translators: please see EXTRA 32/92 for similar background information)

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. However, all information available to Amnesty International indicates that torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey. Most allegations relate to ill-treatment of detainees in police custody during their initial interrogation when they are usually denied access to relatives or a lawyer. In August 1990, the government derogated from Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all of which contain important safeguards for human rights. Under current legislation the maximum period a detainee may be held before being formally charged or released is 24 hours; in cases involving three or more suspects or due to the 'nature of the crime' it may be extended to 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in areas under emergency legislation or martial law. Emergency legislation is currently in force in 10 provinces in the southeast, though not in Adana.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail

letters:

- urging that Sevgi Saymaz be allowed promptly to see her parents and lawyers and that she is not subjected to any form of ill-treatment while being held;
- expressing concern at her reported ill-health and urging that she is given all medical attention she may require
- asking to be informed whether she has been charged and if so, what the charges are.

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APPEALS TO:1. Adana State Prosecutor:

Adana Cumhuriyet Savc_s_

[Salutation: Dear Sir]

Adana Cumhuriyet Savc_l____

Adana, Turkey

Telegrams: Adana Cumhuriyet Savcisi, Adana, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 71 12 09 05

[you may have to telephone first]

2. Minister of the Interior:

Mr _smet Sezgin

[Salutation: Dear Minister]

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 46369 IC SL TR

Faxes: + 90 4 118 1795

3. Chief of Adana Police:

Mr Mete Altan

[Salutation: Dear Sir]

Adana Emniyet Müdürlü_ü

Adana, Turkey

Telegrams: Adana Emniyet Muduru, Adana, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 71 12 31 96

[telephone first and ask to switch on fax machine:

"Lütfen fax sinyal veriniz"]

4. Governor of Adana Province:

Mr Bekir Aksoy

[Salutation: Dear Governor]

Adana Valili_i

Adana, Turkey

Telegrams: Adana Valisi, Adana, Turkey

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Ahmet Türk

nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_

TBMM

Ankara, Turkey

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 April 1992.