

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 81/95 Prisoner of conscience / Fear of torture /  
Fear for safety

28 March 1995

**TURKEY** Ekber Kaya, board member of the Tunceli Human Rights Association (HRA)  
Eren Keskin (f), lawyer and member of Istanbul HRA  
Mercan Güçlü, lawyer and member of Istanbul HRA  
Ercan Kanar, Deputy Chairman of Istanbul HRA

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Fears are growing for the safety of activists of the Human Rights Association (HRA) in Turkey as they increasingly face detention by police and threats and harassment by unidentified persons.

On 23 March 1995 Ekber Kaya, father of three and member of the Turkish Human Rights Association (HRA) in Tunceli, was detained in Tunceli. He was reportedly asked to go to the Police Headquarters in Tunceli in order to give a statement.

On his arrival, Ekber Kaya, who is employed by the local council, was detained.

As far as Amnesty International is aware, no charges have been brought against him. The organization considers him to be a prisoner of conscience and fears that he may be tortured or ill-treated in detention.

On 25 March Hüseyin Y\_d\_r\_m, HRA board member, and several other people were detained by police officers in Adana. They were all released on 26 March.

Previously, on 10 March, the Court of Appeal confirmed a fine of £5,000 and sentence of two years and six months' imprisonment for Eren Keskin, secretary of the Istanbul HRA branch. She was charged with spreading "separatist propaganda" under Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law. She has not yet received an arrest warrant from the police. If imprisoned, Amnesty International would consider her to be a prisoner of conscience. On 28 March a press conference took place at the office of the Istanbul HRA branch in order to protest against violations of the right of expression in Turkey and against Eren Keskin's sentence.

Eren Keskin and other members of the Istanbul HRA branch are reportedly facing a growing number of attacks and telephoned death threats by unidentified persons. On 28 February unidentified persons broke into the apartments of Mercan Güçlü, a lawyer of the HRA in Istanbul, and Ercan Kanar, Deputy Chairman of HRA. On 9 March petrol was spread on the doorway of the apartment of Mercan Güçlü and set on fire. Mercan Güçlü was not in Istanbul at the time and neighbours extinguished the fire.

On 26 March there was an arson attack on the Kirsehir HRA office by unidentified persons.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Ten members of the HRA in Diyarbak\_r are currently in prison as prisoners of conscience. Amnesty International believes they are being held solely on account of their peaceful human rights activities for the HRA (see UA 450/94, EUR 44/157/94, 22 December 1994, and its follow-ups). On 20 March, a delegation of HRA activists went to the Diyarbak\_r HRA office in order to re-establish its activities, and the HRA is now delegating members from branches in West Turkey in alternating shifts to keep the Diyarbak\_r office open.

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

**letters either in English or in your own language:**

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ekber Kaya, currently held in Tunceli Police Headquarters, whom Amnesty International considers to be a prisoner of conscience, detained for his work on behalf of the HRA; seeking assurances that he will not be subjected to ill-treatment or torture;
- expressing regret at the prison sentence passed on Eren Keskin, stressing that if she is imprisoned, Amnesty International will consider her as prisoner of conscience;
- expressing deep concern for the safety of activists of the HRA, who have been increasingly subjected to threats and harassment; urging the authorities to investigate these incidents and to bring those responsible to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**Minister of Justice:

Mr Mehmet Mo\_ultay

Adalet Bakanl\_\_\_\_

06659 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Ankara, Turkey****Faxes: +90 312 417 3954****Salutation: Dear Minister**Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Mr Murat Karayalç\_n

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

D\_\_i\_leri Bakanl\_\_\_\_

06100 Ankara

**Faxes: +90 312 287 1886****Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Ankara, Turkey****Salutation: Dear Minister**Emergency Legislation Governor (Only for appeals on behalf of Ekber Kaya)

Mr Ünal Erkan

Ola\_anüstü Hal Valisi

Diyarbak\_r, Turkey

**Telegrams: Olaganustu Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey****Telexes: 72110 OHVT TR; 72084 DYVA TR "please forward to the Governor"; 72090 JASY TR****Faxes: +90 412 222 6194****Salutation: Dear Governor****COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Azimet Köylüo\_lu

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba\_bakanl\_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**

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 20 May 1995.