

**PUBLIC**

AI Index: EUR 44/57/00

Distrib:  
PG/SC

To: Health professionals  
From: Medical office / East Adriatic & Aegean team  
Date: 6 November 2000

***MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION***  
**Ill-health Filiz Gülköker**  
**Turkey**

**Key words** ill-health / insufficient medical care

**Summary**

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that Filiz Gülköker is seriously ill in Gebze prison, western Turkey, and is not receiving adequate medical care. Filiz Gülköker has been suffering from an inherited disorder of haemoglobin, thalassaemia major, since childhood. She was imprisoned in 1995 and sentenced to 18 years in prison in 1999 after having been convicted of holding a position of leadership within the Union of Revolutionary Communists in Turkey (TIKB), an illegal organization in Turkey.

**Recommended actions**

Please write letters of appeal,

- expressing concern at reports that Filiz Gülköker is seriously ill in Gebze Prison;
- asking for information on the current state of health of Filiz Gülköker and for details of whatever medical care she is currently receiving;
- urging that she receives whatever medical care she requires without delays and on a regular basis as specified by her doctors;
- call for the gendarmerie to be instructed to remain out of the hearing and sight of the patient while care is given, in order to secure the privacy of Filiz Gülköker and the confidentiality of the doctor-patient relationship;
- call upon the Turkish government to implement as a matter of urgency the recommendations with regard to health care in places of detention made by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment following its visit to Turkey in October 1997.

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 10 January, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

## **Addresses**

Prime Minister  
Mr Bulent Ecevit  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Basbakanlik  
06573 Ankara, Turkey  
Faxes: +90 312 417 0476  
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Minister of Health  
Osman Durmus  
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare  
Saglik ve Sosyal Yardim  
Bakanligi  
06434 Ankara, Turkey  
Faxes: +90 312 431 4879

Minister of Justice  
Prof Hikmet Sami Turk  
Adalet Bakanligi  
06659 Ankara, Turkey  
Faxes: +90 312 425 4066 and +90 312 417 3954  
Salutation: Dear Minister

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights  
Mr Rustu Kazim Yucelen  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Basbakanlik  
06573 Ankara, Turkey  
Faxes: +90 312 417 0476  
Salutation: Dear Minister

## **Copies**

Please send copies of your letters to:

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

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.

**PUBLIC**

AI Index: EUR/44/57/00  
Distrib: PG/SC

Date: 6 November 2000

***MEDICAL CONCERN***

**Ill-health Filiz Gülkokuer  
Turkey**

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that Filiz Gülkokuer is seriously ill in Gebze prison, western Turkey, and is not receiving adequate medical care. Filiz Gülkokuer has been suffering from an inherited disorder of haemoglobin, thalassaemia major, since childhood. Filiz Gülkokuer was imprisoned in 1995 and sentenced to 18 years in prison in 1999 after having been convicted of holding a position of leadership within the Union of Revolutionary Communists in Turkey (TIKB), an illegal organization in Turkey.

**Background information**

Filiz Gülkokuer, a journalist, was sentenced early in 1999 to 18 years in prison under Article 168/1 of the Turkish Penal Code for having a position of leadership (*örgüt yöneticilik*) within an illegal armed opposition group. The sentence is currently under review with the Appeal Court.

Amnesty International has received reports that Filiz Gülkokuer was tortured by police during interrogation, and that her conviction was based on statements made by others under torture but retracted in court. The organization has not been able to confirm these reports independently but believes them to be consistent with similar cases in Turkey.

**Prison health care**

Medical care in Turkish prisons is generally inadequate as prison infirmaries are materially under-resourced and there are not enough qualified medical personnel. Filiz Gülkokuer's hospital visits have been frequently delayed according to Amnesty International's information. Although the prison administration has given permission for her to be taken to hospital, the gendarmerie commander has placed arbitrary limitations on the number of prisoners to be taken to the hospital at any one time and thereby has prevented some of the sick prisoners from receiving adequate treatment. According to reports received by Amnesty International, on occasions when Filiz Gülkokuer was taken to hospital, either her handcuffs were not removed during examinations or the gendarmes refused to leave the examination room during the examination.