

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 72/95 Fear of torture / Possible prisoners of conscience 16 June 1995

**TURKEY**      **Hüseyin Umut, lawyer, secretary of Hakkari branch of the Turkish  
Human Rights Association  
Ükrü Çall, former mayor of Hakkari**

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In the afternoon of 15 June 1995, lawyer and human rights activist Hüseyin Umut was detained in a café in the centre of Hakkari in southeast Turkey. Later that day, in an apparently related operation, the former mayor of Hakkari Ükrü Çall was also taken into detention. At 6.00pm the files of the Hakkari branch of the Turkish Human Rights Association (HRA) were removed from Hüseyin Umut's office by uniformed and plainclothes police.

The Chief Prosecutor for Hakkari have confirmed that the two men are in detention, but have not disclosed any allegations against them.

Hakkari is one of the ten provinces in the southeast under emergency legislation.

Under the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code, detainees in this area may be held incommunicado for up to 30 days without access in person or by telephone to their lawyer, family, or a doctor of their choice.

Amnesty International believes that Hüseyin Umut and Ükrü Çall may be prisoners of conscience, and fears that they may be at risk of ill-treatment or torture.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The HRA continues its monitoring of human rights violations in the face of considerable pressure from the authorities. Officials of the organization report police harassment and threats. Board members of Diyarbakır HRA branch were detained in December and committed to prison (see UA 450/94, EUR 44/157/94, 22 December 1994, and follow-ups). The charges against them of membership of an illegal armed organization were based on statements which witnesses later retracted as having been extracted under torture. Two other board members taken into custody in February reported being tortured. The lawyer Sinan Tanrıkulu said that he was sprayed with high pressure cold water and that his testicles were squeezed. He was threatened with further torture, such as hanging by the arms and electric shocks if he did not sign incriminating statements. All members of Diyarbakır HRA board were later released, but their trials continue.

On 1 June the lawyer Eren Keskin started a two-year prison sentence for an article she had written calling for a cease-fire in the conflict between security forces and armed members of the Kurdish Workers' Party in southeast Turkey which has claimed 16,000 lives since 1984 (See UA 81/95, EUR 44/44/95, 28 March and follow-ups). On 15 May Atıl Ayçin, president of the Turkish airport workers' union Hava-İş, began a 16-month prison sentence for a speech he made on 8 September 1991 at a meeting organized by Istanbul HRA on "Fundamental Rights and Freedoms" at the Abide-i Hürriyet [Freedom Memorial] Square in Istanbul.

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

- urging that Hüseyin Umut and Ükrü Çall, arrested in Hakkari on 15 June 1995, be immediately released or brought before a judge;

- seeking assurances that they are not being subjected to any form of ill-treatment;
- expressing concern at the continuing detention of members of the Human Rights Association, and calling for them to be allowed to carry out their internationally recognized right to the peaceful defence of human rights without fear of intimidation or arrest.

**APPEALS TO**

1. Hakkari Chief Prosecutor  
 Hakkari Cumhuriyet Ba\_savc\_s\_  
 Mr Ali Aydemir  
 Hükümet Kona\_\_  
 Hakkari  
 Turkey

**Telegrams: Hakkari Chief Prosecutor, Hakkari, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Sir**

2. Deputy Prime Minister  
 Mr Hikmet Çetin  
 Ba\_bakanl\_k  
 06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: Deputy Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Telexes: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr; 42099 basb tr; 42875 bbk tr**

**Faxes: +90 312 417 04 76 DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**

**Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Sabri Yavuz  
 \_nsan Haklar\_ Ara\_t\_rma Komisyonu Ba\_kan\_  
 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 30 July 1995.