

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 44/081/2001

UA 284/01

Fear for

TURKEY efik Y ld r m (m), 34 years old

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of _efik Y_ld_r_m. He has been arrested twice over the course of one week and is reportedly being held in incommunicado detention at a gendarmerie station in Diyarbak_r province, southeast Turkey, where he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

On 30 October, _efik Y_ld_r_m was taken into police custody in Çermik, Diyarbak_r province, and charged with "having connections with the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK)". He was reportedly tortured with electric shocks as well as with other unspecified methods and is said to be suffering from health problems as a result of this.

On 2 November, he was brought before a judge with the prosecutor asking for his imprisonment. He was however released at 5.00 pm on the same day.

Four days later on 6 November, he was detained again following a raid on his house. His family were informed that he was to be held at a gendarmerie station, but were not told why he was being detained for a second time.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has received numerous accounts of people being illegally detained and tortured by police in Diyarbak_r. Fesih Güler was reportedly tortured while held illegally at the Anti-Terror Branch of Police Headquarters (see Further Information on UA 317/00, EUR 44/040/2001, 17 October 2000). Fahrettin Özdemir reportedly spent a total of 59 days in police custody, during which he was severely tortured (see EXTRA 30/00, EUR 44/23/00, 3 April 2000).

Whereas torture is rarely reported from prisons, in police and gendarmerie stations, torture appears to be regularly used to extract confessions, elicit information about illegal organizations, intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as unofficial punishment for presumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods in Turkey documented by Amnesty International include severe beatings, being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, suspending by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

The Turkish Regulation on Apprehension, Police Custody and Interrogation provides clear guidelines for the registration of people taken into custody and their right to inform their relatives "unless informing the relatives will harm the investigation". In an amendment to the Constitution on 3 October 2001 this restriction was lifted. Yet guidelines for the prompt and proper registration of detainees and for notification of their families are often ignored. This is extremely distressing for the families of detainees, who often spend days trying to establish the whereabouts of their loved ones. Failure to register detainees properly and promptly creates conditions in which there is an increased risk of torture, and "disappearance" or death in custody can occur.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that _efik Y_ld_r_m has been re-detained and may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment;
- urging the authorities to ensure that _efik Y_ld_r_m is not tortured or ill-treated, and that he is given immediate access to lawyers, relatives and appropriate medical care should he need it;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into allegations that he has been tortured and ill-treated, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking the authorities to take action to prevent the torture of detainees, pointing out that the government is bound by the European Convention on Human Rights.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

Mr Rü_tü Kaz_m Yücelen

Ministry of Interior

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95

Salutation: Dear Minister

Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie

General Aytaç Yalman

Jandarma Kuvvetleri Komutanl____

Bakanl_klar

Ankara, Turkey

Telegram: Jandarma Genel Komutani, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 418 9208

Salutation: Dear General

Governor of the Provinces under Emergency Rule

Ola_anüstü Hal Valisi

Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: Olaganustu Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 412 224 3572

Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Nejat Arseven

Office of the Prime Minister,

Ba_bakanl_k,

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 04 76

Salutation: Dear Minister

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 19 December 2001.