

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/115/95

EXTRA 121/95

Torture

20 October 1995

TURKEYGül Da_deviren (f) aged 16

Ersin Da_deviren, aged 15, her brother

Kemal Bolat, aged 17

Selma Yi_iter (f) teacher from E_itim-Sen teachers' trade union

Mehmet Altan

Hilal Üsenir

Bar_ Algül

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of the seven detainees named above who are currently being interrogated in incommunicado detention at Ankara Police Headquarters, reportedly under torture.

Five of the seven were detained on 17 October 1995 in the street in Ankara as they dispersed after a demonstration by members of various civil servants' unions in K_z_lay Square in Ankara. The demonstrators were protesting low wages and demanding recognition of trade union rights and the right for civil servants to strike. Later, in the evening of 17 October, Gül Da_deviren and her brother Ersin Da_deviren were detained at their home in an apparently related operation.

According to statements given by three women, just released from police custody, whose identities are known to Amnesty International and who shared a cell with Gül Da_deviren, the latter was unable to move her arms. She had told them it was because she had been suspended by her arms while being subjected to electric shocks. The women said that they saw police officers enter the cell and massage Gül Da_deviren's shoulders with warm water. Gül Da_deviren also told the women that her younger brother Ersin Da_deviren was being tortured in an attempt to make his sister sign a confession.

The women reported that they themselves had been subjected to beating about the head, pulling of hair, sexual assault and insults during the course of their detention.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The persistence of torture is one of the major human rights problems in Turkey today. There were 29 reported deaths in custody due to torture in 1994, more than in any year since 1982, and six in 1995 so far. Most reports of torture come from the major cities of Istanbul, Ankara, _zmir, Adana and the 10 provinces in the east and southeast, currently under State of Emergency legislation due to the continuing conflict between the security forces and armed members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). The victims of torture come from all sectors of Turkish society and range from political activists held under the Anti-Terror Law to those held on suspicion of ordinary criminal offences, including children.

Torture is used mainly in police and gendarmerie stations during the first days or weeks following detention. It is often applied to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal punishment for assumed support of illegal organizations.

People suspected of offences under the Anti-Terror Law can be held without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to 30 days in the 10 provinces

under State of Emergency, and for 15 days in the rest of Turkey. When not being interrogated, detainees are held in cramped, airless and insanitary conditions. With no access to the outside world they are at the mercy of their interrogators. Torture methods include being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, hanging by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating on the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

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

- expressing deep concern about the reported torture of Gül and Ersin Da_deviren, two minors held since 17 October 1995 at Ankara Police Headquarters;
- calling for a prompt and thorough investigation of these allegations and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern also for the safety of Kemal Bolat, aged 17, Selma Yi_iter, Mehmet Altan, Hilal Üsenir and Bar__ Algül, all held since 17 October at Ankara Police Headquarters;
- appealing that none of the detainees be subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- asking to be informed of any charges brought against them.

APPEALS TO:

1. Ankara Chief of Police:

Mr Orhan Ta_anlar
Ankara Emniyet Müdürlü_ü
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

2. Chief Prosecutor at Ankara State Security Court:

Mr Nusret Demiral
DGM Ba_savc_s_
Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES 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 20 November 1995.