

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 132/95

Fear of torture

6 November 1995

TURKEY Ibrahim _ahin, Kurd from Van, accountant

Ibrahim _ahin is being held in Van Police Headquarters where Amnesty International fears he is being interrogated under torture.

Ibrahim _ahin was detained at his office in Van on 3 November 1995 by a team from the Anti-Terror Branch of Van Police Headquarters, who reportedly took him away in a white unmarked Ford minibus with darkened windows, registration number 65 EN 007. Later he was brought to his family home while the police conducted a search of the house.

His wife's appeals for information as to his whereabouts were initially unsuccessful, and one official suggested to her that her husband had been abducted by "his enemies". Finally, at 11am on 4 November, Van Police Headquarters accepted that he was in police custody, but said that he was not being held at the police headquarters building. On 6 November, however, the police and public prosecutor accepted that Ibrahim _ahin was being held in custody at Van Police Headquarters.

Ibrahim _ahin was secretary of the Human Rights Association (HRA) branch in Van until he was forced to resign as a result of death threats in 1994. Several officials of the HRA in Van have been subjected to such threats, either face to face or while blindfolded in police detention. One official was told in detention at Van Police Headquarters in early 1994, "You talk about the contra-guerrilla - we are the contra-guerrilla. Our friends get killed in the mountains, and we kill the first Kurd we come across. We can kill you any time."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Founded in 1986, the Turkish Human Rights Association has 56 branches throughout the country and a membership of 15,000. The HRA is not linked to any political party or movement. As well as monitoring abuses by government forces, the HRA has on numerous occasions condemned human rights abuses by armed opposition groups. The HRA continues its monitoring of human rights violations in the face of considerable pressure from the authorities. Many of its leading officials are standing trial on various charges and several members are serving prison sentences. Most branches in the southeast had to close because of police harassment and threats.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Ibrahim _ahin, held since 3 November 1995 in police custody in Van Police Headquarters;
- urging that he not be subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- asking to be informed of any charges brought against him.

APPEALS TO:

1) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Adnan Ekmen
Office of the Prime Minister
Ba_bakanl_k
06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 0476

Salutation: Dear Minister

2. Van State Prosecutor:

Cumhuriyet Ba_savc_s_

Hükümet Kona__

Van, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Bassavcisi, Van, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

3. Van Chief of Police:

Van Emniyet Müdürü

Emniyet Müdürlü_ü

Van, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Van, 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 10 December 1995.