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Turkey: Victims of family violence

Violence against women takes different forms, it is found all over the world, its victims have different social, racial and religious backgrounds. The common factor is its total disregard for the basic human rights of women. Amnesty International's latest report on violence against women *Turkey: Women confronting family violence* focuses on Turkey and includes the following cases:

Guldunya Toren

Guldunya Toren named her new baby "Hope". She knew that the two of them might not have long to live. After she became pregnant, she had refused to marry her cousin and was sent to her uncle's house in Istanbul. There, one of her brothers gave her a rope and told her to hang herself. She escaped and begged for police protection, but was assured that her uncle and brother promised not to kill her. In February 2004, weeks after the birth, her brothers reportedly shot and wounded her in the street. From her hospital bed, she pleaded for the police to save her. She was left to face her murderers alone. Late at night, her killers entered the unguarded hospital and shot her in the head.

"Reyhan"

"Reyhan"'s husband beat her and forced her to have sex throughout her 13-year marriage. This is her story as she told it to Amnesty International in her home town in Turkey on 3 June 2003:

"I have been working for a while as my husband is unemployed. One day earlier this year I came home and saw him molesting my (nine-year-old) daughter. I couldn't speak, I was so frightened. Three days later I took my daughter and left home. I had to leave the boys with him as I knew his family would look after them. We are staying with my father, but I don't know what to do, he is very ill and can't look after my daughter, so I can't work. When the day for the first hearing came, I was so frightened my legs were shaking. But the judge behaved well - it was a secret hearing and he sent for a doctor's report.

Why would I put my own honour out for inspection? The Turkish community, they look very critically at these things. Whatever happens, a woman will suffer. But I thought to myself, somebody who could do this (molest a child) could do anything, so from that I got courage."

For further information please see *Turkey: Women confronting family violence* (AI Index EUR 44/013/2004, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur440132004>)

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