

TURKEY Co_kun Do_an (m), 24 years old

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Co_kun Do_an following his "disappearance" on either 23 or 24 February. It is not known exactly where he is being held, though he is believed to be in gendarmerie or police custody where he is at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Co_kun Do_an's relatives reportedly saw him on television amongst a group of detainees who had been apprehended by security forces, following a military operation apparently in the province of Tunceli in eastern Turkey. He was alive and appeared to be in good health.

On 5 March, representatives from the Human Rights Association (IHD) called the Detentions Monitoring Bureau of Istanbul Police Headquarters to find out his whereabouts. They were informed by an official that he was registered as being in detention at the Anti-Terror Branch, possibly in Istanbul.

However, when lawyers acting on Co_kun Do_an's behalf rang the Detentions Monitoring Bureau, they were told that he was not registered as being in detention at that time. Representatives from the IHD again rang the Bureau and asked about Co_kun Do_an's whereabouts. They were told that he was not in detention. It was only when they stated that they had been told an hour earlier that Co_kun Do_an was in detention at the Anti-Terror Branch that the official told them that Co_kun Do_an was in fact registered as being in detention at an Anti-Terror Branch outside of Istanbul. The official could not say which city he was held in as the information was not on the computer.

The following day, representatives of the IHD once again called the Detentions Monitoring Bureau of Istanbul Police Headquarters and enquired about the whereabouts of Co_kun Do_an. An official there had Co_kun Do_an's place and date of birth on record and said that it would be possible to find out where he was being detained by contacting the General Police Headquarters in the capital Ankara.

Representatives of the IHD, then made contact accordingly. They were told that a person with the same name and birth date as Co_kun Do_an was registered, but it was not clear where he was being held and no more information was available. The IHD then rang Police Headquarters in Tunceli where Co_kun Do_an had apparently been detained. Police officers there said that they had not arrested Co_kun Do_an, but if he had been detained in a rural area, only the gendarmerie would have this information.

Following this, the IHD made an application to the Minister of the Interior on this matter. On 17 March, the Minister of the Interior replied saying that he had investigated the matter but that Co_kun Do_an was not in custody.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Turkish Regulation on Apprehension, Police Custody and Interrogation provides clear guidelines for the registration of people taken into custody and detainees' right to inform their relatives. Formerly this right could be waived if "informing the relatives will harm the investigation", but this restriction was lifted by an amendment to the Constitution on 3 October 2001 and by Law Number 4744 which entered into force on 19 February 2002. However, 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, "disappearance" and death in custody.

Torture appears to be used routinely in police and gendarmerie stations, 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.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Co_kun Do_an and asking to be informed of his whereabouts;
- urging that he should be given immediate access to his lawyers and relatives;
- urging that he is not tortured or ill-treated while in detention;
- asking to be informed of any charges that may be brought against him;
- reminding the government of Turkey of its obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights, to which Turkey is a state party, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

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

Telegrams: General Yalman, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: +90 312 418 92 08

Salutation: Dear General

General Director of Police
Mr Necati Bilican
Emniyet Genel Müdürlü_ü
Bakanl_klar
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Genel Muduru, Bakanliklar, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

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 8 May 2002.