

UA 81/01

Fear of t**TURKEY**Mehmet Dilsiz (Cizre district head of HADEP)

Bedirhan Dilsiz (his nephew)

Muhsin Gas_r]

Ali Güven]

Tahir_lçin] HADEP Cizre board members

Nesim Tan]

Ömer Tunç]

Halit Zeynep]

Eight members of the Kurdish party HADEP (People's Democracy Party) were arrested by gendarmes on 1 and 2 April and Amnesty International is concerned that they may be tortured in custody. They are held at __rnak Provincial Gendarmerie Headquarters, in southeastern Turkey.

Gendarmes reportedly raided the house of Mehmet and Bedirhan Dilsiz, in Cizre district, at 6am on 1 April. They searched the house for three hours before taking the men into custody. The other five men named above were arrested in the early hours of 2 April. Halit Zeynep, whom they were also trying to find, surrendered later that day.

Mehmet Dilsiz has been harassed and threatened by the security forces since he tried to set up a branch of HADEP in Cizre in September 2000. He was taken into custody several times, and warned to give up his work for the party. On 6 November, when he was about to be appointed Cizre head of HADEP, he was arrested by gendarmes and later remanded to prison, but released on appeal. The provincial gendarmerie commander later told him face to face that he would kill him if he did not give up activities for HADEP. A HADEP office in Cizre was supposed to be opened this week.

Two other HADEP representatives, Serdar Tan__ and Ebubekir Deniz, "disappeared" on 25 January. They were last seen at the Gendarmerie headquarters in Silopi, another district of __rnak province. Three days later Mehmet Dilsiz reportedly received a phone call saying he would meet the same fate and "be sent to hell". When he asked who was calling, he was told: "I am the Death Angel of Serdar and Ebubekir".

Before they "disappeared", Serdar Tan__ and Ebubekir Deniz had suffered the same sort of harassment as Mehmet Dilsiz. He and the others arrested with him may be in very grave danger.

Mehmet Dilsiz had lodged a petition with the authorities on 21 February, describing the harassment and threats and asking for guarantees of his safety. His statement was taken by the Cizre Prosecutor on 12 March.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Legal Kurdish political parties face daily harassment by the authorities: some have been closed, while others have been threatened with closure. Their supporters and members have been tortured, have "disappeared" and have even been killed.

HADEP is the successor to two parties that were both closed for "separatism" by the authorities. HADEP favours more rights for the Kurds in the region. Although it is opposed to political violence, in some circles the party is regarded as the "political wing" of the armed opposition group, the Kurdistan

Workers' Party (PKK). The Constitutional Court is currently considering a request by the State Security Court Prosecutor to ban HADEP on the grounds that it is the "lengthened arm of the PKK". Although 37 local councils in the predominantly Kurdish southeastern area of Turkey elected HADEP mayors by overwhelming majorities in 1999, HADEP deputies elected at the same time did not enter parliament because of a rule under which political parties must have at least 10% of the entire national vote to be represented.

HADEP members in __rnak have come under increasing pressure recently. In the last few months numerous HADEP representatives have reportedly been arrested. Several later reported that they had been ill-treated in custody. On 11 September 2000, gendarmes arrested HADEP's __rnak provincial head, Resul Sadak, and 10 other HADEP members. The gendarmes reportedly blindfolded them, threatened to kill them and prevented them from sleeping. (See UA 294/00, EUR 44/47/00, 25 September 2000, and follow-up, EUR 44/74/00, 20 December 2000.) The Silopi head, Serdar Tan__, and Ebubekir Deniz have "disappeared" on 25 January. (See UA 26/01, AI Index: EUR 44/007/2001 30 January, and follow-ups EUR 44/010/2001, 26 February, and EUR 44/019/2001, 29 March).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Mehmet Dilsiz and the other seven men;
- urging that they should not be tortured or ill-treated;
- asking to be informed of any charges that may be brought against them;
- reminding the government of its obligations as a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights, which states in Article 3: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

APPEALS TO:

__rnak Gendarmerie Headquarters
Jandarma Komutan_
__irnak Jandarma Komutanl____
__irnak, Turkey

Fax:+90 486 216 6517

Telegrams: Sirnak Jandarma Komutanligi, Sirnak, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Commander

Governor of __irnak
Mr. Hüseyin Ba_kale
__irnak Valisi
__irnak Valili_i
__irnak, Turkey

Fax:+ 90 8456 1188

Telegrams: Sirnak Valiligi, Sirnak, Turkey

Salutations: Dear Governor

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

Minister of Interior

Mr Saadettin Tantan
_çi_leri Bakanl____
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 418 17 95

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Rü_tü Kaz_m Yücelen

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 0476

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 May 2001.