

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 86/00

Risk of t

TURKEYHac\_ Muhittin Ak (m), aged 65

Ay\_e Ak (f), aged 55

Abdülhamit Ak (m), aged 25

Gülizar Ak (f), aged 20

Dilber Ak (f), aged 16

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Amnesty International is concerned that five members of the Ak family, who have been arrested in southeastern Turkey, are at risk of torture.

Haci Muhittin and Ay\_e Ak, and their children, Abdülhamit, Gülizar and Dilber, were arrested early in the morning on 18 November by gendarmes (soldiers who act as police in rural areas) from a local outpost near their home in the Kurdish village of Davahirap in Bingöl Province, southeastern Turkey. They were subsequently brought to the Gendarmerie headquarters in Genc, a borough of Bingöl. It is not known where they are detained at present, or on what charges they are held. However, at least two family members have been tortured while in detention previously, and it is feared that they are at serious risk of being tortured once more.

Sixty-five-year-old Haci Muhittin Ak has been detained four or five times, and was imprisoned for aiding and abetting the armed opposition group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), until May this year. He is paralysed and has difficulty walking, reportedly because of previous torture. His son, Abdülhamit Ak, has also been arrested previously, and was imprisoned for six or seven years.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees and for notification of their families are frequently ignored. This is extremely distressing for the families of detainees and creates conditions in which "disappearances" and torture can occur.

People suspected of offences that fall under the jurisdiction of the State Security Courts can be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to four days. If they are held for longer (up to a total of seven days), detainees have the right of access to a lawyer, under certain conditions. In most cases this right is denied.

With no access to the outside world detainees are at the mercy of their interrogators. Torture is regularly used to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to 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 telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of the five members of the Ak family who have been arrested, and asking to be told where they are held;

- urging that they are not tortured or ill-treated;
- asking to be informed of any charges that may be brought against them;
- 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:**

Bingöl Gendarmerie Headquarters

Jandarma Komutan\_  
Bingöl Jandarma Komutanl\_\_\_\_  
Bingöl, Turkey

**Telegrams:**Bingöl Jandarma Komutanl\_\_\_\_, Bingöl, Turkey

**Salutation:**Dear Commander

Governor of Bingöl

Bingöl Valisi  
Bingöl Valili\_i  
Bingöl, Turkey

**Telegrams:** Bingöl Valili\_i, Bingöl, 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

**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

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 December 2000.