

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 44/50/99

EXTRA 93/99 Fear for safety / Fear of torture or ill-treatment /
Fear of "disappearance" / Health concern

22 July 1

TURKEY Cemil Yöyler, aged 52

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Cemil Yöyler, who has reportedly been detained since 15 July 1999 at Izmit Police Headquarters, a town close to Istanbul.

Officials at Izmit Police Headquarters later told his family that he had injured himself seriously in a suicide attempt and had been moved to the prisoners' ward at Izmit State Hospital. His family have since inquired after him at the hospital but have been told that he is not there. Amnesty International has also made inquiries with the hospital and been told that no one by that name is held in the prisoners' ward.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

People suspected of committing offences under Turkey's Anti-Terror Law may be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to four days. This may be extended to seven days, in which case detainees have the right to see a lawyer. In most cases, however, this right is denied. With no access to the outside world detainees are at the mercy of their interrogators.

Torture is regularly applied in Turkey to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal 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, hanging by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electro-shock torture, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

In 1998 there were at least 10 reported deaths in custody in Turkey apparently as a result of torture. In March 1999 the journalist and trade unionist Süleyman Yeter died in police custody at the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters, allegedly after being tortured by police. No investigation has yet been opened into the allegations, but the trial of seven police officers for a previous alleged incident of torture of Süleyman Yeter continues.

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

- expressing concern for the safety and well-being of Cemil Yöyler who was reportedly being held in police custody at the time of his alleged suicide attempt;
- urging that steps be taken to establish his whereabouts and that his family and lawyer be informed of the results without delay.

APPEALS TO:

Izmit Chief of Police
Izmit Emniyet Müdürü
Izmit Emniyet Müdürlüğü
Izmit, Turkey

Telegrams: Izmit Emniyet Müdürü, Izmit, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Chief of Police

Minister of the Interior

Mr Saadettin Tantan

Içi_leri Bakan_

Içi_leri Bakanl____, 06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Içi_leri Bakan_, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 418 9208

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Mehmet Ali Irtemçelik

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 417 0476

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.