

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Possible "disappearance" / Fear for safety

15 February 1995

TURKEY

Osman Künde_ , Kurdish trade unionist, father of six

There is grave concern for the safety of Osman Künde_ , who has not been seen or heard of since 6 February 1995 when he was abducted in front of his house in Batman, southeast Turkey. He is the President of the Municipality Workers' Union's (Belediye-__ Sendikas_) branch in Batman.

At 4.30pm on 6 February, Osman Künde_ came home from his office in his trade union car. His 16-year-old son saw him arrive and went outside to greet his father. The son then witnessed two men aged between 20 and 25 approach his father and ask him to come with them on some urgent business. Osman Künde_ told them that he was hungry and would prefer to talk after the evening meal or the following day, but they insisted that it was urgent. So Osman Künde_ asked his son to come with them. The son went briefly inside the house to get his coat, but minutes later, when he came back outside, his father and the two men had gone.

A woman who had observed the scene, later said that she saw Osman Künde_ sitting in the front passenger seat of his trade union car, while one of the men drove and the other sat in the back. A second car was following. The trade union car was found abandoned the following day about 70 kilometres away on the road between Batman and Kozluk.

The family's inquiries with the authorities for information about Osman Künde_'s whereabouts have so far been unsuccessful.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) has claimed more than 14,000 lives since it began in August 1984. Police operations against suspected PKK supporters and other Kurdish activists are being carried out all over Turkey. A state of emergency remains in force in 10 provinces in the east and southeast including Batman.

Any person suspected of supporting the PKK is at serious risk of torture, "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution. In 1994 there were more than 50 reported "disappearances", and more than 400 people were killed in unclarified circumstances. In most cases the victims were shot by unidentified assailants in the streets of cities in the southeast such as Batman, where a member of parliament was shot in 1993. Relatives believe that they have been killed for political reasons by agents of the state. Reports indicate that eight people became victims of unclarified murders in Batman in January 1995.

In February 1993, a cross-party parliamentary commission was established to investigate these "murders by unknown persons", but two years later, when the total death toll has risen to well over 1,200, the commission has still not submitted a final report nor proposed any concrete measures to put a halt to the murders.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams, express and airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing grave concern for the safety of trade unionist Osman Künde_ , who

was abducted by two men in front of his house in Batman on 6 February and whose car was found abandoned the next day on the road to Kozluk;
 - urging that all possible steps be taken as a matter of urgency in order to establish the whereabouts of Osman Künde_;
 - requesting to be informed when Osman Künde_ has been found.

Please bring this action to the attention of trade unionists.

APPEALS TO

1) Chief of Police in Batman:

Mr Azmi Derin
 Batman Emniyet Müdürlü_ü
 Batman, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Mudurlugu, Batman, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

2) Batman Chief Public Prosecutor:

Cumhuriyet Ba_savc_s_
 Batman C. Ba_savc_l____
 Batman, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Bassavciligi, Batman, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

3) Minister of Labour and Social Security:

Mr Nihat Matkap
 Çal_ma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanl____
 06100 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Minister Matkap, Calisma Bakanligi, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Sabri Yavuz
 nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_
 TBMM
 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 420 5394

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 29 March 1995.