

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/130/95

EXTRA 139/95

Fear of torture

10 November 1995

**TURKEY** **Gevher TOPRAK (f), aged 17**

**Emrullah TOPRAK, aged 14**

**Fatih TOPRAK, aged 9**

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At 7am on 10 November 1995 Gevher, Emrullah and Fatih Topruk were taken from their home in Diyarbak\_r by members of the security forces. Their detention was witnessed by three people. The children's whereabouts remain unknown - in breach of Statute 2253 of Turkish law which requires that minors are questioned by the prosecutor only and that their next of kin are promptly informed of their whereabouts. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for their safety while they remain in unacknowledged detention.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The persistence of torture is one of the major human rights problems in Turkey today. There were 29 reported deaths in custody due to torture in 1994, more than in any year since 1982, and six in 1995 so far. Most reports of torture come from the major cities of Istanbul, Ankara, \_zmir, Adana and the 10 provinces in the east and southeast, currently under State of Emergency legislation due to the continuing conflict between the security forces and armed members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). Those detained and subjected to torture come from all sectors of Turkish society and range from political activists held under the Anti-Terror Law to those held on suspicion of ordinary criminal offences, including children.

Torture is used mainly in police and gendarmerie stations during the first days or weeks following detention. It is often applied to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal punishment for assumed support of illegal organizations.

People suspected of offences under the Anti-Terror Law can be held without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to 30 days in the 10 provinces under State of Emergency, and for 15 days in the rest of Turkey. When not being interrogated, detainees are held in cramped, airless and insanitary conditions. With no access to the outside world they are at the mercy of their interrogators. Torture methods include being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, hanging 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 serious concern for the safety of Gevher Toprak, aged 17, Emrullah Toprak, aged 14 and Fatih Toprak, aged 9;
- urging that their whereabouts are established and that they are given access to their family, pointing out that the unacknowledged detention of minors is in breach of Statute 2253 of Turkish law;
- appealing that none of the detainees are subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- asking to be informed of any charges brought against them.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

1) Interior Minister

Mr Teoman Ünisan  
Ministry of Interior  
\_çi\_leri Bakanl\_\_\_\_  
06644 Ankara, Turkey

**Faxes: +90 312 418 1795**

**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

2) Deputy Prime Minister

Mr Deniz Baykal  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Telexes: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr; 42099 basb tr**

**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**

**Telegrams: Deputy Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister**

3) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Adnan Ekmen  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**

**Telegrams: Adnan Ekmen, Prime Minister's Office, Ankara, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES 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 15 December 1995.