

UA 375/94

Fear of "disappearance" / Torture

12 October 1994

TURKEYKenan Bilgin

There are fears for the life of Kenan Bilgin who has been held in unacknowledged detention in Ankara since 12 September 1994. Fellow detainees have reported that he has been tortured.

On 11 and 12 September, 11 suspected members of the illegal Revolutionary Communist Party of Turkey (TDKP) were detained in Ankara, including Kenan Bilgin who was reportedly arrested by members of the Anti-Terror Branch of Ankara police at the Sokullu minibuss stop opposite the Dikmen Lycée. Police eventually acknowledged the detention of all except Kenan Bilgin, despite testimony from fellow detainees now in Ankara Central Closed Prison. Their testimony includes the following statements:

Bülent Kat: *"I was detained in the TEM (Anti-Terror) branch at Ankara from 8 to 23 September. Almost everyone was being tortured while I was there. About five or six days before I was formally arrested [about 18 or 19 September], a person was dragged past my cell towards the shower area. While they interrogated him there under torture, they continually shouted and asked his name. I could see the person only from behind when he was being taken to his cell because they covered the grilles on the doors as they took this person along. This person, whose name I later learned was Kenan Bilgin, was tortured by a large group of police in the shower area on - I think - 19 September. About one and a half to two hours later, I saw a person who I took to be a doctor emerging with a black doctor's bag from the shower area. This shower area was opposite but a little ahead of my cell, therefore I could more or less make out people being taken there, even though the grilles were covered when torture was taking place. I think this person was kept in cell No. 8, because when prisoners were being taken to the toilet in order, only cell 8 was not opened, and when the grilles were left uncovered, No. 8 alone remained covered."*

Talat Abay: *"I was detained in the TEM (Anti-Terror) branch at Ankara from 8 to 23 September. Everyone was being subjected to systematic torture while I was there. On about 18 or 19 September I saw Kenan Bilgin whom I knew beforehand. I met him at the toilet and we exchanged greetings but I did not meet him again before I left detention. When I was formally arrested and got to prison, I read in the newspapers that the police denied that they had ever detained such a person."*

Özer Akdemir: *"I was in TEM from 12 to 25 September. I and others there were systematically tortured. I was staying in cell No. 6. A person in cell 8 was severely tortured every day. He was taken naked to torture, and brought back, naked and unable to stand. I could see quite easily this person being taken to torture through the gap in the grille in my cell. The person was about 1.65m, brown haired, moustache, dark complexion, with a slight beard, and losing his hair a bit at the front, about 60kg. I could easily recognize those who were taking him to torture because I was tortured without a blindfold. They were from team A3 - or the TDKP team. One day when they brought out the man in cell 8 to go to the toilet, he said, 'I am Kenan Bilgin, they want to "disappear" me. They have not registered me.'"*

M Cavit Nacitarhan: *"While I was in Ankara Police Headquarters from 12 September*

until 6 October, I saw Kenan Bilgin, naked, being taken past the ventilation window in my cell door (1.65m, dark complexioned, curly hair receding at the front). He was in cell 21. His name was not chalked on the door, but I witnessed him shouting that he was Kenan Bilgin, and asking that those who heard him should inform the outside world."

The lawyer Murat Demir who was detained at the Anti-Terror Branch of Ankara Police Headquarters from 27 September to 10 October stated: *"I spoke with someone who said that he had been in detention for 22 days, and that his name was Kenan Bilgin. When I spoke to him, it was 3 or 4 of October."*

Kenan Bilgin, from Pertek in Tunceli province, was previously detained in Istanbul in 1993, when he reported that he had been tortured. He was held for two months and released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. Following a programme of visits to Turkish police stations in 1990, 1991 and 1992, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT - established by the Council of Europe) reported: *"In the light of all the information at its disposal, the ECPT can only conclude that the practice of torture and other forms of severe ill-treatment of persons in police custody remains widespread in Turkey and that such methods are applied to both ordinary criminal suspects and persons held under anti-terrorism provisions"*.

Most allegations relate to ill-treatment of detainees in police custody during their initial interrogation when they are usually denied access to relatives or a lawyer. Detainees held on suspicion of political offences may be held without charge for up to 15 days.

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

- expressing grave concern for the life of Kenan Bilgin who has been held in unacknowledged detention at the Anti-Terror Branch of Ankara Police Headquarters since 12 September 1994;
- citing statements by fellow detainees who testified that they saw him there as recently as 3 or 4 October, and that he was being tortured;
- urging that he be duly registered as prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code and that his detention be acknowledged to his lawyers;
- requesting to be informed of Kenan Bilgin's current state of health and of any charges brought against him.

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of the Interior:

Mr Nahit Mente_e
İçişleri Bakanl____
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 428 4346

Salutation: Dear Minister

2) General Chief of Police:

Mr Y_lmaz Ergun

Emniyet Genel Müdürü
Emniyet Genel Müdürlü_u
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Genel Muduru, Ankara, Turkey
Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Prof Mümtaz Soysal

D_i_leri Bakanl____

06100 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: 90 312 287 1886

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 10 November 1994.