

£TURKEY

@Kurdish Writer Musa Anter, 74, Murdered

Amnesty International is deeply concerned about the killing of yet another journalist in Turkey, the ninth since February this year, and about the wounding of the relative accompanying him.

Musa Anter, the prominent Kurdish writer and journalist, was one of 28 (mostly Kurdish) people named in a leaflet which was circulating in the southeastern provinces earlier this year and which threatened death to them. He is the first of those named in the leaflet to be killed. Amnesty International is concerned that he should also be the last.

On the evening of Sunday, 20 September, at around 8.30pm, Musa Anter was shot in the heart and head as he was walking in the street in Diyarbak_r. He died on the way to hospital. Orhan Miro_lu, a relative who was with him, was seriously wounded in the attack by an unknown gunman.

Musa Anter, who had come to Diyarbak_r to participate in some cultural events, reportedly said that he had been aware of being observed by the police from the moment he arrived at the airport. In the evening he was to go from the hotel with Orhan Miro_lu to his house for a family dinner when an unknown caller reportedly requested him by telephone to come briefly to help settle a land dispute. Both were picked up at the hotel by a man who spoke Kurdish and they drove by taxi to the outskirts of Diyarbak_r. After leaving the taxi and walking to some houses, the man stepped in front, turned around and started firing with a 14-shot 9mm automatic pistol. Musa Anter was hit by four bullets, Orhan Miro_lu by three. The man then ran off through the houses in the direction of Diyarbak_r. A police station and a constantly manned traffic control point are said to be near the site. Three journalists from the local newspaper *Söz*, who overheard on the police wavelength that a crime had been committed, went to the site in a taxi. Walking towards the spot they were stopped by three people reportedly saying that they were police and carrying weapons and a walkie-talkie. After being slapped, the three journalists were made to get back into the taxi with one of the policemen and forced to drive around for several hours, while being followed by the other two policemen in a Toros Renault-type station wagon with the registration number 21 SV 004 which later turned out to be false. The three journalists and the driver were made to get out of the taxi at 2am on a highway in the province of Malatya. The policeman drove off in the taxi followed by the Toros car.

Musa Anter, aged 74, was first imprisoned as a lycée pupil in 1938 and held for 15 days. His second imprisonment was in 1959 when he was detained with 50 friends for "Kurdish activities", a charge of which he was later acquitted. In 1965 he became a member of the Turkish Workers' Party (TIP) and in 1969 was imprisoned for the third time in connection with his writing and publishing activities. Following a general amnesty he was released in 1974, to be detained several times again after the military coup of September 1980. He had several court cases against him pending at the time of his death. He wrote four books, three of which are written in Kurdish, and a number of plays. Musa Anter was a founding member of the People's Labour Party (HEP) which has 17 Kurdish deputies in parliament, and he was the chairman of the newly founded Kurdish Institute in Istanbul.

Orhan Miro_lu, aged 40, was arrested after the military coup and sentenced in 1983 to 15 years' imprisonment by a military court in Diyarbak_r on charges of membership of a Kurdish organization, illegal under Turkish law. He served 10 years in prison.

Since the early summer of 1991, Amnesty International has received allegations of extrajudicial execution on a scale unprecedented for Turkey. During 1991 it received reports of more than fifty killings of villagers and local politicians in which the security forces were implicated. Since November 1991 the killings have continued, but the methods have changed: more than a hundred Kurdish men - journalists, local politicians, members of the People's Labour Party (HEP) and others have been shot to death in "mysterious murders" in the predominantly Kurdish provinces in the southeast. Many of the killings have been attributed to a local organization which uses the name "Hizbullah". However, many of the victims are people who were previously detained, threatened or tortured by the police, and there is growing evidence to suggest that the security forces are at least protecting the assassins, if not inciting them.

Journalists and local correspondents working for newspapers and magazines like the Kurdish-owned daily *Özgür Gündem* (Free Agenda) and its sister publication, the weekly *Yeni Ülke* (New Land), like the magazines *Özgür Halk* (Free People), *Gerçek* (Truth) and *2000'e Do_ru* (Towards 2000), have been special targets of prosecutions, harassment by the police, detention, ill-treatment and torture, death threats and killings ever since their papers started publication. Their publications have been specifically mentioned in the leaflet threatening death to all those working for them. Their declared policy is to investigate and publicize human rights violations committed by the security forces, in particular in the Kurdish provinces under State of Emergency where reporting has been severely restricted. Issues of these and similar publications are frequently confiscated.

Musa Anter, a senior columnist for *Özgür Gündem* and *Yeni Ülke*, is the fifth of *Özgür Gündem's* journalists to be attacked by unidentified assailants since the newspaper started publication in May this year. Four of them have been killed and one remains paralyzed.

Three journalists working for other Kurdish publications have been killed this year in similar circumstances in the southeastern provinces under a state of emergency. One reporter was killed while covering events around the Kurdish New Year in March in the southeast. None of the killers has been found and no serious investigations appear to be carried out. The Turkish Prime Minister is reported to have commented on their deaths by saying, "Those killed were not real journalists. They were militants in the guise of journalists. They kill each other", apparently justifying their deaths.

Oktay Ek_i, leading columnist of the centre-right daily *Hürriyet*, commented on the murder of his colleague stating, "...When I had visited Diyarbak_r, my colleagues had expressed their belief that the killings in the region were the work of the terrorist organization "Hizbullah" and of the state's security services which cooperate with it and use the Hizbullah militants as their hit-men. Until now I had regarded these claims with reserve. After the killing of Musa Anter, I, too, am inclined to believe them. I cannot help but believe that Anter, too, has been killed by that notorious state force called the "counter-guerrilla" or the "Special Warfare Department" unless proven to the contrary..."

Amnesty International is calling for an immediate, full and impartial investigation into the circumstances of Musa Anter's murder which, as with previous similar killings, is provoking allegations of extrajudicial execution, and for those responsible to be brought to justice. The organization once again urges that an independent commission is established to investigate such allegations in accordance with the United Nations Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions.