

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 355/92 Fear of Torture/"Disappearance"/
Extrajudicial Execution

13 November 1992

TURKEY: Mehmet Akan, aged 70, shepherd
Mehmet Akkum, aged 25, shepherd

Ahmet Akkum, 40
Selahattin Akkum, 18
Selahattin Akelma, 20
Zülfü Aktut, 30
Mehdi Ceylan, 15
Zülküf Cansever, 20
Abdurrahim Akay, 17
Ismail Celik, 40, village imam (prayer leader)
Nuri Karakaplan, 23
..... Altun [first name not known]
..... Altun [first name not known]

Amnesty International is concerned about the fate of the 13 people named above who were detained by the security forces and taken to an unknown place. The body of one of them, Mehmet Akkum, has been found in the fields.

We have received reports that the security forces detained the shepherds Mehmet Akan and Mehmet Akkum from the village of Kur_unlu near Dicle in Diyarbakir province while they were grazing their animals on 10 November 1992. The following day, 11 November, the body of 70-year-old Mehmet Akan was found in the fields, while the second shepherd, Mehmet Akkum has "disappeared".

On 12 November, the security forces carried out an operation in Kur_unlu village and detained the other 11 men named above. All efforts by their families to discover their whereabouts have so far been unsuccessful. It is feared that they are being held for interrogation under torture, presumably about suspected links with guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is estimated to number some 10 million people, living mainly in southeastern Turkey. Since August 1984, when guerrillas of the PKK started armed attacks against the security forces, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces. Furthermore, allegations of over 100 extrajudicial executions have been received during the past 12 months. More than 5,000 lives have so far been lost on both sides and among the civilian population in the context of the continuing fighting. Emergency legislation is in force in 10

provinces in the region and the Emergency Legislation Governor in Diyarbakir has extraordinary powers over three additional provinces.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. However, all information available to Amnesty International indicates that torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey. 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. In August 1990, the government derogated from Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all of which contain important safeguards for human rights. Under current legislation the maximum period a detainee may be held

Page 2 of UA 355/92

before being formally charged or released is 24 hours; in cases involving three or more suspects or due to the 'nature of the crime' it may be extended to 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in areas under emergency legislation or martial law. Emergency legislation is currently in force in 10 provinces, including Diyarbak_r province.

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

- expressing concern that 12 men from Kur_unlu village in the province of Diyarbak_r are held incommunicado in unacknowledged detention at an unknown place;
- seeking assurances that they are not subjected to torture while in custody;
- calling for an immediate, full and impartial investigation into the reported death in detention of Mehmet Akan, aged 70, from Kur_unlu village whose body was found one day after he had been detained on 10 November;
- requesting to be informed of its findings.

APPEALS TO

1) Chief of the Turkish General Staff:

General Do_an Güre_
Bakanl_klar
06100 Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear General

Telegrams: General Gures, Bakanliklar, Ankara, Turkey

2) Minister of the Interior:

Mr _smet Sezgin
_çi_leri Bakanl____
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Minister

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 46369 ICSL TR

Faxes: +90 4 418 1795

3) Prime Minister:

Mr Süleyman Demirel
Office of the Prime Minister
Ba_bakanl_k
06573 Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey
Telexes: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr
42099 basb tr, 42875 bbk tr
Faxes: + 90 4 417 04 76
+ 90 4 230 88 96

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission
nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_
TBMM
Ankara, Turkey

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 25 December 1992.