

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 102/92

Fear of Torture

25 November 1992

TURKEY: Fifty people in Viran\_ehir including:

Mahmut Özkan, aged 60 )  
Halil Özkan ) brothers  
Ömer Özkan )

Lokman, 15, son of Mahmut

and the children of a fourth brother:

Ru en, 14 (female)

Abdullah, 25 ) sons of

Nezan, 15 (female)

Cengiz, 17 ) Halil

Cuco, 14

Mahmut, 14, son of Ömer

Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of some 50 people detained in Viran\_ehir, including the above members of the Özkan family.

On 21 November 1992, the security forces detained some 50 people in Viran\_ehir, province of \_anl\_urfa, including the above named members of the Özkan family. On that day at 10am six police officers searched the house of Ömer Özkan. During the search a man was found in the house who was wanted by the police. Subsequently, the police also searched the homes of Ömer Özkan's brothers Mahmut and Halil and detained them as well as the members of their families (named above) present in their homes at the time. The police are said to have since carried out daily searches of the same houses. The detainees were taken to \_anl\_urfa where reportedly they are held incommunicado at the Anti-Terror Branch of \_anl\_urfa Police Headquarters, presumably on suspicion of supporting the guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).

It is feared that the detainees are being subjected to torture during interrogation.

#### 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

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important safeguards for human rights. Under current legislation the maximum period a detainee may be held 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. New legislation to shorten the maximum detention period was passed by Parliament on 18 November, but is not yet in force, awaiting the President's approval. However, it will not be applicable to detainees held on suspicion of political offences to be tried in State Security Courts.

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

- urging that the detainees from Viran\_ehir including all those named above and in particular the two young girls are granted prompt access to their families and lawyers;
- seeking assurances that they are not subjected to torture or any form of ill-treatment while in police custody;
- requesting to be informed of any charges brought against them.

**APPEALS TO**

1) Chief of \_anl\_urfa Police:

Mr Mehmet Cebe

Salutation: Dear Sir

\_anl\_urfa Emniyet Müdürlü\_ü

\_anl\_urfa, Turkey

**Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Sanliurfa, Turkey**

2) Minister of the Interior:

Mr \_smet Sezgin

Salutation: Dear Minister

\_çi\_leri Bakanl\_\_\_\_

06644 Ankara, Turkey

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

**Telexes: 46369 ICSL TR**

**Faxes: + 90 4 418 1795**

3) Prime Minister:

Mr Süleyman Demirel

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba\_bakanl\_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

**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 5 December 1992.