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## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **Turkey**

#### **Authorities acquit torturers**

Amnesty International was disturbed to hear of today's acquittal of 10 police officers who were on trial for the torture of 16 juveniles and young people at Manisa Police Headquarters between 26 December 1995 and 5 January 1996.

The trial, during the course of which the young victims continued to be subjected to intimidation, was seriously flawed.

Most notably, the prosecutor changed the charges from torture to ill-treatment in the closing stages in spite of the fact that the allegations made by the teenagers were among the most distressing that Amnesty International has received in the past 10 years. They reported being stripped naked, sexually assaulted, hanged by the arms, subjected to electric shocks and having had their testicles twisted.

For the court to acquit in the face of clear medical evidence and the testimony of an eye-witness (the parliamentary deputy for Manisa, Sabri Ergül) confirms that torture in Turkish police stations is a craft practised with impunity and with the collusion of the judiciary.

This follows two other judgements in cases of torture of children, Abdullah Salman and Halil Ibrahim Okkali, in which the perpetrators were found guilty but initially punished with fines equivalent to less than 10 dollars.

ENDS.../