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**Public Statement**  
**Turkey**  
**Amnesty International's position on the arrest of Abdullah Öcalan**

In view of the well documented practice of torture and ill-treatment in custody in Turkey -- as well as the longstanding concerns over the fairness of political trials in the country -- Amnesty International has called for Abdullah Öcalan to be given immediate and unhindered access to a lawyer of his own choice and that all necessary steps will be taken to ensure his physical integrity.

Current legislation in Turkey provides for four days' incommunicado detention for people held under the Anti-Terror Law. This has been described as unacceptable by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and it is widely recognized as being conducive to torture.

Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit has promised that Abdullah Öcalan will have a fair trial. Amnesty International welcomes this undertaking but points out that the incommunicado detention puts it in doubt. A fair trial must ensure proper access to a lawyer, in order to protect his right to legal defence and as a safeguard against torture.

Amnesty International supports today's call by the Special Rapporteur on torture of the Commission on Human Rights, Sir Nigel Rodley, appealing to the Turkish authorities for clarification of the circumstances surrounding the case with a view to ensuring that Abdullah Öcalan's right to physical and mental integrity is protected, and calling upon the Government to ensure that he be granted immediate access to legal counsel and that an independent monitoring system be put into place to verify that he is not subjected to any impairment of respect for his human dignity.

Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned human rights abuses by the PKK and other armed opposition groups, and has publicly called on them to ensure that their members are instructed not to abuse human rights. The organization believes those accused of human rights violations or abuses should be brought to trial and, based on this, does not oppose Abdullah Öcalan being subjected to a fair and impartial judicial process to determine his guilt or innocence in relation to such crimes.

Amnesty International opposes the application of the death penalty in all cases and under all circumstances. Should Abdullah Öcalan be found guilty of the crimes of which he is accused, Amnesty International would call on the Turkish authorities not to request the imposition of the death penalty.

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