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## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **TURKEY**

#### **Fear for prisoner safety as gendarmes brought to prison gate**

The Justice Minister should ensure that gendarmes and police are not used to quell the crisis at Buca Prison and other disturbances developing in prisons throughout Turkey, Amnesty International said in a letter to the minister yesterday.

In view of the many fatalities which have occurred in the past as a result of using police and gendarmes to suppress such prison unrest, the organization is concerned that gendarmes have been brought to quell disturbances in Ward 7 at Buca Prison, near Izmir, and have attempted to enter the ward.

Disturbances have also been reported at Bergama Prison, Ankara Closed Prison and Ümraniye Special Type Prison in Istanbul.

Amnesty International has written to the Turkish authorities on several past occasions, urging that sufficient resources be allocated so that prison services are not required to call upon Interior Ministry security forces – police and gendarmes – to handle such crises.

The letter drew attention to the history of ill-treatment and fatalities which have occurred during such crises. When entering wards on previous occasions, police and gendarmes have consistently used excessive force to restore order, and have subsequently “punished” convicted members of illegal armed organizations who have participated in disturbances by dealing out severe beatings with sticks.

In September 1995 when prisoners in Ward 6 at Buca Prison refused to appear for roll-call in protest at brutal treatment by gendarmes while being taken to and from court, a large group of gendarmes forced entry into Ward 6. After subduing the prisoners, the gendarmes allegedly brought them into the courtyard one by one and beat them with chains, iron bars, sticks and truncheons. Three prisoners, Yusuf Ba\_ , U\_r Sariaslan and Turan Kili\_ç, were beaten to death. The injuries documented in Turan Kili\_ç’s autopsy report suggested a ferocious attack: “general body trauma, broken skull, subdural and subarachnoidal haemorrhage, broken ribs, laceration and haemorrhage of the left lung.”

A few months after this incident, in January 1996, Orhan Özen, Riza Boyba\_ and Abdülmecit Se\_çkin were beaten to death, and Gültekin Beyhan died later in hospital from head injuries, after police and gendarmes entered Ümraniye Special Type Prison to subdue a prisoners’ protest action.

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