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NEWS FLASH

Turkey

Prominent human rights activist Akin Birdal, was today re-imprisoned despite a medical report warning that his injuries are a danger to his life.

Ankara State Prosecutor today rejected Akin Birdal's lawyer's application for his sentence to be postponed again on medical grounds. A medical report issued by Ankara State Hospital on 22 March 2000 had stated that the continuing effects of Akin Birdal's injuries were a definite danger to his life. However, a report issued by the Forensic Institute in Istanbul on 24 March stated that the physical effects of the injuries did not endanger his life.

Amnesty International now adopts Akin Birdal as a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for the peaceful expression of his views. Amnesty International will campaign for his immediate and unconditional release and calls for an urgent review of the laws governing freedom of expression in Turkey.

Akin Birdal is expected to remain at Ankara Central Closed Prison until 23 September 2000.

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For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on 44 171 413 5566 or visit our website at <http://www.amnesty.org>