

7 April 1997

Further information (2) on EXTRA 36/97 (EUR 44/21/97, 13 March 1997) and follow-up (EUR 44/23/97, 27 March) - Torture / Fear of torture

TURKEYHatun Temuzalp (f), journalist, aged 34

Hatun Temizalp has given testimony to Amnesty International concerning her detention at the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters from 7 to 14 March 1997. She states that she was blindfolded during interrogation. "I was taken into custody from my home while being subjected to insults and oaths. I was kept blindfolded on a chair in the police department until 9 March. From time to time I was taken for interrogation, and when I refused to speak, I was brought back while being slapped and kicked. When I dozed on the chair they beat me and pulled me upright. I was frequently subjected to verbal sexual abuse.

After midday on Sunday 9 March I was taken to the place of torture. They said "We are going to let you swing a little." Down below, in the presence of my friends [who were also in custody] they assaulted me, trying to strip me of my clothes. Then we went upstairs and they pulled off some of my clothes while insulting and threatening me. They left me in trousers and t-shirt. They sat me on a chair and bound my arms tightly to wooden bar. Two people grabbed me, lifted me onto the chair, hung me up, and then pulled the chair away from under my feet. After a period of intense pain, I started to lose consciousness. They were continually checking the state of the muscles of my arm and whether or not I was perspiring. At that moment they put the chair back underneath me until I fully regained consciousness, when they again removed the chair. Sometimes they pushed my suspended body as if it were a swing, and also gave me electric shocks. This sort of session happened four or five times. On two occasions when I was hanging there was a cracking sound in my arms. They said: "The muscle fibres are breaking - you will be left disabled." After the hanging, they removed my trousers, took me to the toilet area and hosed me all over my body with cold water under pressure. I do not remember how long this lasted, but I had lost track of time and it seemed like hours. At the time I was being tortured, I was menstruating, and was wearing a sanitary towel. They knew this, but after soaking me, they made me put my clothes back on without changing them. After further interrogation they kept me on a chair, blindfolded until monday afternoon, then they put me in a cell. The systematic torture lasted for one day."

Hatun Temizalp's shoulder and arm were injured. She was brought before a doctor on the last day of detention. "The doctor was good. I was referred to hospital where x-rays were taken and my arm was bandaged". The state Forensic Medicine Institute issued a medical certificate indicating a fractured and dislocated shoulder blade as well as signs of "light blows". Amnesty International has received a copy of the X-ray report confirming the fracture of Hatun Temizalp's left shoulder.

On charges of membership of an illegal armed organization, Hatun Temizalp was then taken to the State Security Court prosecutor to whom she complained of her torture. The police reportedly attempted to intimidate her from making her complaint, but the prosecutor made a written note before ordering her release.

On 6 March 1997 President Süleyman Demirel put his signature to a law which required that people detained on suspicion of offences under the Anti-Terror Law should be brought before a judge after four days' detention, and thereafter be permitted access to a lawyer. Hatun Temizalp, who was not brought before a judge, states that she requested access to a lawyer but that this was denied. Applications for access by her family and lawyer were also rejected.

No further action by the UA Network is requested.