

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**Fear of Torture**

**11 March 1991**

**TURKEY: Ahmet TEKIN, aged 33, married with five children,  
member of Turkish Human Rights Association**

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Ahmet Tekin, a member of the Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD), was detained in Siirt during the last week of February. This is the ninth time he has been detained during the past ten years. He is said to be held incommunicado at the Gendarmerie Headquarters in Siirt and it is feared that he is again being interrogated under torture.

Ahmet Tekin was most recently detained in Mersin on 12 November 1990. He was held for 14 days, during which he was tortured. When he was taken for medical examination at the end of his detention, the doctor declined to record the cuts and bruises on his body. He was brought before a judge in Mersin, formally arrested for "sheltering" guerrillas and committed to prison. After two or three days he was released, but detained again immediately afterwards and brought to Eruh Gendarmerie Headquarters. Here he was tortured again, including being left lying on the floor in the toilet and urinated over. He was charged and formally arrested, but later provisionally released. The charges were dropped by Diyarbakir State Security Court on 31 January 1991. He claimed that a month later it was suggested to him at Siirt Police Headquarters that he should become a police agent.

Ahmet Tekin alleges that during one of his recent detentions he was told that he had already four children and that they would make sure he would not have any more. Electricity was applied particularly to his sexual organs, he was hosed with pressurized cold water. The torture lasted for 12 days and affected his health. He was about to go for treatment at the Torture Treatment Centre in Ankara, when he was detained once again around 26 February.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is not officially recognized by the authorities, but is estimated to number some 10 million people. The Kurdish population lives mainly in southeastern Turkey. Frequent allegations of torture and ill-treatment have been received from the region and the number of torture allegations increased substantially after the 1980 military coup.

Since August 1984, when Kurdish guerrillas - members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) - started armed attacks, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces, where more than 2000 lives so far have been lost in the continuing fighting.

In May 1990 the Turkish government issued Decrees 424 and 425 (in December replaced by Decree 430), further extending the already extraordinary powers of the Emergency Legislation Governor. Subsequently, in August 1990, the government derogated from Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all of which contain important safeguards for human rights.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. However, all information available to Amnesty International indicates that

torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey. Allegations of torture have continued since the transfer of power to a civilian government in 1983. Most allegations relate to ill-treatment of detainees in police

custody during their initial interrogation when they are usually denied access to relatives or a lawyer. Under current legislation the maximum detention period before being formally charged or released is 24 hours; in cases involving three or more suspects or due to the 'nature of the crime' it may be extended to 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in areas under emergency legislation or martial law. Emergency legislation is currently in force in ten provinces, including Siirt.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- urging that Ahmet Tekin be given prompt access to his family and a lawyer, and that he not be ill-treated while in detention;
- requesting to be informed of any charges against him.

**APPEALS TO:**

Siirt Gendarmerie Headquarters:  
Siirt Jandarma Tugay Komutanl\_\_\_\_  
Siirt, Turkey

**Telegrams: Jandarma Komutanligi, Siirt, Turkey**  
**Telexes: 72216 JSIR TR**

Siirt Governor:  
Attila Koç  
Siirt Valisi  
Siirt, Turkey

**Telegrams: Siirt Valisi, Siirt, Turkey**  
**Telexes: 72313 srvt tr**  
**Faxes: +90 8441 2769**

President Turgut Özal  
Office of the President  
Devlet Ba\_kanl\_\_\_\_  
06100 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: President Özal, Ankara, Turkey**  
**Telexes: 42875 BBK TR**  
**Faxes: (via Press Office) + 90 4 168 5012**

Abdülkadir Aksu  
Minister of the Interior  
\_çi\_leri Bakanl\_\_\_\_  
06644 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: Interior Minister Aksu, Ankara, Turkey**  
**Telexes: 46369 ICSL TR**  
**Faxes: +90 41 28 43 46; +90 41 17 23 90**

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 April 1991.