

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 33/93

Fear of Torture

31 March 1993

TURKEY:

Ha_im Ha_imi, mayor of Cizre

Murat Özalp

R_dvan Elçi

Abdurrahman Budak

Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of the four men named above from Cizre, a town on the border with Syria. Ha_im Ha_imi was detained on 30 March 1993 after going to the police headquarters in Cizre. He had been told to report there after the religious holiday of Ramadan. Amnesty International does not know when the other three people were detained or the reasons why they are being held in detention. They have reportedly been transferred to the provincial capital __rnak where they are being interrogated at the police headquarters. It is feared that they may be subjected to torture while being held in incommunicado detention. They may be held until 27 April under current emergency legislation.

Ha_im Ha_imi has become fairly well-known abroad because he has spoken frequently about the conditions caused by the armed conflict between the guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and the security forces with foreign journalists and delegations who have visited the region . In mid-March the PKK unilaterally declared a ceasefire to last from 20 March until 15 April and its intention to end the fighting and to join the democratic political process as a legal political party. So far the ceasefire has been holding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is estimated to number some 10 million people, living mainly in southeastern Turkey. Since August 1984, when guerrillas of the PKK started armed attacks against the security forces, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces. Furthermore, allegations of over 100 extrajudicial executions have been received during the past 12 months. More than 5,000 lives have so far been lost on both sides and among the civilian population in the context of the continuing fighting. Emergency legislation is in force in 10 provinces in the region and the Emergency Legislation Governor in Diyarbakir has extraordinary powers over three additional provinces.

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. 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. New legislation to shorten

the maximum detention period came into force on 1 December 1992. Now the normal maximum period of 24 hours, for which a non-political detainee may be held before being formally charged or released, may be extended to eight days in cases of ordinary crimes involving three or more suspects. Detainees held on suspicion of political offences to be tried in State Security Courts may be held without charge for 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in provinces under emergency legislation or martial law. Emergency legislation is currently in force in __rnak province.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of the mayor of Cizre, Ha_im Ha_imi and the three other men named above who were detained in Cizre on 30 March 1993 and are being held at the Police Headquarters in __rnak;
- seeking assurances that they are not subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- asking to be informed of the reasons for their detention.

APPEALS TO

1) Chief of Police:

Mr Necati Alt_nta_
__rnak Emniyet Müdürü
__rnak, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Mudurlugu, Sirnak, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

2) Governor of __rnak Province:

Mr Aydın Aslan
__rnak Valili_i
__rnak, Turkey

Telegrams: Sirnak Valiligi, Sirnak, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 8456 1188

Salutation: Dear Governor

3) Minister of the Interior:

Mr _smet Sezgin
_çi_leri Bakanl____
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 46369 IC SL TR

Faxes: +90 4 418 1795

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission
Mr Sabri Yavuz

nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_
TBMM
Ankara, Turkey

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 April 1993.