

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/39/96

19 March 1996

Further information on EXTRA 17/96 (EUR 44/21/96, 6 February 1996) - Health concern / Probable prisoner of conscience

TURKEY Abdülmelik F\_rat, former member of parliament, aged 63

The trial of Abdülmelik F\_rat, the former member of parliament, at Erzincan State Security Court began on 7 March 1996. However, the defendant was not able to attend the hearing due to ill-health and he remained imprisoned in Istanbul as he was not fit for the journey to Erzincan.

According to the indictment read out at the hearing, Abdülmelik F\_rat was accused of "aiding the PKK and disseminating separatist propaganda". The prosecution demanded a sentence of five to eight years' imprisonment. His lawyers demanded his release because the indictment, they said, was based on false information. In 1994, a former PKK member, in exchange for a reduced sentence, had made a statement which incriminated Abdülmelik F\_rat, among others. The court decided that Abdülmelik F\_rat should be released, but should be prohibited from going abroad. The trial will continue on 4 April.

No further action by the UA Network is required. Thanks to all of you who sent appeals on Abdülmelik F\_rat's behalf.