

28 August 2002

Further information on UA 141/02 (EUR 44/027/2002, 10 May 2002) - Risk of torture and ill-treatment

TURKEY Mikail Bülbül (m)]
(name corrected) Yakup Ba_bo_a (m)]
(name corrected) A. Kerim Ko_ar (m)]
(name corrected) Mahsun Bilen (m)]
Faruk K_l_ç (m)] teachers and members of *E_itim-Sen*
Nurettin Demir (m)] trade union
Zübeyir Avc_ (m)]
Mahmut Kuzu (m)]
A. Aziz Yüceda_ (m)]
Lokman Koçhan (m)]
ermin Erba (f)]
Ahmet Ökten (m), engineer

All those named above have been released by the authorities and are now awaiting trial. While in police detention in Mardin they were all reportedly exposed to torture or ill-treatment.

On 10 May, the group were charged with "participating in an illegal meeting" and being in contravention of the Anti-Terror Law. On 14 May _ermin Erba_, Abdulaziz Yüceda_, Nurettin Demir, Faruk K_l_ç, Mahmut Kuzu, and Ahmet Ökten were released pending their trial in September. Yakup Ba_bo_a, Zübeyir Avc_, Lokman Koçhan, Mahsun Bilen, Mikail Bülbül, Abdulkерim Ko_ar were released on 3 June to await trial. Appeals from Amnesty International members have been cited by the lawyer of the group as a possible reason for their rapid release.

Following their detention by security officials on 7 May, the group were reportedly exposed to torture and ill-treatment at the Anti-Terror Branch of Police Headquarters in Mardin. They were reportedly stripped naked, beaten and sprayed with cold pressurized water, and accused of membership of the illegal armed opposition group KADEK, formerly known as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The male members of the group reportedly had their testicles squeezed. They were allegedly forced to stand in the corridor with their faces turned to the wall and their heads covered in cloth bags for three days. They were also deprived of sleep. They were forced to listen to loud music throughout this period and were only given a piece of bread to eat.

The trade union members were reportedly detained by armed members of the security forces while they were drinking tea and discussing Kurdish literature at the home of one of the group on the evening of May 7. They were each taken to their homes and their magazines, journals, computer disks and books were apparently confiscated.

Changes to the Law on Foreign Language Education and Teaching which came into effect on 8 August 2002 will allow for the teaching of languages, including Kurdish. However, no courses in Kurdish have apparently yet been approved by the authorities and the prosecution of individuals detained for requesting Kurdish language education continues.

Thank you to all who send appeals. If possible, please send a last round of appeals in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that the people named above were reportedly tortured or ill-treated while in police custody in Mardin, and reminding the government that it is a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights, which says that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment";
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the torture allegations, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- asking for the group to be compensated for any psychological or physical damage resulting from the alleged torture, and urging that they are provided with appropriate treatment and rehabilitation;
- urging the authorities to suspend any police or gendarmerie officer accused of torture and ill-treatment from duty while they are under investigation, and to dismiss them if they are convicted.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice
Prof Aysel Çelikel
Ministry of Justice
Adalet Bakanl_____

06659 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 3954

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Salutations: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Ali Do_an

Office of the Prime Minister,

Ba_bakanl_k,

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 0476

Salutation: Dear Minister

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 9 October 2002.