

11 August 2000

**Further information on EXTRA 30/00 (EUR 44/23/00, 3 April 2000) - Fear for safety/Fear of torture or ill-treatment****TURKEYFahrettin Ozdemir**

---

Fahrettin Ozdemir was put on trial on 10 July at Diyarbakir State Security Court. Fourteen other alleged members of the radical Islamic illegal armed opposition group Hizbullah are on trial with him, including some of the group's alleged leaders. Together they are accused of killing 156 people and of "intending to change the constitutional order", charges which carry the death penalty.

In the first session of the trial, Fahrettin Özdemir said that he had been held in detention for a total of 59 days. The first five days were not registered. Fahrettin Ozdemir also claimed that he was tortured at Police Headquarters in Gaziantep. He told the court that he would not respond to the charges until he was sure that he would not be taken back to Police Headquarters, and until he had recovered from the torture. Below is the description of what happened to him in his own words, from the statement he presented to the court:

"The police took me from the state hospital mosque in Gaziantep at evening prayer on 20 February[2000]. They took me straight up to the mountains and fired at me for 10 to 15 minutes. They told me that if I didn't talk they would execute me like the others...They took me to a place which they said was a basement in the mountains for carrying out executions. My eyes were blindfolded. In the days that followed I realized that this was Police Headquarters. They undressed me and tied my arms behind my back and suspended me by "Palestinian" hanging [hanging by the arms with the arms tied behind the back]. At the same time they applied electric shocks to my male organ and compressed my testicles. They said they would castrate me.

"After a while they took me down from the hanger and kept me for hours under pressurized water like an ice-cold whip. Over a period of ten days they put me on the hanger ten times (six times "Palestinian" hanging, twice "straight" hanging [hanging by the arms with the arms outstretched in a cross shape], and twice with my arms bound behind my back. Each time they applied electric shocks and squeezed my testicles and sprayed me with pressurized water when I was taken down.

"On four occasions they made me bend so they could put me into a wheel. They began to hit the soles of my feet. When the soles of my feet had well and truly swollen, they made me bend my fingers towards the palms of my hands and began to apply pressure. When my fingertips burst and began to bleed they left my right hand and put a bullet between the fingers of my left hand and began to squeeze my left hand between the palms of their hands. They held a cigarette lighter to the toe nail of my right foot until the flesh beneath began to burn. Then they took me out of the wheel and made me walk on gravel.

"They did not give me anything to drink for ten days so that my throat dried up and I could hardly speak...They deprived me of food and sleep. If my head dropped even slightly they would beat and kick me, there was no limit to the kicking and slappings. Sometimes they would pull my hair as hard as they could. They stamped on my toes with the heels of their shoes and ground on the veins until they swelled and my feet could hardly fit into my shoes and I could no

longer walk. All this time they swore at me and abused me countless times. Once late at night they took me up to the mountain and said they would execute me... They untied my blindfold and told me to run nine steps. I told them I would not run away and to shoot at me there. They emptied a magazine of bullets around me...

"Another kind of torture was to make me lean against the wall and stand there. After a while I could no longer stand and collapsed...The police chief sent me to Diyarbakır Police Headquarters. They did not torture me much here because they saw I had no strength. I lay on my back for a full month unable to get up. When I did get up I swayed from left to right and it was hard to stop myself from falling. I was in so much pain that for 20 days I could not sleep. Once they took me urgently to hospital, but the medicines prescribed by the doctor never came.

"I was held in police custody for 59 days altogether...The torture in Diyarbakır was rather more emotional and psychological. I was constantly threatened and told that the torture in Gaziantep was nothing and that I would see here what torture really was. The screams and cries of the other detainees being tortured were like another mark of torture on my psyche. I am in a profound state of shock because of the torture I have experienced and I have still not been able to pull myself together since I cannot be certain that I will not be taken back to police headquarters..."

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:**

- expressing profound concern at the allegations of torture made by Fahrettin Özdemir;
- reminding the Turkish government of its obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Turkey is a state party, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."
- urging the government to carry out a full and impartial investigation into Fahrettin Özdemir's allegations of torture and asking to be informed about the results.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Interior

Mr Saadettin Tantan

İçişleri Bakanlığı

06644 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams:Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Faxes:+ 90 312 418 1795**

**Salutation:Dear Minister**

Minister of Justice

Prof Hikmet Sami Türk

Ministry of Justice

Adalet Bakanlığı

06659 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Faxes: + 90 312 417 3954 / 418 5667**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Mehmet Ali Irtemçelik  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey  
**Faxes: + 90 312 417 0476**

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 30 September 2000.