

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## TURKEY: APPEAL CASES

16 July 2001; AI Index: EUR 44/042/2001; public

### **Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya: Prisoner of conscience for the second time**

Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya was remanded to Kalecik prison near Ankara on 29 June 2001. He is serving a 16 month sentence passed against him for the peaceful expression of non-violent opinions.

Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya is the founder and chairman of the Turkey and Middle East Forum Foundation. On 1 June 1999, an article of his titled "A Question of History?" was published in the daily newspaper *Özgür Bak*. In this he questioned the viability of the Turkish state's approach towards the Kurdish problem following the arrest of Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

As a result, he was indicted under Article 8/1 of the Anti-Terror Act for "disseminating separatist propaganda through the press". This was on the basis of the concluding sentence of his article where he stated: "...now the Kurdish community is not a village community but an urban community. A broad-based Kurdish intelligentsia has come into being. Subsequently there is the high probability that a political leadership will be formed. This is the crucial point that the Turkish authorities don't know and don't want to know. If this is so, it is no longer possible to 'solve the problem' by eliminating and disempowering the movement's leader."

Istanbul State Security Court sentenced him to 16 months' imprisonment and a fine of 1 billion 66 million Turkish Lira on 13 June 2000. The custodial sentence was delayed for a surety of 300 million Turkish Lira until 29 June 2001. Amnesty International has adopted Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya as a prisoner of conscience and will campaign for his immediate and unconditional release and for changes in Turkish legislation which allow for the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience.

This is the second time that Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya has been imprisoned for the expression of non-violent opinions. In 1993, while a faculty member of Economics Department at Abant \_zzet Baysal University near Bolu, he was indicted under the same law for "disseminating separatist propaganda" in his book titled *Westernization, Modernization, Development- Bankruptcy of the Paradigm*. In this, he traced Turkey's socio-economic development since the 1920s and criticized dominant Turkish ideology including government policy on the Kurds. He was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment and a fine of 41 million Turkish Lira and was subsequently dismissed from his position at the university. He served his sentence at Haymana prison near Ankara and was released on 15 June 1995.

#### **Background information:**

Dr Fikret Ba\_kaya was born in Denizli in 1940. He graduated from the Political Science Faculty of Ankara University and completed his doctorate at Paris and Poitiers Universities in France. He has written several books on development economics. These are *Westernization, Modernization, Development- Bankruptcy of the Paradigm*; *700- Anatomy of a State Tradition from the Ottoman Principality to 28 February*; *The Continuity of Underdevelopment*; *The Rise and Fall of Development Economics*; *Official Ideology, Science and Socialism*.

**Recommended action:**

Please send politely worded

Letters to write addresses

below in English or your

<b>own language</b> <b>President of Turkey:</b>	<b>Prime Minister:</b>	<b>Minister of Justice:</b>
President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, Cumhurba_kanl____, 06100 Ankara, Turkey	Mr Bülent Ecevit, Ba_bakanl_k, 06573 Ankara, Turkey	Prof Hikmet Sami Türk, Adalet Bakanl____, 06659 Ankara, Turkey
<b>Faxes:</b> +90 312 468 5026	<b>Faxes:</b> +90 312 417 0476	<b>Faxes:</b> +90 312 418 5667 +90 312 417 3954
Salutation: Your Excellency	Salutation: Dear Prime Minister	Salutation: Dear Minister

Send copies of your letters to:

- The diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.