

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: EUR 44/46/95
Distr: UA/SC

UA 82/95

Fear of "disappearance"

30 March 1995

TURKEY

Hasan Ocak, aged 30

Hasan Ocak has not been seen since 21 March 1995, when he was allegedly detained by police in Istanbul. Amnesty International is investigating reports of several "disappearances" following the recent disturbances in the Gaziosmanpa_a district of the city, and fears that the case of Hasan Ocak may be part of a wider pattern of human rights abuse by police during and after these disturbances.

At 3pm on 21 March Hasan Ocak received a telephone call at his father's home. Reportedly, he then left the house, saying that he was going to the Aksaray district of Istanbul. He did not return, and no further news has been heard from him since. A prisoner who was detained at the Anti-Terror Branch of the Istanbul Security Headquarters has stated that he saw Hasan Ocak in detention at the Anti-Terror Branch, although Istanbul Security Headquarters deny that they are holding anyone of that name.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During and following the four days of the worst street violence in Istanbul for 15 years, an as yet unknown number of people have been detained, with increasing reports of "disappearances".

The disturbances began on 12 March 1995 in the Gaziosmanpa_a district of Istanbul following an attack on an Alawite café by unknown gunmen. A customer in the café and the driver of the taxi used in the attack were killed. During the demonstrations that ensued as people took to the streets in protest, a further 17 people were killed, and more than 100 injured. Some of these deaths and injuries occurred when police opened fire on the demonstrators. There are also reliable reports that the police dragged protestors into doorways, beat them and threatened to kill them. Several police officers have been removed from duty following their actions.

Alawite Muslims number some 30 percent of Turkey's 60 million people. Their relaxed practice of Islam and advocacy of a liberal, secular state has long made them the target of hardline Islamists. Many Alawites are ethnic Kurds, refugees from the ongoing conflict between Turkish security forces and Kurdish separatists in the southeast of Turkey. Alawites maintain that the demonstrations reflected their anger at the café attack, allegedly carried out by hardline Islamists, as well as their anger about human rights abuses and abuses of police power.

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 Hasan Ocak who has been missing in Istanbul since 21 March 1995;
- urging that immediate steps are taken to establish his whereabouts, and asking to be informed of the results of this investigation;
- seeking assurances that, if in detention, Hasan Ocak is being treated humanely in accordance with international standards and urging that he be granted immediate access to a lawyer of his choosing and to his relatives.

APPEALS TO

1) Chief Prosecutor at Istanbul State Security Court

Mr Ahmet Köksal

DGM Ba_savc_s_

Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi

Istanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Istanbul, Turkey**Salutation: Dear Sir**2) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Azimet Köylüo_lu

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**Telegrams: Mr Köylüo_lu, Ba_bakanl_k, Ankara, Turkey****Salutation: Dear Minister**3) Istanbul Chief of Police:

Mr Necdet Menzir

Istanbul Emniyet Müdürü

_stanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Istanbul, Turkey**Telexes: 30812 EMMH TR; 26177 IEMT TR****Salutation: Dear Sir****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

Faxes: +90 312 420 5394

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 15 May 1995.