

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: EUR 44/70/91
Distr: UA/SC

UA 179/91

Fear of Torture

24 May 1991

TURKEY: Servet Eren, 45-year-old teacher
Abdullatif Gündüz, aged 55, 1 son also detained
Hamza Gündüz, aged 54, 2 daughters also detained
Yahya Gündüz, aged 45, 2 sons also detained
Faruk Gündüz, aged 45-50
Faysal Eren, aged 20
Kerem Eren, 27-year-old shepherd
Hüsnü Ertu_u_, 55-year-old farmer
Faik Erdiñç, 56-year-old farmer

During the night of 22/23 May 1991, the police station in Kulp was attacked. Subsequently some 30 people, including those named above, were reportedly rounded up and taken into custody by soldiers and "special teams" of the security forces. It is not known where they are being held - presumably at the local gendarmerie station, Jandarma Alay Komutanli_i - and it is feared that they are being interrogated under torture.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is not officially recognized by the authorities, but is estimated to number some 10 million people. The Kurdish population lives mainly in southeastern Turkey. Frequent allegations of torture and ill-treatment have been received from the region and the number of torture allegations increased substantially after the 1980 military coup. Since August 1984, when Kurdish guerrillas - members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) - started armed attacks, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces, where more than 2,000 lives so far have been lost in the continuing fighting.

In May 1990 the Turkish government issued Decrees 424 and 425 (in December replaced by Decree 430), further extending the already extraordinary powers of the Emergency Legislation Governor. Subsequently, in August 1990, the government derogated from Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all of which contain important safeguards for human rights.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. However, all information available to Amnesty International indicates that torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey. Allegations of torture have continued since the transfer of power to a civilian government in 1983. Most allegations relate to ill-treatment of detainees in police custody during their initial interrogation when they are usually denied access to relatives or a lawyer. Under current legislation the maximum detention period before being formally charged or released is 24 hours; in cases involving three or more suspects or due to the 'nature of the crime' it may be extended to 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in areas under emergency legislation or martial law. Emergency legislation is currently in force in ten provinces, including in Kulp.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- urging that Servet Eren and all the detainees from Kulp are given prompt access to their families and lawyers and that they are not ill-treated while in detention;
- requesting to be informed of any charges against them.

APPEALS TO:

Kulp Jandarma Alay Komutanli_i
Kulp, Turkey

Telegrams: Jandarma Alay Komutanligi, Kulp, Turkey

Emergency Legislation Governor:

Mr Hayri Kozakçio_lu
Ola_anüstü Hal Valisi
Diyarbakir, Turkey

Telegrams: Olaganustu Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

**Telexes: 72110 OHVT TR
72084 DYVA TR**

"please forward to the Governor"

72090 JASY TR

Faxes: +90 831 26174

President Turgut Özal
Devlet Ba_kanli_i
06100 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: President Ozal, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 42875 bbk tr

Faxes: +90 4 168 5012

(via Press Office)

Minister of the Interior:

Mr Abdülkadir Aksu
Içi_leri Bakanli_i
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 46369 IC SL TR

Faxes: +90 41 28 43 46

COPIES TO:President of Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Eyüp A_ik
Insan Haklari Ara_tirma Komisyonu Ba_kani
TBMM
Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 4 11 91 664

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 July 1991.