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MEDIA ADVISORY

TURKEY

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL APPEALS TO MINISTER OF JUSTICE

Amnesty International today appealed to Oltan Sungurlu, Minister of Justice in Ankara, to ensure the Appeal Court is fully informed of Turkey's obligations under the United Nations Convention against Torture in respect of 16 young defendants whose convictions were based upon evidence allegedly extracted under torture.

In the letter, Amnesty International expressed concern about the following aspects of the case:

- that their convictions were based upon evidence allegedly extracted under torture;
- that Izmir State Security Court proceeded with the case while a trial against the alleged torturers was pending;
- although the court stated that it had disregarded evidence allegedly extracted by torture in reaching its decision, under the Convention against Torture such evidence should never have been introduced to the court in the first place.

Amnesty International believes that justice will be served only if the Appeal Court will overturn the convictions in this case, and instruct Izmir State Security Court to dismiss the case or to hold it until the trial of the alleged torturers is concluded.

Background to case

Ten of the defendants were sentenced to imprisonment on charges of membership of, or links with, the illegal armed organization *Revolutionary People's Liberation Front* (DHKP-C). The convictions will be considered by the Ninth Chamber of the Appeal Court on 26 November 1997. Fourteen of the detainees, including seven high school students alleged that they had been blindfolded, stripped naked, hosed with cold water and subjected to electric shocks while in police detention. Their allegations of torture were supported by strong medical evidence.

For further information, please refer to the attached letter