

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of torture

4 October 1994

TURKEY

Bahri Mente_ , aged 46

Amnesty International fears that Bahri Mente_ is being tortured in custody in Bingöl.

On 23 September 1994, Bahri Mente_ was detained by two uniformed and one plainclothes policemen while leaving a mosque opposite the Fatih market place in Istanbul. On 26 September his family applied to the Istanbul State Security Court and the Anti-Terror branch of Fatih Security Headquarters for information.

They were informed by the Anti-Terror branch that Bahri Mente_ had been transferred to the Istanbul Maslak Gendarmerie. The latter, however, denied any knowledge of Bahri Mente_ despite repeated inquiries.

On 4 October, Amnesty International received an unconfirmed report that Bahri Mente_ was being held at Bingöl District Gendarmerie in the southeast Turkey.

A lawyer working for the Turkish Human Rights Association was verbally informed by the Bingöl Gendarmerie that they are holding Bahri Mente_ in detention. No formal charges, however, are reported to have been made.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There has been a striking increase in reports of "disappearances" since the summer of 1993 - particularly in the 10 southeastern provinces where a State of Emergency is in force and where police and gendarmerie have the right to hold political suspects incommunicado for up to one month. Bingöl is one of the ten provinces under Emergency Legislation.

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees, and for notification of their families, are almost universally ignored in the southeastern provinces and increasingly disregarded in the rest of Turkey. Lack of proper registration and notification is extremely distressing for relatives, and creates the conditions in which "disappearances" and torture take place.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. Following a programme of visits to Turkish police stations in 1990, 1991 and 1992, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT - established by the Council of Europe) reported: *"In the light of all the information at its disposal, the ECPT can only conclude that the practice of torture and other forms of severe ill-treatment of persons in police custody remains widespread in Turkey and that such methods are applied to both ordinary criminal suspects and persons held under anti-terrorism provisions"*.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the incommunicado detention of Bahri Mente_, reportedly at Bingöl District Gendarmerie;
- seeking assurances that he is not being subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- urging that his family is informed without further delay of his whereabouts and state of health;
- asking to be informed of any charges against him.

APPEALS TO1) Bingöl Public Prosecutor:

Bingöl Savc_l____

Bingöl, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Savciligi, Bingöl, Turkey**Salutation: Dear Sir**2) Minister of the Interior:

Mr Nahit Ment_e

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey**Faxes: +90 312 428 4346****Salutation: Dear Minister**3) Emergency Legislation Governor:

Mr Ünal Erkan

Ola_anüstü Hal Valili_i

Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: Ola_anüstü Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey**Telexes: 72110 OHVT TR; 2084 DYVA TR ("please forward to the Governor"); 72090****JASY TR****Salutation: Dear Governor****COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Prof Mümtaz Soysal

D_i_leri Bakanl____

06100 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: 90 312 287 1886

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 6 November 1994.