

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture

17 December 1990

TURKEY: Mukaddes CELIK
Naz_m TABAN

Mukaddes Çelik and Naz_m Taban, correspondents for the political magazine Eme in Bayra (Flag of Labour), were detained on or around 13 December in Zonguldak (the main centre of the Turkish coalfields). They had gone to Zonguldak to collect information about a major strike by the mineworkers there, and they were detained while talking to people in the street, and taken to Zonguldak Police Headquarters. It is feared that they may be tortured during interrogation. In March 1990 the chief editor of Eme in Bayra was detained and it was reported that he was subjected to electric shocks and beating.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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.

In August 1990, the Turkish 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.

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

- urging that Mukaddes Çelik and Naz_m Taban 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:

President Turgut Özal
Devlet Ba_kanli_i
06100 Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 42875 BBK TR
Telegrams: President Ozal, Ankara, Turkey

Emniyet Müdürü
Zonguldak
Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Zonguldak, Turkey

COPIES 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 28 January 1991.