

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/01/98

EXTRA 02/98

Fear of Torture  
Serpil Polat, f, Kurd aged 22

7 January 1998

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On 2 January 1998, Serpil Polat was detained at her home in Balçova, a suburb of Izmir, and taken to the Anti-Terror Branch of Izmir Police Headquarters. She was transferred to Bingöl in southeastern Turkey for interrogation by police on or around 4 January. Her name had reportedly been given by a detainee under interrogation in Bingöl. It is feared that Serpil Polat is being subjected to torture during interrogation.

Serpil Polat was active in the Izmir branch of the Mesopotamia Cultural Association. The Association's activities centre around Kurdish culture; its branches are often subject to police raids and many of its members have been detained and put on trial.

One of Serpil Polat's sisters is said to have died in unclarified circumstances on 10 November 1997. The official account is that she took her own life.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

People suspected of offences under the Anti-Terror Law can be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to four days. This period may be increased to 10 days in the six provinces currently under State of Emergency, and to seven days in the rest of Turkey, during which time detainees would have to be granted access to a lawyer. Bingöl province is no longer under State of Emergency.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Serpil Polat, detained in Balçova, Izmir, on 2 January 1998 and since transferred to Bingöl for interrogation;
- urging that she is not subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment and that she be granted her right of access to legal counsel after the fourth day of her detention;
- requesting to be informed of any charges brought against her

#### APPEALS TO:

1. Bingöl Chief Public Prosecutor:

Bingöl C. Ba\_savc\_s\_

C. Ba\_savc\_l\_\_\_\_

Bingöl, Turkey

**Telegrams: Bassavcisi, Bingol, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Prosecutor**

2. Bingöl Chief of Police:

Mr Kemal \_skender

Bingöl Emniyet Müdürlü\_ü

Bingöl, Turkey

**Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Bingol, Turkey**

**Salutation: Dear Sir**

3. State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Hikmet Sami Türk

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba\_bakanl\_k,

2

06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams; Minister Hikmet Sami Turk, Basbakanlik, Ankara, Turkey**

**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**

**Salutaton: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

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Minister of Foreign Affairs

D\_\_i\_\_leri Bakanl\_\_\_\_

06100 Ankara, Turkey

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 4 February 1998.