

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 09/97

Fear of torture

24 January 1997

TURKEY Kadir Sat_k, publisher
 Mete Demirkol, publisher

On 23 January 1996 plainclothes officers from the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters, accompanied by police officers in uniform, raided the Kurdish-owned *Komal* Publishing House in Istanbul. They confiscated large amounts of equipment including diskettes and computers and detained Kadir Sat_k and Mete Demirkol.

The two Kurdish publishers are being held incommunicado at the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters in Aksaray. The prosecutor has refused permission for their lawyer to see them, even though the lawyer holds power of attorney for both. The prosecutor has given permission for the two men to be held incommunicado until 31 January. It is feared that they are being subjected to torture.

The raid on *Komal* publishing house was reportedly triggered by the seizure of a leaflet found on a youth detained in the street by police. He told the police that he had obtained the leaflet from *Komal*.

Mete Demirkol was previously the editor of *Sterka R_zgari* (Star of Liberation), a Kurdish magazine.

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 30 days in the nine provinces currently under State of Emergency, and for 15 days in the rest of Turkey.

When not being interrogated, detainees are held in cramped, airless and insanitary conditions. With no access to the outside world they are at the mercy of their interrogators. Torture is often applied to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal punishment for presumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods include being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, hanging by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees, and for notification to their families, are almost universally ignored. Lack of prompt registration and notification is extremely distressing for the families of detainees, and creates the conditions in which "disappearances" and torture can occur.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Kadir Sat_k and Mete Demirkol, detained on 23 January 1996 and held incommunicado at the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters in Aksaray;
- seeking assurances that they are not being subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;

- appealing that their lawyer holding power of attorney for both be given immediate access to the two detainees;
- urging that they be promptly brought before a judge to be charged or released;
- requesting to be informed of any charges brought against them.

APPEALS TO:

1. Chief Prosecutor at Istanbul State Security Court:

Mr Erdal Güven

DGM Ba_savc_s_

Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi

Istanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Ba_savc_s_, _stanbul, Turkey

Telex: 0607 30187 eist tr; 0607 30188 iemd tr

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

2. Istanbul Chief of Police:

Mr Ramazan Er

Istanbul Emniyet Müdürü

_stanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Istanbul, Turkey

Telexes: 30811 IEHM TR or 30812 EMMH TR or 26177 IEMT TR

Salutation: Dear Sir

3. Minister of the Interior:

Mrs Meral Ak_ener

İçişleri Bakanl____

Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 2390

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Lütfü Esengün

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 0476

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 24 February 1997.