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Fear of Torture / Prisoners of conscience 11 January 1995

**TURKEY** **Ahmet Killi, correspondent for *Dengê Azadi* in Diyarbak\_r**  
**Ça\_atay I\_k, office worker at *Dengê Azadi* in Diyarbak\_r**

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On 8 January 1995 plainclothes police officers from the Anti-Terror Branch of Diyarbak\_r Police Headquarters raided the office of the weekly *Dengê Azadi* (Voice of Freedom) in Diyarbak\_r. They searched the premises for more than three hours, confiscated all documents and computer disks, checked the identity of all people present and took them away. All but Ahmet Killi, the Diyarbak\_r correspondent, and Ça\_atay I\_k, a member of the office staff, were released after a few hours. When a lawyer requested access to the two men, the police denied that they were being held at Diyarbak\_r Anti-Terror Branch or that they were registered as detainees.

Amnesty International considers Ahmet Killi and Ça\_atay I\_k to be prisoners of conscience and fears that they are being subjected to torture during interrogation in incommunicado detention. It is not known where they are being held.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The bilingual Kurdish-owned newspaper *Dengê Azadi* is published weekly in Turkish and Kurdish. Like other Kurdish publications, it and its predecessor *Azadi* have been subjected to constant harassment, raids, confiscation and prosecution on charges of separatist propaganda. Several of its editors and writers are currently serving long prison sentences as prisoners of conscience while other editors have fled abroad.

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) has claimed almost 14,000 lives since it began in August 1984. Police operations against suspected PKK supporters and other Kurdish activists are being carried out all over Turkey. A state of emergency remains in force in 10 provinces in the east and southeast, including Diyarbak\_r.

Detainees held on suspicion of political offences may be held without charge for up to 15 days. In the 10 provinces under emergency legislation the maximum detention period for political detainees may be doubled to 30 days.

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. 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.

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT) of the Council of Europe, of which Turkey is a member, and the UN Committee against Torture (UN CAT) have both published reports to the effect that torture is widespread and systematic in Turkey.

The ECPT also stated that in Diyarbak\_r Police Headquarters they had found "the equipment necessary for suspension by the arms in place and ready for use (ie a three metre long wooden beam which was mounted on heavily-weighted filing cabinets on opposite sides of the room and fitted with a strap made of strong material securely tied to the middle) ... the delegation's discoveries caused considerable consternation among police officers present; some expressed

regret, others defiance."

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Ahmet Killi and Ça\_atay I\_\_k, who were detained on 8 January and are being held incommunicado at an unknown location in Diyarbak\_r;
- seeking assurances that the two men are not being subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- calling for their immediate and unconditional release as prisoners of conscience, and urging that they are meanwhile given prompt access to their lawyers.

**APPEALS TO**

1) Chief of Police:

Mr R\_dvan Güler  
 Diyarbak\_r Emniyet Müdürü  
 Diyarbak\_r, Turkey  
**Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Diyarbakir, Turkey**  
**Faxes: +90 831 11956**  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

2) Chief Prosecutor at Diyarbak r State Security Court:

DGM Ba\_savc\_s\_  
 Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi  
 Diyarbak\_r, Turkey  
**Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey**  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

3) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Azimet Köylüo\_lu  
 Office of the Prime Minister  
 Ba\_bakanl\_k  
 06573 Ankara, Turkey  
**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Sabri Yavuz  
 \_nsan Haklar\_ Ara\_t\_rma Komisyonu Ba\_kan\_  
 TBMM  
 Ankara, Turkey  
**Faxes: +90 312 420 5394**

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 12 February 1995.